



Société de transport  
de Sherbrooke

# USER MANUAL

## PARATRANSIT SERVICE







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# FOREWORD

Out of a concern for equity and guided by its primary mission, which is to contribute to the well-being of the population of Sherbrooke, the STS offers a paratransit service to nearly 4,000 people deemed eligible under the Ministère des Transports du Québec's paratransit eligibility policy.

This guide is intended as a practical reference tool related to STS paratransit procedures and service standards. It brings together all the information relevant to managing and planning paratransit-customer rides.

The STS reiterates its commitment to meeting the mobility needs of Sherbrooke's population by providing a service that is increasingly efficient, safe, and accessible to all, thereby promoting the social, professional, and economic integration of people living with functional limitations.

## **Have a good trip!**

Société de transport de Sherbrooke

Efforts have been made to make this document gender inclusive. In those instances in which that was not possible, the gender used is to be construed as encompassing all genders and gender identities.







# INTRODUCTION

The STS paratransit service exists specifically to meet the transportation needs of persons with reduced mobility who are registered users of this form of transportation under the eligibility criteria set out in the Ministère des Transports du Québec's eligibility policy for paratransit.

Three types of vehicles are used for public paratransit: minibuses, regular taxis, and adapted taxis.

The paratransit user's guide is intended to provide all the necessary information for booking and using minibuses and cabs.

**It is important to follow the procedures outlined in the following pages to ensure all customers receive efficient and fair service.**



## REGISTERING FOR THE SERVICE

To be a registered STS paratransit rider, you must:

- 1° Answer all the questions in the first part of the eligibility application form prepared by the Ministère des Transports du Québec.
- 2° Have the medical part completed by a professional from the health and social services network (as indicated on the form). This information should make it possible to assess the disability associated with the handicap.
- 3° Return the completed form to this address:  
Comité d'admissibilité  
Transport adapté STS  
895, rue Cabana  
Sherbrooke (Québec) J1K 2M3

### Committee Composition

- 1 admission officer representing the representative organization
- 3 representatives of persons with disabilities
- 1 representative of the health and social services network

You can obtain an eligibility application form by mail at the above address, by calling the STS customer service department at 819-564-2687, or by e-mail at [service.clientele@sts.qc.ca](mailto:service.clientele@sts.qc.ca).





## YOUR RIDER FILE

If you are a registered paratransit rider, you need to inform us of any changes to your file such as:

- **change of address**
- **phone number**
- **medical condition**
- **mobility assistance**

**If you move** outside the Sherbrooke area, you must transfer your file to the new carrier by sending a written request to the STS by mail or e-mail [service.clientele@sts.qc.ca](mailto:service.clientele@sts.qc.ca)

**If you do not use paratransit for more than two years**, your file will be deactivated automatically. The STS reserves the right to request an update to the file before reactivating it.



## TERRITORY SERVED

The STS paratransit service serves the City of Sherbrooke's territory, which includes the following boroughs:

- **Fleurimont**
- **Lennoxville**
- **Des Nations**
- **Brompton-Rock Forest and Saint-Élie-Deauville**



## TRANSPORTATION SERVICE HOURS

**Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to midnight**  
**Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to midnight**

Regular transportation schedules are automatically cancelled on holidays and replaced by occasional schedules. Customers requesting rides during the hours of service for holidays must submit a specific occasional trip request (see the section on specific occasional transportation for details).



## Paratransit Holidays and Hours of Service

January 1: from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.  
January 2: from 10 a.m. to midnight  
Good Friday: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Easter Monday: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Journée nationale des patriotes: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Fête nationale des Québécois: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Canada Day: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Labour Day: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Thanksgiving: from 8 a.m. to midnight  
Christmas Eve: from 8 a.m. to 1 a.m.  
Christmas Day: from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.  
Boxing Day: from 10 a.m. to midnight  
December 31: from 8 a.m. to 1 a.m.

