

DISABILITY & AGING RIGHTS



DEVELOPED BY EQUIP FOR EQUALITY UNDER A GRANT PROVIDED BY THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT ON AGING



TRANSPORTATION

Shuttle Services and People with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that protects the rights of people with disabilities, including older adults with physical, sensory, mental and cognitive impairments, when using shuttle services, including hotel, airport parking and theme park shuttles.

ADA requirements aren't exactly the same for all types of shuttle service transportation.

Service requirements

Service requirements that apply to all shuttle service:

- Cannot refuse to serve a person with a disability
- Cannot charge higher fares or fees for carrying people with disabilities and their equipment than are charged to other people
- Must provide assistance with the stowing of mobility devices, if needed (wheelchairs, walkers, etc.)
- Must allow service animals to ride with passengers with disabilities

Shuttle drivers do not have to help with transfers, lifting, or other types of personal assistance.

Accessible vehicles

An accessible vehicle has a lift or a ramp, a securement system for wheelchairs and other mobility devices, and a seatbelt and shoulder harness for the passenger who uses a mobility device. There must be enough room inside the vehicle to allow the passenger to reach the securement location. When the mobility device is secured, it shouldn't move more than 2 inches in any direction, under normal conditions. Vehicles 22 feet or longer must have at least two wheelchair securement locations.

Do shuttle services have to provide a ride in an accessible vehicle?

Yes. When a person asks for an accessible vehicle, the shuttle service company must provide a ride in an accessible vehicle. They may contract with a different company to provide the service.

Are shuttle services required to own any accessible vehicles?

It depends. If a private company that provides shuttle service buys new vehicles, it must buy accessible vehicles, unless the company is already providing "equivalent service" to people with disabilities. However, airport shuttle services that are controlled or operated by a public agency are required to purchase accessible vehicles, even if the services have been contracted to a private company.

To figure out if a private shuttle company is providing "equivalent service" to passengers with disabilities who need an accessible vehicle, you need to look at its system as a whole. All aspects of the accessible service must be the same as the service provided for someone who doesn't need an accessible vehicle: response time, fares, service areas, hours and days of service, availability of service, and reservations.

Shuttle companies have to keep accessible features like ramps and securement systems in good working condition and fix them quickly when they are not working or damaged.

Training

All personnel involved in providing shuttle service must be "trained to proficiency" in serving passengers with disabilities, in relation to their duties. For example, this means that shuttle drivers must be trained in:

- How to use and maintain accessibility features and equipment in accessible vehicles
- Proper securement of mobility devices
- Sensitive and appropriate interaction with passengers with disabilities
- Understanding the requirements of the ADA



What can you do if you have a disability-related problem with shuttle service?

First, and most important, let the company know about any problems. If you can, make your complaint in writing (email or letter). Give them as much information as possible (description of what happened, date, time, location, etc.). Keep a copy for your records.

For problems with public transportation services: You can file a complaint with the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the incident of discrimination, although the deadline may be extended for good cause. You can fill out the FTA's Complaint Form or send a letter to: **Director, FTA Office of Civil Rights, East Building – 5th Floor, TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20590.** Include as many details as possible.

The FTA's ADA website is www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12325.html, and the FTA ADA complaint form is at www.fta.dot.gov/civilrights/12875_14816.html. You may also leave a message at FTA's ADA Assistance Line, **1-888-446-4511**, through the Federal Information Relay Service, **1-800-877-8339**, or by email at: FTA.ADAAssistance@dot.gov.

For problems with private transportation services: You can file an ADA complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice ADA Information Line: **1-800-514-0301** or **1-800-514-0383** (TTY).

www.ada.gov/filing_complaint.htm
ADA.complaint@usdoj.gov
U.S. Department of Justice,
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Civil Rights
Division, Disability Rights Section –
1425 NYAV, Washington, DC 20530

You can also file a complaint with the Illinois Department of Human Rights, which has offices in Chicago, Springfield and Marion. Submit a completed Public Accommodations Complainant Information Sheet in person or by mail. A charge of discrimination must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

www2.illinois.gov/dhr/FilingCharge/Pages/Public_Accommodations.aspx
1-312-814-6200 or **1-866-740-3953** (TTY)
 Chicago office: **100 W. Randolph St.,**
10th Floor, Intake Unit, Chicago, IL 60601

Another option is to file a complaint with the Illinois Attorney General's Disability Rights Bureau. Send a letter to: **Office of the Attorney General, Chicago Disability Rights Bureau, James R. Thompson Center, 11th Floor, 100 W. Randolph St., Chicago, IL 60601.** Include as many details as possible.

www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights/disabilityrights.html
1-312-814-5684 or **1-800-964-3013** (TTY)

For more information about this and other topics, contact Equip for Equality at **1-800-537-2632** or visit www.EquipForEquality.org.

Additional helpful resources and links

Easter Seals Project ACTION is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation to promote access to transportation for people with disabilities by providing training, technical assistance, research, outreach and communication.

1-800-659-6428

Motorcoach Services Section:

www.projectaction.org/Resources

Publications/MotorcoachServices.aspx

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund provides advocacy for and training about accessible transportation.

1-510-644-2555

1-510-841-8645 (Fax/TTY)

info@dredf.org

www.dredf.org/public-policy/transportation

U.S. Access Board issues ADA standards for transportation facilities and vehicles:

www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/transportation

Community Transportation Association of America is a national association of organizations and people that provides programs and services to remove barriers and improve mobility for all people, particularly senior citizens and people with disabilities.

1341 G St. NW, 10th Floor

Washington, DC 20005

1-800-891-0590

www.ctaa.org

The National Center on Senior Transportation strives to increase transportation options for older adults to support their ability to live independently in their homes and communities throughout the United States.

1-866-528-6278

ncst@easterseals.com

www.seniortransportation.net ■



Equip for Equality

20 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60602

www.equipforequality.org

1-800-537-2632

1-800-610-2779 (TTY)

Illinois Department on Aging

One Natural Resources Way
Suite 100
Springfield, IL 62702-1271

Senior HelpLine:

1-800-252-8966

1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

www.illinois.gov/aging

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel like you have been discriminated against, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY).