

ADA COMPLIANCE - AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a civil rights law. The purpose of this law is to see that all individuals have equal access to, and can enjoy the same opportunities regardless of their disability.

A large part of this Act covers transportation services provided by public entities. Individuals with disabilities cannot be denied the opportunity to use public transportation or be discriminated against because of their disability, if they are capable to use the system. Under this Act public entities may not discriminate against persons with disabilities.

Not only are there physical barriers, but there are also invisible barriers. One invisible barrier is the negative attitude many people have toward disabled persons. Sometimes this is out of fear or ignorance about a certain disability. Lavaca County R-Transit drivers are trained to understand disabilities and can properly assist those who need help.

A disabled passenger is a person like all other passenger. They have feelings, thoughts, and desires. A passenger with a disability will be treated like all other passengers.

PROCEDURES FOR SERVING PASSENGERS WITH DISABILITIES

It is the policy of Lavaca County R-Transit that passengers with disabilities will be served according to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) so they will not be discriminated against and may fully benefit from the services provided by LCRT to the extent that persons without disabilities benefit.

Persons with Limited Mobility

Persons with limited mobility include those individuals who have difficulty walking and may or may not include persons with mobility aids, such as walkers and canes. The largest group of these persons will include the frail elderly. When providing transit service to persons with limited mobility, the following guidelines should be followed:

Be prepared for any eventuality. The driver must stand at the passenger door as passengers board and depart the vehicle.

The driver should always ask if the passenger needs assistance, typically offering an arm for assistance. Do not touch the passenger unless permission is granted.

The driver should walk next to the passenger in the event the passenger loses his or her balance.

Riders should never assist the driver in operating lift equipment.

TRANSPORTING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Lift and Securement Use

Lavaca County R-Transit will transport on its lift-equipped vehicles all three and four-wheeled wheelchairs that do not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied. When a driver encounters wheelchairs that exceed the weight or dimensions, he or she should call the dispatch office to receive instructions. All wheelchairs must be secured during transport. Persons whose wheelchairs cannot be properly secured will be denied service. Persons who do not use a wheelchair but who cannot use the steps will be accommodated on the lift. Drivers will assist persons requiring the use of the lift and securing device as necessary.

Accommodating Other Mobility Aids and Life Support Equipment

Specially trained service animals, including dogs used by persons with vision or hearing impairments and animals that provide aid to persons with mobility impairments, will be permitted to travel with their masters. Persons who use life support equipment will be permitted with this equipment if it does not violate rules concerning the transportation of hazardous materials. Respirators and portable oxygen supplies shall generally be permitted.

Escort Policies and Refusing Services

Persons requiring the assistance of a personal care attendant (PCA) may travel with their PCA at no additional charge if first certified with the transit agency. Service will only be refused for a rider engaging in "violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct."