Updated National RTAP Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Toolkit Overview

June 30, 2020, 2:00 PM ET

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
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About the ADA Toolkit

• Developed in 2014 for rural and tribal transit managers.
• Focuses on ADA-related information for public bus systems and demand response services in rural areas.
• Strove to provide “plain language” explanations of complex regulatory language - 49 CFR Parts 37 and 38.
• Provides ideas for good practices and links to regulations, guidance, and more information.
• Updated and expanded in 2020.
• This toolkit provides technical assistance info, not legal advice.
Accessing the Toolkit

From the home page (www.nationalrtap.org), click on Toolkit, then ADA Toolkit

Alternately, click on this hyperlink: https://www.nationalrtap.org/Toolkits/ADA-Toolkit/
Toolkit Sections

- Welcome
- Key Regulations, Standards, and Guidance
- Service Type Requirements
  - General Requirements Common to All Service Types
  - Fixed Route Bus Requirements
  - Demand Response Requirements
  - Route Deviation Requirements
  - ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements
Toolkit Sections

- Vehicle and Facility Accessibility
- Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices
- Service Animals
- Passenger Assistance and Customer Service
- Rider Information
- Public Meetings and Outreach
- Funding Considerations
- Questions and Answers
Toolkit Sections

- New Developments
  - Updated
- Glossary
- Sample Policy Templates
  - Fixed Route Bus Service with ADA Complementary Paratransit Sample Policy
  - Demand Response Service Sample Policy
  - Route Deviation Service Sample Policy
  - Commingled Fixed Route and Paratransit Service Sample Policy
Welcome Section

• Link to download PDF – June 2020 edition

• Table of Contents

• Acknowledgments
Key Regulations, Standards, and Guidance

- Regulations – CFRs
  - Table with links to 49 CFR Part 37, 38 and more
- U.S. DOT Regulatory Standards
  - Links to ADA Standards for Transportation Facilities and Vehicles
- Guidance and Technical Assistance
  - FTA ADA Circular C 4710.1, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Guidance
  - Additional U.S. DOT Guidance
  - Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) Topic Guides on ADA Transportation
  - Guidance on Website Accessibility
Service Type Requirements

- General Requirements Common to All Service Types
- Requirements for Specific Service Types
  - Fixed Route Bus Requirements
  - Demand Response Requirements
  - Route Deviation Requirements
  - ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements
Service Types Mapped to Sample Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Sample Policy Template</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Route Bus</td>
<td>• Fixed Route Bus Service with ADA Complementary Paratransit Sample Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADA Complementary Paratransit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demand Response</td>
<td>• Demand Response Service Sample Policy</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Commingled Service</td>
<td>• Commingled Service Sample Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Requirements Common to ALL Service Types

- Non-Discrimination Requirements - Overarching
  - U.S. DOT Regulatory Definition of “Wheelchair”
  - Reasonable Modifications
- Provision of Service Requirements
  - Maintenance and Use of Accessible Features
  - Other Service Requirements
- Reasonable Modification of Policies and Practices
- Training Requirements
- Complaint Process Requirements
Fixed Route Bus

• Defining fixed route service - per 49 CFR Part 37

• Reminder to review General Requirements for All Services – common to each “service type” section

• Accessible Vehicles
  • Vehicles of Historic Character

• Maintenance of Accessibility Equipment

• Inoperative Lift or Ramp on a Fixed Route Vehicle

• Passenger Assistance and Use of Accessibility Equipment
• Route Identification
• Stop Announcements
• Access to Priority Seating, Securement Areas
• ADA Complementary Paratransit
• Accessibility of Bus Stops and Surrounding Pedestrian Environment
• Rider Information and Travel Training
• Sample ADA policy template – includes Fixed Route and ADA Complementary Paratransit
ADA Complementary Paratransit

- Subsections in this section:
  - Origin-to-Destination Service
  - Service Criteria
  - Prohibited Capacity Constraints
  - Eligibility
  - Other ADA Complementary Paratransit Operational Requirements and Considerations
  - Planning Paratransit Service and Ongoing Consultation with People with Disabilities
  - Facilitating Use of Fixed Route Service when Possible

NEW

Expanded

National RTAP
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ADA Complementary Paratransit

- **Origin-to-Destination Service**
  - “…complementary paratransit service…shall be origin-to-destination service.” (§ 37.129)

- **What does that mean?** Added discussion with examples to the toolkit, based on U.S. DOT guidance
  - Transit agency policy can be curb-to-curb or door-to-door
  - If curb-to-curb, need to provide door-to-door service when required by a rider’s disability.
  - Example: Help an ambulatory rider with mobility limitation with steps to door.
• Service Criteria

 Ada's six service criteria frame provision of ADA paratransit.

