

Work Transportation Help: Bus Passes & Bicycles

Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties - practical referral list for people who need transportation to work or job interviews. Prepared for Red Bird resource coordination. Updated May 16, 2026.

Use this list first for programs that appear more practical locally. BCDCOG / Lowcountry Go, TriCounty Link, and children-only bike programs are intentionally left out because they are not reliable or relevant enough for this work-transportation list.

Quick referral order

Prior ity	Program	Best use	Caution
1	Second Chance Bikes - Change a Tire, Change a Life / Earn-a-Bike / Low-Cost Bikes	Free hardship bike / low-cost bike / bike repair	Best first call for someone who needs a bicycle to get to work. Red Bird may want to ask about becoming a referral partner.
2	Charleston Moves	Bike/transit advocacy and referral, not a direct free-bike program	Keep high on the list as a knowledgeable local referral contact, but do not promise direct help.
3	CARTA Low-Income Fare / Reduced Fare Card	Reduced bus fare, not a free pass	This is one of the most practical transportation options because it does not depend on temporary charity funding.
4	SC Works Charleston Career Center	Workforce center / possible supportive services / CARTA fare determination site	Ask directly whether any current supportive-service funding exists for bus passes or work transportation before sending someone.
5	Palmetto Community Action Partnership	Community action agency / possible emergency or employment-support transportation help	Put near the bottom because funds are often exhausted. Call before sending anyone.
6	Trident United Way Centers for Strong Families	Navigation / possible transportation support if funds are available	Keep low on the list because current funds are often exhausted. Useful mainly for navigation or when other routes fail.
7	SC 211 / 2-1-1	Referral line only, not a direct funding program	Put near the bottom because it is often not useful locally, but it can still catch short-term programs Red Bird may not know about.

Important notes for Red Bird

- **For bicycles:** Second Chance Bikes is the strongest direct local option. Charleston Moves is a referral/advocacy contact, not a direct free-bike charity.
- **For bus help:** CARTA low-income fare is reliable because it is a fare program, not temporary charity funding. It reduces fare to \$1.25 per ride for qualifying riders.
- **For free bus passes or money:** SC Works, Palmetto CAP, Trident United Way, and 211 may help only when the person fits eligibility and funds are available. Call before sending anyone.

Detailed program list

1. Second Chance Bikes - Change a Tire, Change a Life / Earn-a-Bike / Low-Cost Bikes

Type	Free hardship bike / low-cost bike / bike repair
Cities/counties served	Charleston region / Lowcountry. Best local fit for North Charleston, Charleston, and nearby Berkeley/Dorchester residents who can reach the shop or work through a referral partner.
Location	3310 Rivers Ave, North Charleston, SC 29405
Phone	843-608-8383
Email / web contact	info@scbikes.org
Who is eligible	For a free Change a Tire, Change a Life bike, the person must need a bike and be unable to afford one. They need a referral letter from a partner agency or a local helping organization. Bring photo ID or another form of identification. One free bike per person per year. Bikes are first come, first served and not guaranteed to be in stock.
Documents to bring / ask about	Referral letter emailed or printed from a helping agency, photo ID or other identification, and a bike lock at pickup. They sell U-locks for about \$10 and lights for about \$15 if needed.
What they may help with	Free single-speed cruiser bikes when available; low-cost bikes; affordable repairs; volunteer/shop-credit repair options; Earn-a-Bike with 15+ volunteer hours.
Referral note	Best first call for someone who needs a bicycle to get to work. Red Bird may want to ask about becoming a referral partner.

2. Charleston Moves

Type	Bike/transit advocacy and referral, not a direct free-bike program
Cities/counties served	Charleston County focus; useful as a referral/contact for biking and transportation resources in the region.
Location	Office: 478 King Street, Suite F, Charleston, SC 29403; Mailing: P.O. Box 30561, Charleston, SC 29417
Phone	No main phone confirmed on site
Email / web contact	info@charlestonmoves.org
Who is eligible	No client eligibility for direct aid because this is not a direct assistance program. Best used by Red Bird/resource coordinators to ask about current bike-donation partners, safety resources, bike infrastructure, and referrals.
Documents to bring / ask about	None for referral inquiry.
What they may help with	May know current bicycle, safety, bike repair, helmet, and transit advocacy resources. Not a guaranteed source of free bikes or bus passes.
Referral note	Keep high on the list as a knowledgeable local referral contact, but do not promise direct help.

3. CARTA Low-Income Fare / Reduced Fare Card

Type	Reduced bus fare, not a free pass
Cities/counties served	CARTA service area, mainly Charleston area fixed routes. Useful for workers who can realistically use CARTA routes.
Location	Determinations at SC Works Charleston Career Center, 1930 Hanahan Road, North Charleston, SC 29406. CARTA Admin: 3664 Leeds Ave, North Charleston, SC 29405.
Phone	SC Works: 843-574-1810 or 843-574-1800; CARTA: 843-724-7420; email askcarta@ridecarta.com
Email / web contact	askcarta@ridecarta.com
Who is eligible	Low-income riders who qualify. CARTA says qualified riders receive a CARTA ID and must re-verify every 6 months. Low-income fare is listed as \$1.25 per ride.
Documents to bring / ask about	CARTA does not clearly list exact low-income documents online. Tell clients to call first. Recommended to bring photo ID, proof of address, proof of income for the last 30 days, and any benefit proof such as SNAP, Medicaid, SSI/SSDI, unemployment, or a zero-income statement if applicable.
What they may help with	Reduced one-way fare. Not door-to-door, not a free monthly pass, and only useful where routes line up with the job.
Referral note	This is one of the most practical transportation options because it does not depend on temporary charity funding.

