

This document details the policies and procedures related to the Marin Access Fare Assistance (MAFA) program.

### **MAFA Enrollment**

Applicants for Marin Access can apply for the MAFA program by providing a copy of their valid Medi-Cal card, or annual income and living situation. This application can be completed over the phone, online, or via a paper application.

Applicants determined eligible for MAFA will receive a letter that confirms enrollment, advises on how to use their MAFA credit, and provides further instruction about how to get a MAFA bus pass for use on Marin Transit local bus service. Applicants that are determined ineligible for MAFA will receive a letter detailing the reason they are ineligible and providing further instruction on how to appeal the determination should they choose to do so.

### **MAFA Eligibility Determinations**

MAFA eligibility is determined by three factors: residence, age, and demonstrated need. Eligible participants must be Marin Access clients that currently:

- » have a primary residence in Marin County
- » are age 65+; applicants under the age of 65+ may qualify if they are eligible for Marin Access Paratransit
- » have a need for financial assistance, either through:
  - demonstrating enrollment and eligibility for Medi-Cal; applicants must provide a copy of their valid Medi-Cal card
  - demonstrating an annual income that is at or below the current Elder Economic Index standard that aligns with their living situation

The Elder Economic Index standard is updated annually. Eligibility determinations will be made based on the most up to date information available and the standard will be posted on our website.

<b>Housing Situation</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Couple</b>
Owner without Mortgage	\$30,792	\$45,508
Owner with Mortgage	\$59,844	\$74,460
Renter	\$50,808	\$65,424

*Elder Index. (2022). The Elder Index™ [Public Dataset]. Boston, MA: Gerontology Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston. Retrieved from ElderIndex.org*

Acceptable documents for demonstrating income include:

- » Most recent 3 paystubs
- » Most recent 3 financial assistance documents
- » Most recent tax return
- » Most recent year end social security statement

Documents can be submitted via US mail to the Travel Navigator department. Applicants must provide copies of these documents as documents will not be returned. Applicants are encouraged to remove or cross out all instances of social security number, identification number, and / or account numbers for their bank or financial institution on the documents that they provide.

Exceptions will not be made for those that do not meet the eligibility requirements or are in the process of enrolling in Medi-Cal or for financial assistance. Applicants are encouraged to apply again once they are eligible for Medi-Cal or financial assistance.

Following receipt of a complete application, processing may take up to 21 days, not including mailing time. All applications are processed in the order received. If determined eligible, all clients will be eligible through the end of the fiscal year (June 30) in which they apply. Applicants will have their accounts updated on the date of the determination and can begin to use MAFA credit immediately.

**MAFA Eligibility Renewal**

All MAFA eligible clients must renew their eligibility on an annual basis regardless of the date of initial application or eligibility determination. The renewal process is similar to the initial eligibility process and applicants must submit all relevant information and documentation to remain enrolled in the MAFA program.

Eligible clients will be sent a letter by May 1<sup>st</sup> advising them of the need to reapply with instructions on how to do so. Applicants must submit renewal applications by June 10<sup>th</sup> to ensure that there is no interruption to their MAFA benefit.

Once eligibility is renewed clients will receive a letter confirming eligibility. If they have opted into the MAFA pass for local bus service, they will also receive a sticker to affix to their ID that will show that they are eligible to use the pass for the current MAFA year.

**Termination of Eligibility**

Clients can have their access to MAFA suspended or revoked due to misuse of or misconduct when using any Marin Access program or service.

**MAFA Credit**

MAFA credit is added to each enrolled client account on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each quarter (three-month period). Each eligible client will receive \$75 per quarter to use toward the fare for local Paratransit trips or Marin Access Shuttles. MAFA credit is applied to trips as they are booked. MAFA credit will be used for all trips before cash fare is required; if a rider does not want to use MAFA credit and prefers to pay cash fare they must notify the scheduler when booking the trip. The fare payment type cannot be changed at time of boarding. Once a rider uses all of the credit in their MAFA account, they must pay all remaining fares in cash at the time of boarding. MAFA credit is for the eligible rider only and cannot be applied to pay the fare of companion riders.