 #2 Response Time: Sometimes misapplied as “24 hours in advance.” Trips can be booked on a next-day basis.

 #6 No Capacity Constraints: examples of operational patterns and practices that indicate capacity constraints

 1. Operate in the same service area as the fixed route system: 3/4-mile corridor on either side of bus routes and around rail stations.
 2. Have a comparable response time as fixed route: accommodate trip requests for a particular day during normal business hours on previous day (i.e., next-day service).
 3. Have comparable fares to fixed route: fares no more than twice the base, non-discounted adult fare for fixed route service.
 4. Meet requests for any trip purpose: no trip purpose restrictions or priorities.
 5. Operate during the same days and hours as the fixed route service.
 6. Operate without capacity constraints: no waiting lists, trip caps, or patterns and practices of substantial number of trip denials, untimely pick-ups or excessively long trips.
• Eligibility Certification – expanded discussion of

• 3 Categories of Eligibility
  - Cannot navigate without assistance (category 1). Example: Rider has cognitive disability.
  - Requires accessible vehicle but not available (category 2). Example: Fixed
  - Unable to reach transit stop (category 3). Example: Rider uses wheelchair but no curb ramps.

• Types of Eligibility Granted to Riders
  - Unconditional: can make all trips on ADA paratransit.
  - Conditional: can use fixed route for some trips or some of the time.
  - Temporary: can use ADA paratransit for a defined length of time.
• Service to Visitors
  • ADA complementary paratransit to be provided to visitors on the “same basis” as to eligible riders in a jurisdiction
    - Accept paratransit ID from the visitor’s home jurisdiction, or other documentation of disability/eligibility
    - Provide service for any combination of 21 days over a 365-day period
    - FTA has permitted this an accommodation to the industry for practicality
  • FTA expects the process of entering visitors into its records to be simple
    - Completed same day, or not more than one day later
• Other Considerations

  • Geographic Coverage and Rural Road Conditions

  • Poor road conditions within the required ADA service area: what if unsafe?

  • Direct threat applies to the health or safety of others

  • A transit agency can decide for itself if weather conditions prevent safe operation, but cannot decide to operate (but refuse service) to someone because the agency believes that person would not be safe. That is for the individual to determine.
ADA Complementary Paratransit (continued)

- **Trip Negotiation**
  - Can schedule a trip within one hour before or after requested time. Must account for rider’s practical travel considerations.

- **No-Shows**
  - Allowed to establish process to suspend riders with pattern and practice of no-shows.
  - Added discussion of recommendations from FTA Circular.

- **Suspensions**
  - Must notify rider before; rider can appeal.
  - Only for reasonable time period. Not longer than 30 days.
  - Only for pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips.
• Sample ADA paratransit policy

• The toolkit includes a sample template for fixed route and ADA paratransit that a transit agency can use to customize to reflect the agency’s local policies.

• Template includes the components needed for compliance, for example:
  - Eligibility determination process
  - Service characteristics and operating policies (e.g., 6 service criteria)
  - Origin to destination service
  - No-show policy
Demand Response

- What is Demand Response Service?
- General Requirements reminder
- Demand Response Specific Requirements
  - Vehicles Used in Demand Response Service
  - Equivalent Service Standards
  - Contracting Service from Taxi Providers and Transportation Network Companies
- Sample Demand Response ADA Policy template
Route Deviation

• Characteristics of Route Deviation Service
• General Requirements reminder
• Route Deviation Service for the General Public
  • Equivalent Service Standards
  • Vehicle Accessibility
  • Ensuring Nondiscrimination in Route Deviations

• Sample ADA Policy Template
  • Route Deviation for the General Public
Commingled Service

• Operating fixed route and paratransit aboard the same vehicle.
  • All paratransit eligibility requirements apply.
  • All paratransit service requirements apply.
  • Eligible riders reserve paratransit trips in advance.
  • Fixed route vehicle deviates from route up to ¾-mile to pick up/discharge eligible paratransit riders.