On December 24 and 31, service ends at 1:00 a.m. This means that the last return will be at 1:00 a.m.



## DISPATCH SERVICE HOURS

**Monday to Friday:** 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Saturday, Sunday, and holidays:** 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

### To contact dispatch:

- by phone: 819-564-2687
- by fax: 819-564-7151
- by e-mail: [repartitionta@sts.qc.ca](mailto:repartitionta@sts.qc.ca)

### Holidays when there is no paratransit dispatch service:

- Fête nationale du Québec (June 24)
- Christmas Eve (December 24)
- Christmas Day (December 25)
- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Day after New Year's Day (January 2)
- Easter





# REQUEST FOR TRANSPORTATION ON A REGULAR BASIS

**A regular trip** is a repetitive weekly or semimonthly trip at a fixed time and place.

Examples:

*Leaving at 9:00 a.m. from 1020 X Street for the university every Wednesday.*

*Leaving at 10:00 a.m. from 800 Y Street for the Carrefour de l'Estrie on Thursday every two weeks*

This request requires a single call to the dispatcher to inform him of your needs.

**This request can be made up to 14 days in advance.**

If requests for transportation on a regular basis are repeatedly cancelled or changed, the STS reserves the right to consider them occasional transportation after prior notification of the customer.

After a prolonged cancellation of transportation for one or more customers, a 10-day delay is required to reinstate or modify their file for activities registered to take place on a regular basis.

**Once the request has been confirmed, the customer cannot change the origin, destination, or time.** If they cannot make the trip, they must cancel at least 24 hours in advance or, if they wish to make changes, they must cancel the trip and request occasional transportation.





# REQUEST FOR OCCASIONAL TRANSPORTATION

**Occasional transportation** is a one-way or return trip on a given day. A minimum of 30 minutes must be spent by the customer at the drop-off location (for example, going to the bank).

Requests must be made 7 days to 24 hours in advance. Please check to see if you have already requested a trip for that same day to avoid it conflicting with your new request (until 6:00 p.m. the day before a trip request).

Reservations are still accepted within the 24-hour time frame for unscheduled or same-day trips. Such reservations are not guaranteed, as they are subject to resource availability, just like all other reservation requests.



## ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations planning an event should inform the dispatch department by **e-mail** at least 7 days in advance or as soon as possible (beginning of the year) to allow for better assessing the additional service required.

This does not mean that the organization is guaranteed that the additional service will be available. The service required depends on the availability of resources; customers in a given group might not be transported in the same vehicle.

After a prolonged cancellation of transportation for one or more customers, a 10-day delay is required to reinstate or modify their file for activities registered to take place on a regular basis.



# RESERVATION PROCEDURE

## » TRIP REQUESTS

To contact dispatching during business hours:

- by phone: 819-564-2687; by fax: 819 564-7151;
- by e-mail: [repartitionta@sts.qc.ca](mailto:repartitionta@sts.qc.ca) or at [www.sts.qc.ca/reservationta](http://www.sts.qc.ca/reservationta)

Vous devez indiquer au répartiteur s'il s'agit d'une demande de déplacement régulier ou occasionnel.

You must indicate to the dispatcher whether the request is for regular or occasional travel.

To book a trip, you must provide the following information for both the outbound and return trips:

1. Your name and file number
2. The day of the trip
3. The pickup address
4. Exact address of the drop-off location (location must be accessible)
5. The desired arrival time at the drop-off location or the desired departure time.  
For example: Arrival at the university at 9:00 a.m.; departure from the Cégep at 3:30 p.m. (until 6:00 p.m. the day before a trip request)
6. Your mobility: ambulatory person or user of a manual or motorized wheelchair
7. Your payment method
8. You must specify if you will be accompanied.

The dispatcher will use this information in determining if the trip is possible given the available places for the requested trips and times. In general, the STS does not take into account customers' reasons for the trip.