MAFA credit rolls over quarterly but does not roll over annually. MAFA has no cash value and riders will not be refunded for any credit not used by the end of the fiscal year. Riders can

request a detail of their trip history including details on MAFA credit usage and fare payment by contacting the Travel Navigator department.

### **Marin Access MAFA Pass for Local Bus Service**

Clients that are eligible for MAFA have the option of receiving a pass to use local bus service at no cost. This pass will be in an ID format and include your photo. To opt into the pass, applicants must provide a recent photo, and consent to the terms of use. The MAFA pass must be renewed annually as part of the MAFA renewal and all enrolled riders will be sent a sticker to attach to their card that shows the current eligibility period. The pass is a “flash pass” and the photo side must be shown to the driver upon boarding the bus. Pass holders do not pay any fare upon boarding the bus and showing a valid pass. This pass **is valid** on local Marin Transit fixed route bus routes and **not valid** on Marin Access services (Paratransit or Catch-A-Ride), the Muir Woods Shuttle, the SMART trains, or Regional Golden Gate Transit routes.

Photos for the MAFA pass must be current and have a white or solid background. Photos should be 2” x 2” (similar to a passport photo) and show a clearly visible face with sunglasses and/or hats removed. The Travel Navigator team will review and confirm whether photos are usable. A MAFA pass will not be created until we receive a usable photo.

Once determined eligible, your Marin Access fixed route pass will be mailed to you. MAFA passes are non-transferrable and misuse will be reported to MCTD staff. You may be asked to present picture ID when you ride. If misuse is reported, the District reserves the right to revoke the pass. If misuse is reported, the Marin Access MAFA pass holder will be sent a letter detailing the allegation and advising of the rules of proper use; renewal of the MAFA pass will not be granted to riders that are found to be misusing the MAFA pass. Riders attempting to board a vehicle using a pass that does not belong to them will have the pass revoked.

The Marin Access MAFA pass can only be replaced once during a fiscal year if lost. Replacement of lost passes will cost \$10; this fee is meant to encourage safe keeping & discourage abuse. The fee for a lost pass can be paid via credit card at [www.marintransit.myshopify.com](http://www.marintransit.myshopify.com).

Clients that lose their pass must complete a MAFA Bus Pass Replacement form (available at <https://marintransit.org/brochures> or by contacting the Travel Navigator team) and submit this to the Travel Navigator department. There is a 10-day processing period for all replacement cards once a completed form and payment is received; replacement cards must be picked up in person by the owner. Clients will be required to show picture ID when picking up a replacement card. If pick-up is not possible exceptions may be made with MCTD staff approval.

### **Appealing a MAFA Eligibility Determination**

If you believe that your application has been denied in error, you may appeal this decision and have it reviewed by Marin Access staff. Your determination letter will explain common reason(s) for denial of eligibility and explain the procedure to follow if you would like to appeal the decision.

#### *Common Reasons MAFA Applications are Denied*

- » The applicant is not eligible for Marin Access
- » The applicant's income is above the Elder Economic Index standards
- » The information provided in the application is incomplete
- » The applicant is not eligible for Medi-Cal at the time of application
- » The applicant provided a Medi-Cal ID number or Issue Date that is not valid
- » The applicant did not demonstrate income per program standards

All requests for an appeal must be received by Marin Access within 30 days of issuance of denial of eligibility. In all cases, the appeal process will be concluded as expeditiously as possible. Once we receive an appeal request, the information you provide will be reviewed by Marin Access staff. You may elect to have a representative provide documentation or information on your behalf if additional documentation or information is requested by Marin Access staff.

You will receive a determination to your appeal via US Mail. The determination decision is final, and the appeal will be closed. Should the appeal be successful, and you are



## **Marin Access Fare Assistance Policies**

determined eligible for the MAFA program, eligibility and benefits will be granted starting the first day of the month following the date we received a complete application.

### **Questions**

If you have any questions about this document or the MAFA program, please contact the Marin Access Travel Navigators by phone at (415) 454-0902 or by email at [travelnavigator@marinaccess.org](mailto:travelnavigator@marinaccess.org).