4. SC Works Charleston Career Center

Type	Workforce center / possible supportive services / CARTA fare determination site
Cities/counties served	Charleston area workforce center; may serve job seekers and workers connected to SC Works/WIOA/TANF or other workforce programs.
Location	1930 Hanahan Road, North Charleston, SC 29406
Phone	843-574-1810 or 843-574-1800
Email / web contact	Use local center contact or SC Works website contact.
Who is eligible	Best for people actively looking for work, starting a job, in workforce training, or enrolled in an eligible workforce program. Supportive services depend on program eligibility, available funds, and case manager approval.
Documents to bring / ask about	Photo ID, Social Security card if available, proof of address, resume/job-search info, job offer or interview details, training enrollment, proof of income/benefits, and any program documents requested.
What they may help with	May help screen for work-related transportation supports, CARTA low-income fare eligibility, job resources, and possible supportive services such as bus pass, gas, mileage, or other work-related transportation help when funding/program rules allow.
Referral note	Ask directly whether any current supportive-service funding exists for bus passes or work transportation before sending someone.

5. Palmetto Community Action Partnership

Type	Community action agency / possible emergency or employment-support transportation help
Cities/counties served	Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties.
Location	Main/Charleston: 1069 King St, Charleston, SC 29403; Berkeley: 500 S Live Oak Dr, Moncks Corner, SC 29461; Dorchester: 500 N Main St, Suite C Room 100, Summerville, SC 29483
Phone	843-724-6760
Email / web contact	Use appointment system/contact through palmettocap.org
Who is eligible	Economically underserved residents of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties. Eligibility depends on program calendars, fund availability, appointment availability, verifiable income, and family size. Current funds may be exhausted, so treat as low priority unless they confirm funding.
Documents to bring / ask about	SC photo ID with matching address, Social Security cards for household members, proof of all household income for the past 30 days, benefit award letters, unemployment/zero-income proof if applicable, and any additional documents required by program.
What they may help with	Possible employment/education support, emergency assistance, and temporary assistance. Some resource listings have included help obtaining CARTA bus tickets, but confirm current funding before referral.
Referral note	Put near the bottom because funds are often exhausted. Call before sending anyone.

6. Trident United Way Centers for Strong Families

Type	Navigation / possible transportation support if funds are available
Cities/counties served	Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties.
Location	Berkeley: 500 S Live Oak Dr, Moncks Corner; Charleston/North Charleston: 6296 Rivers Ave, Suite 104; Charleston/Downtown: 68 Calhoun St; Dorchester: 133 E 1st North St, Suite 3, Summerville
Phone	Berkeley 843-761-6033; North Charleston 843-207-4206; Downtown 843-207-4210; Dorchester 843-566-7040
Email / web contact	Use TUW contact/intake forms if phone is unavailable.
Who is eligible	Tri-county residents needing resource navigation. Transportation assistance may depend on program, partner availability, and funding. Current funds may be exhausted.
Documents to bring / ask about	Photo ID, proof of address, proof of household income, employment/interview/job-start details, and documents requested by the Center for Strong Families.
What they may help with	Resource navigation; may ask about bus tickets, gas, car repair, work transportation, benefits, and partner referrals.
Referral note	Keep low on the list because current funds are often exhausted. Useful mainly for navigation or when other routes fail.

7. SC 211 / 2-1-1

Type	Referral line only, not a direct funding program
Cities/counties served	Statewide. Can search Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester resources.
Location	Phone/text/online referral service
Phone	Dial 211 or text HELP to 211-211
Email / web contact	Use sc211.org if needed.
Who is eligible	Anyone can ask for referrals. Actual help depends on the programs 211 finds.
Documents to bring / ask about	None to call. Programs referred by 211 may require ID, proof of address, income, job offer/interview proof, or hardship documents.
What they may help with	May identify temporary bus-pass, gas-card, or bicycle resources when local funding changes.
Referral note	Put near the bottom because it is often not useful locally, but it can still catch short-term programs Red Bird may not know about.

Copy/paste call scripts

Bike for work:

Hi, my name is Theresa Kelly with The Red Bird Foundation. I am helping someone who needs a bicycle to get to work and cannot afford one. Do you currently have any free or low-cost bikes available, or do you require a referral letter from our organization? What documents should they bring?

CARTA low-income fare:

Hi, I am helping someone apply for the CARTA low-income fare card. What documents do they need to bring to SC Works, and are determinations still being made Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5 PM with lunch closure from 12 to 1?

Bus pass or transportation money:

Hi, I am helping someone who needs transportation to get to work or a job interview. Do you currently have any funds for bus passes, CARTA tickets, gas cards, car repair, or other work transportation assistance? They live in [county/city] and have [job/interview/start date].

Source notes checked

- Second Chance Bikes official pages: no-cost bikes and repairs; Change a Tire, Change a Life referral-letter requirement; photo ID/identification; one bike per year; shop hours, phone, email, and address.
- Charleston Moves official contact page: Charleston County mobility nonprofit; info@charlestonmoves.org; office/ mailing address.
- CARTA Fares & Passes: low-income fare is \$1.25 per ride; determination and ID card through SC Works Charleston Career Center; re-verification every 6 months; CARTA contact phone/email.
- Palmetto Community Action Partnership official site: tri-county mission, office locations, fund-availability language, required documents, and main phone.
- FindHelp listing for Palmetto CAP transportation/employment support was checked for CARTA bus-ticket language, but current availability must be confirmed.
- SC Works and 211 included as secondary/low-priority referral options because transportation support depends heavily on current eligibility and funding.

Do not include in this list

- BCDCOG / Lowcountry Go / Ride Low Go: left out because the user could not confirm active, functional intake.
- TriCounty Link: left out because it is not practical/reliable enough for this resource list.
- Going Places: left out because it focuses on children's bikes, not adult work transportation.