**That being said, in the event of a schedule conflict, priority will be given to travel for work, medical reasons, educational purposes, and death of a loved one.**

Once the trip has been confirmed, it becomes a reservation and you are responsible for it.

The dispatcher will confirm a 20-minute boarding time slot (e.g., pickup between 9:00 a.m. and 9:20 a.m.). The proposed time might differ slightly from the requested time, Your flexibility in this regard is appreciated.

**To place a request for occasional trips at any time** through our website:  
[www.sts.qc.ca/reservationta](http://www.sts.qc.ca/reservationta)

You will receive confirmation when you reserve by e-mail or fax.



## » WILL-CALL TRIPS

**This is the number to call if you cannot predict the time for the return pickup: 819 564-2687**

In the case of medical appointments, court appearances, or for any other exceptional reason for which the time cannot be set in advance, the pickup can be made by calling in.

The customer might have to wait until a vehicle is available for the return trip. The waiting time can be up to 60 minutes in normal circumstances. In all other cases, the customer must specify the return time.

## CHANGE REQUESTS

You can request a change to a reservation that has already been made.



The dispatcher may change a reservation as long as the service is available and the change does not jeopardize trips already underway.

If the dispatcher cannot meet these conditions, the change request will be denied or listed as “pending confirmation.” This is the case for same-day trip requests. You will then have to decide between keeping the original reservation or cancelling it.

This measure is necessary in order to meet the requests of customers who booked between 7 days and 24 hours in advance.

## » CANCELLATION

For cancellations by phone: 819-564-2687, by fax at 819-564-7151, or by e-mail at [repartitionta@sts.qc.ca](mailto:repartitionta@sts.qc.ca).

**Dispatch must be informed of a cancellation as soon as it is known for reasons such as an absence, illness, or vacation.** If the customer is absent, the driver will notify the dispatcher and the dispatcher will automatically cancel the return trip. Customers who want to keep their return trips will have to reapply to the STS dispatcher, who will grant it depending on the availability of transportation on the same day.

If possible, do not wait until the same day to notify dispatch of a cancellation. This will allow other customers to benefit from the service.

If, on the day you are scheduled to travel, you can't make the trip, notify dispatch instead of keeping the reservation without taking the trip or cancelling when the vehicle shows up (both considered no-show trips). This is to avoid unnecessary movement of our vehicles, depriving other customers of a ride.

## » **PROCEDURE FOR NO-SHOW TRIPS**

Occasional no-shows or repeated cancellations may result in the STS taking certain actions, as described below.

A procedure for intervening with offending customers has been in place since March 2014 to limit no-show trips.

- After two no-show trips within 7 days for regular and/or occasional trips, a first awareness letter is sent to the offending customer.
- After receiving an initial awareness letter, if the customer makes two more no-show trips within seven days for regular and/or occasional travel, a second awareness letter is sent.
- After the offending customer repeats after receiving two awareness letters for no-show trips, they are issued a suspension letter.
  - In such cases, customers with regular trips are suspended for a period of three months, and their trips fall into the "occasional" category, which means that the customer will have to reserve trips between 24 hours and 7 days in advance. Any no-shows during the suspension period (three months) will result in the customer not being able to make reservations for a period of two weeks.
  - Customers who only make occasional trips will be excluded from making reservations for a period of two weeks.





## USING THE SERVICE

The rules for using the service apply to each mode of transportation used by the STS: minibuses, taxis, and adapted taxis. Taxi drivers must report their presence and assist the customer when required, as must minibus drivers.

For the safety of clients with significant cognitive issues or intellectual or psychological disabilities, the STS offers a “hand-in-hand” accompaniment service. The “hand-to-hand” service implies that the driver will take charge of a customer entrusted to him by a responsible person at the pickup site and hand the customer off to a responsible person at drop-off location.

When a customer with significant cognitive problems or an intellectual / psychological disability requires “HAND-TO-HAND” service, the person responsible for the customer must indicate this when applying for eligibility or when the customer’s health status changes.

**No travel requests will be accepted over the communication system on board STS vehicles in order to maintain the confidentiality of our customers’ travel. Drivers are not authorized to change a trip’s destination when so requested by a customer.**

**Customers must pay the cost of the entire trip if they contact the taxi company themselves.**



## MANAGEMENT

**You must be ready for your ride at the beginning of the ride’s time slot** (for example, if the dispatcher has confirmed a pickup between 9:00 and 9:20 a.m., you must be ready by 9:00 a.m.)

Minibus and taxi drivers must indicate their presence by attempting to make contact with the customer upon arrival.

**If you are not there, drivers can leave the premises after receiving authorization from the dispatcher.**

If something unexpected delays your preparation, it is important to inform the dispatcher, who will ask the driver to wait exceptionally a few extra minutes.

In the event that a driver does not show up at the end of the time slot given by dispatch, the customer must report this by calling dispatch at 819-564-2687.



# ACCESSIBILITY

## **ACCESSIBILITY: Three-Step Rule**

Please note that we offer our customers a service from an accessible exterior door to an accessible exterior door. This means that, in the case of a multi-dwelling building, the lobby and the number of steps should not exceed three consecutive exterior steps. Minibus and taxi drivers must assist customers within these limits.

**All pickup and drop-off locations must be accessible.** You must know in advance the number of exterior steps hindering your movements. If there are more than three steps, including the landing, you must be able to negotiate that by yourself or with the help of someone other than the driver.

Customers who use motorized wheelchairs for mobility must go to locations with ramps or doorways at ground level.

## **ACCESSIBILITY: Clear Entrances in the Winter**

**Entrances must be clear of snow and ice; abrasives must be applied to hazardous areas before the driver arrives.**

The STS will assess location accessibility on a case-by-case basis for all travel requests during major storm events.

For safety reasons, however, the company reserves the right to cease all operations in the event of a major storm or in any other circumstances that justify it (see page 15).



# COMPANIONS

In exceptional cases, the STS may provide additional assistance to some customers. They must submit a written request—supported by a professional from the health and social services network—to the eligibility committee, who will assess the relevance of the request.

In the case of urgent requests, the chair of the eligibility committee is authorized exceptionally to make certain temporary decisions.

## **The following are the only additional services that can be offered:**

1. Lock or unlock the doors.
2. Turn lights on or off.
3. Help take off or put on coats.

## **»» OPTIONAL COMPANION**

Some people who do not necessarily require physical or psychological assistance during their rides may still have the option of being accompanied when using the paratransit service.

Such **companions must pay their own passage**. Moreover, the paratransit service cannot guarantee a seat in the vehicle for them at the time of reservation. The STS must, however, as soon as possible, confirm that there will be a seat for the companion for both legs of the trip.

Lastly, for practical reasons, only one companion is allowed per customer.

## **»» PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

In exercising their parental responsibility, anyone eligible for paratransit may, as parents, travel with their child or children aged 13 years or younger.

In addition, a child with a disability who is 13 years of age or younger may travel with the child's caregiver (mother, father, caregiver, guardian) and, if applicable, another immediate family member who is 13 years of age or younger, provided that, even with the caregivers present, it would not be possible for the child with a disability to use public transportation.



In addition, children 5 years of age or younger eligible for paratransit must be accompanied on all trips by a responsible person 14 years or older. **The companion must pay their own fare.**

**Lastly, when a customer is accompanied by a child or the guardian of a child, both the guardian and the child over 11 years of age must pay their own fare.** Their seat in the vehicle must be confirmed at the time of booking.

The safety standards set out in the *Highway Safety Code* concerning the wearing of seat belts (sections 396 and 397) must be complied with at all times.

## » Companion Required

The members of the eligibility committee determine when a companion is required. Their decision is made based on **the difficulties that the rider would encounter when traveling.**

The companion must be responsible, at least 14 years of age, and able to provide the person with a disability with the assistance they need during the trip while the driver is operating the vehicle.

**When a companion is required, the companion's seat in the vehicle is guaranteed as soon as the reservation is made. The companion does not have to pay the fare.**



## SERVICE/GUIDE DOGS

During your travels, you can be accompanied by a service/guide dog. Service/guide dogs assist people in dealing with limitations. Dogs must be tied when in a minibus. You must mention that you will have a service dog with you when you book your ride.



# SAFETY

For safety reasons, all paratransit riders must wear seat belts in minibuses and taxis. Wheelchair riders must have a seat belt with a metal buckle attached to their wheelchairs. In addition, wheelchairs must be equipped with secure fasteners.

Before the rider gets on the hydraulic lift, the operator must ensure that the belt is properly fastened.

If the rider is unable to fasten their seat belt, the driver must do so.

Three- and four-wheel scooters are allowed on paratransit vehicles unless otherwise specified. Anyone using this type of wheelchair must be able to get on the lift and transfer themselves to a seat in the vehicle once on board.

**Scooters must be equipped with a seat belt with a metal buckle and anchor points to secure the scooter to the floor of the vehicle.**



# TROUBLESHOOTING

The STS will not assume the transportation of empty or defective wheelchairs or scooters with the exception of the wheelchair of a hospitalized customer who requires it during their hospital stay.

## **Luggage, Grocery/Shopping Bags**

Only luggage or grocery/shopping bags that do not require driver assistance and additional space in the vehicle can be brought on board (i.e., two bags per person that the customer can carry on their own).

In the case of wheelchair customers, grocery or shopping bags should be placed on the back of the wheelchair in such a way that does not interfere with anchoring the wheelchair with the straps. The STS reserves the right to check on site to ensure that everything is **safe**.



## SNOWSTORMS AND ICE STORMS

In the event of a **major** snowstorm or ice storm, customers will be informed of service cancellation on local radio broadcasts and on our various platforms (website, Facebook, etc.). We are committed, however, to ensuring the return of customers who have already left their homes. Customers could inform the dispatcher if their entranceways have not been cleared.



## SMOKING POLICY

Based on the provisions in the Tobacco Control Act regarding the protection of nonsmokers and as a safety measure, **VAPING AND SMOKING ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED ON BOARD STS VEHICLES.** This applies to drivers, customers, and anyone else in the vehicle.



## FARES

The payment methods and fare schedule in effect at the STS apply (refer to [www.sts.qc.ca](http://www.sts.qc.ca)). The fare must be paid when boarding. Otherwise, the STS reserves the right to deny boarding. This measure is intended to promote standardization.

The exact fare must be given when paying in cash on boarding because minibus and taxi drivers carry no change. Moreover, the STS will not refund the difference between the amount given and the cost of the fare. **Drivers cannot accept tips or issue receipts.**

Customers who use the personalized pass should purchase their monthly passes before the beginning of each month. Monthly passes are available starting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. Monthly passes can be computerized with the STS's authorization.





# IMPORTANT

## » ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE DRIVER

Assistance refers to the immediate boarding procedures. While you must be able to move on your own, you can count on assistance from the driver when necessary (e.g., offering their arm):

- Boarding or disembarking the vehicle
- Covering the distance between the vehicle and the accessible exterior door
- Getting over door thresholds at the pickup and drop-off locations

**If you are unable to negotiate the stairs at your pickup or drop-off location on your own, you must be helped by someone other than the driver.**

Drivers are not allowed to use an elevator or stairs to pick you up or take you back to your floor. They are not allowed to wait for you or change your reservation.

The STS may provide additional assistance to some customers. They must submit a written request—supported by a professional from the health and social services network—to the eligibility committee, who will assess the relevance of the request.

The following are the only additional services that can be provided:

1. Lock or unlock doors
2. Turn lights off or on
3. Remove or put on coats

**Make sure you know in advance if the buildings you are visiting are accessible:**

- If you use a manual wheelchair, there is no ramp, and there are more than three consecutive steps to negotiate, you must be able to do so on your own or with the assistance of someone other than the driver.
- If you cannot get out of your wheelchair, there must be a ramp at both the pickup and drop-off locations.

**Non-transferable wheelchair users:** Mandatory ramps at both the pickup and drop-off locations.

## » WHEELCHAIR USE

If you use a wheelchair and travel by taxi, you must be able to transfer yourself from your wheelchair to the taxi seat without the assistance of the driver or an attendant. The driver will fold and store the wheelchair in the vehicle's trunk.

**If you are not able to do this, you will always be transported in a minibus or accessible taxi.**

## » PUNCTUALITY

The STS is committed to providing the most punctual service possible, but, due to the nature of door-to-door travel, the scheduling of trips requires some flexibility on the part of customers.

## » IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT

If an accident occurs during a trip, the reservation centre will do everything in its power to communicate with your family. If you are injured while traveling with the STS, you must:

1. Inform the driver who must call their supervisor.
2. Consult a doctor.
3. Call customer service to report the incident.
4. Contact the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec at 1-800-361-7620 to open a file.



# COMPLAINTS, SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND INQUIRIES

Customers who file complaints help improve the service and should not fear losing their right to access to the service in any way. Complaints, comments, suggestions, and inquiries can be made by telephone, mail, or e-mail as indicated below:

## **Service à la clientèle**

### **Société de transport de Sherbrooke (STS)**

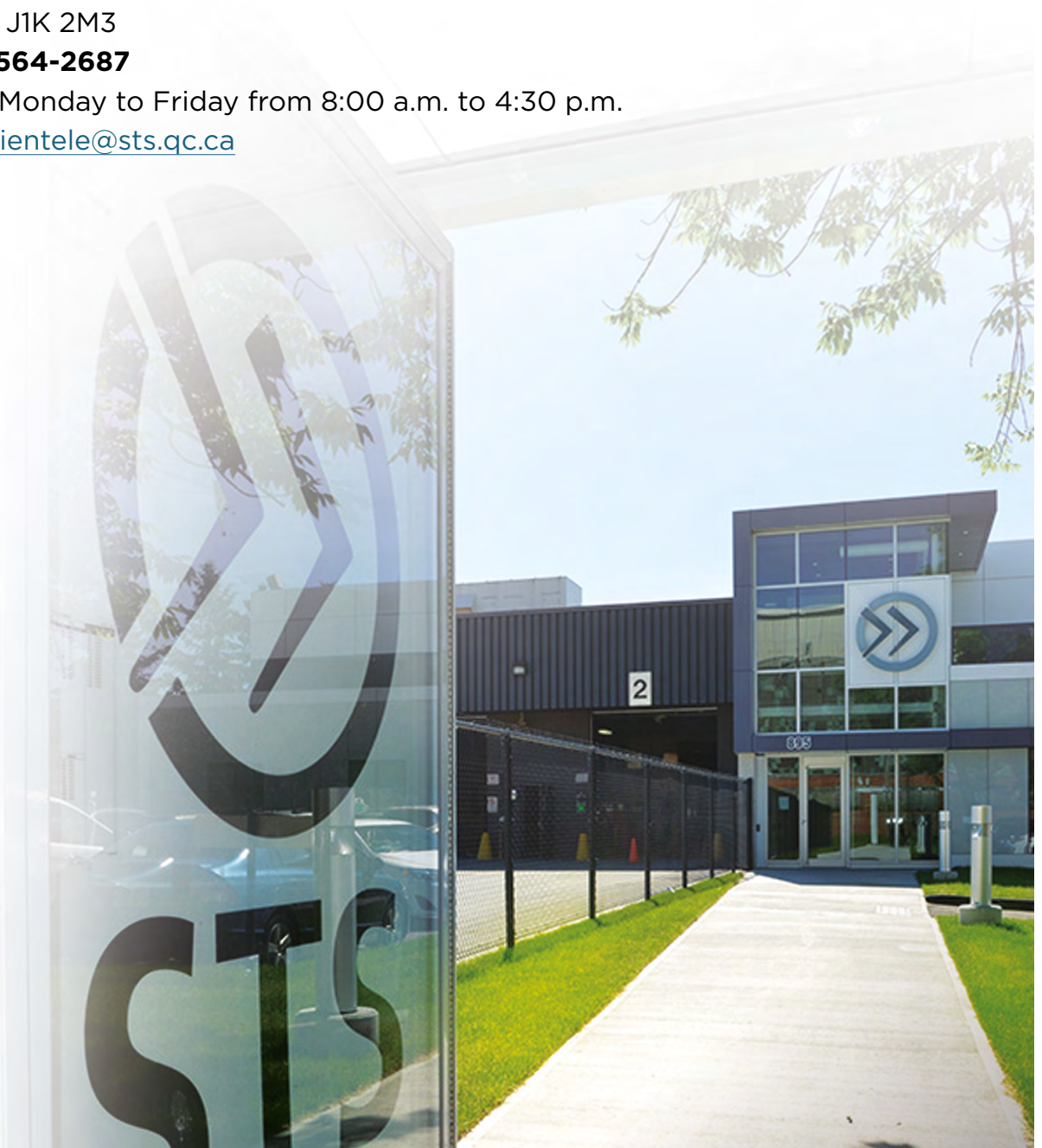
895 Cabana Street

Sherbrooke, QC J1K 2M3

Telephone: **819-564-2687**

Business hours: Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

E-mail [service.clientele@sts.qc.ca](mailto:service.clientele@sts.qc.ca)







# LIST OF STS OUTLETS

You can purchase the various STS tickets at the following locations.

## FLEURIMONT BOROUGH

Accommodation Galvin	2785 Galvin Road	
Dépanneur Bowen	1008 Bowen Street South	
Dépan-Escompte Couche-Tard	825, rue des Quatre-Saisons	
Pharmaprix Quatre-Saisons	930 13 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North	
Dépan-Escompte Couche-Tard	1838 Galt Street East	
Dépanneur Paquette	67 Bowen Street South	
Pharmacie Uniprix	610 King Street East	

## DES NATIONS BOROUGH

Dépanneur Place du Golf	735, rue Paul-Desruisseaux	
Dépan-Escompte Couche-Tard	705, boul. Jacques-Cartier Nord	
Dépan-Escompte Couche-Tard	2525 King Street West	
Marché Prospect enr.	1124 Prospect Street	
Pharmaprix Carrefour de l'Estrie	3050 Portland Blvd.	
Pharmaprix Sophie Deschênes	1811 King Street West	
Coop. U. de S.	2500 University Blvd.	
Dépanneur André Guo	1981 André Street	
Dépan-Escompte Couche-Tard	2558 Galt Street West	
Épicerie G. Lemieux enr.	890 McManamy Street	
Limocar	60 King Street West	
Pharmacie Jean Coutu	1363 Belvedere Street South	
Pharmaprix Place Belvédère	420 Belvedere Street South	

## BROMPTON-ROCK FOREST-SAINT-ÉLIE-DEAUVILLE BOROUGH

Dépanneur Brompton	245 Laval Street	
Dépan-Escompte Couche-Tard	4475 Bourque Blvd.	

## LENNOXVILLE BOROUGH

Accommodation Place Oxford inc.	3085 College Street	
Champlain Lennoxville Bookstore	2580 College Street	
Doolittle's Co-op	2600 College Street	



Société de transport  
de Sherbrooke

895 Cabana Street  
Sherbrooke, QC J1K 2M3  
819-564-2687

[sts.qc.ca](http://sts.qc.ca)

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