• Extremely difficult to operate!
  • Must maintain reliable fixed route service while meeting all paratransit service requirements for eligible riders.
Vehicle and Facility Accessibility

- U.S. Access Board
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- Transportation Vehicles
  - Summary of the Accessibility Specifications for Buses and Vans
  - Additional Mobility Device Accessibility Considerations
  - Vehicle Step Height Considerations
- Transportation Facilities
  - Summary of the Accessibility Specifications for Transportation Facilities
  - Bus Stop Inventory and Improvement Planning
  - Signage and Wayfinding for People with Vision Disabilities
- Equivalent Facilitation

**Renamed & Expanded**

**Expanded**

**NEW**
Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices

• Types of Mobility Devices

NEW

• Ensuring Transit Vehicles and Facilities Can Physically Accommodate Riders Using Mobility Devices
  • Accessible Vehicles
  • Accessible Facilities
  • Ensuring Accessibility Features Work

Renamed & Expanded
Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices (continued)

- Operating Policies on Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices
  - Using Accessibility Features
  - Deploying Lift at Any Stop
  - Adequate Time to Board
  - Allowing Standees on Lifts/Ramps
  - Boarding Direction
  - Pushing Manual Wheelchair onto Lift or Ramp
  - Accommodating Riders Who Use Wheelchairs if the Lift and Vehicle Can Physically Accommodate Them
  - Accommodating Bariatric Riders Who Use Mobility Devices
Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices (continued)

- Operating Policies on Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices (continued)
  - Access to Securement Area
  - Use of Securement Devices
  - Use of Seat Belts and Shoulder Harnesses
  - Requesting that Riders Transfer to a Seat
  - Strollers as Mobility Devices
  - Other Considerations for Assisting Riders Who Use Mobility Devices
Service Animals

• Definition of a Service Animal (U.S. DOT definition differs from U.S. Dept. of Justice)

• Determining Whether or Not an Animal is a Service Animal

• Other Considerations about Accommodating Service Animals

• Case Study: Lane Transit District’s “Paw Print Endorsement” Approach

• Additional Resources on Service Animals

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Passenger Assistance and Customer Service

• Personnel Training Requirements
• Customer Service Guidelines
• General Guidelines for All Customers
• Communication Tips – Serving Customers …
  • Who are Deaf or hard of hearing
  • With Vision Disabilities
  • Who Use Wheelchairs
  • Who Use Service Animals
  • With Intellectual Disabilities
  • With Psychiatric Disabilities

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Rider Information

• Federal Requirements on Information Accessibility
• Federal Requirements and Standards for Information and Communication Technology
• Accessible Formats
• Information at Transit Facilities and on Transit Vehicles
Public Meetings and Outreach

- Ongoing Public Participation – Toolkit provides suggestions
  - Transit agencies have public participation requirements beyond ADA
  - Transit agencies that provide ADA paratransit have requirements for engaging individuals with disabilities
  - Important to engage people with disabilities on an ongoing basis (e.g., through a citizen advisory committee – examples provided)

- Hosting Accessible Meetings - Recommended practices
  - Meeting location
  - Room set-up
  - Meeting materials / accessible presentation
Funding Considerations

• FTA Funding that Can Support ADA-Related Expenses
  • Section 5311—Formula Grants for Rural Areas
  • Section 5310—Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
  • Section 5339 - Bus and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program
  • Other FTA Funding Programs that Can Be Used in Rural Areas
  • FTA Funding and ADA Requirements
    “standing in the shoes”

• Coordination with Other Sources of Transportation Support for People with Disabilities

NEW

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Questions and Answers

• Drop-down Q&A grouped by topic:
  • General Questions
  • Fixed Route Bus Service
  • ADA Complementary Paratransit
  • Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices
  • Service Animals
  • Funding
  • Emergency Management

• Technical assistance, NOT legal advice!
New Developments

• New and Emerging Transportation Modes
• New and Emerging Technologies
  • Automated and Connected Vehicles
  • Wheelchair Charging Stations
• Recent Changes to ADA-Related Federal Rules and Standards
  • Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Final Standards and Guidelines
• Does not yet address COVID-19 - will be addressed in a forthcoming update to this toolkit
And finally...

- Glossary
- Sample Policy Templates
  - Fixed Route with Paratransit
  - Demand Response
  - Route Deviation
  - Commingled Service
Thank you!

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Find contact information for FTA Regional Civil Rights Officers through: https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/regional-offices/regional-offices

National RTAP is a program of the Federal Transit Administration administered by the Neponset Valley TMA.