

Policies regarding ADA Passenger combined weight exceeds lift capacity.

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The Question: What do you do if your ADA passenger's combined weight (wheelchair and person) exceed lift capacity?

Columbia County says...We have not had this happen yet but are wondering how you actually know if they are exceeding the lift capacity. We feel that the lifts should have some sort of digital scale to where you can see what the total combined weight is. It wouldn't be revealing the person's weight since it would be the combined weight. But apparently that is not possible

Everett Transit says...If we know up front that a customer and their mobility aid weighs more than 600+, I let them know through a phone call, we cannot transport them unless they can board separately from their mobility aid. I let them know the requirement of the ADA law and our limitations. If they indicate on their application that their weight is getting close to 600+, I call them and explain that they are getting close to the maximum wt. we can transport. We may not always know if someone is over 600 lb., so if we can get them on the lift and into the van, we will transport them. This is an increasing problem for many systems - fixed route and para-transit.

Grays Harbor Transit says....If the chair and passenger exceed lift limits due to liability we would probably refuse transportation.

Intercity Transit says...In this case, the ADA does not require that they be transported. The same rule applies to wheelchairs that are bigger than the definition of a "common wheelchair" which is 30" by 48", and a combined weight of 600 pounds occupied. We always try to load the person separately, if they are able to do so, and our driver can disconnect the clutch to push the chair. We've had this situation a couple of times over the past 2 years. In both cases, the individuals were able to lose weight, and we were able to provide transportation for them again. Let me know if you have any questions!

Link Transit says... Service is denied when the combined weight of guest and mobility device exceeds 600 pounds regardless of lift capacity. Per ADA regs we have no obligation to transport.

Mason Transit says...Mason Transit has general purpose DAR. So far, we've only been faced with over width chairs, not overweight passenger/chair combinations. Our strategy would be to find a solution to transport – work with the rider, their caregivers – to find an alternate chair or determine if the person can be loaded independent of the chair.

Pullman Transit says...We do not have a policy on this. We will try to load the passenger, if the lift is unable to get them into the van, they do not get the ride.

Spokane Transit says... Our Para transit lift capacity limit is 800 pounds. If a customer's weight exceeds this (including the chair) we ask if they can transfer out of the chair to board separately with the aid of a PCA. If not then we exclude them from service until just time they meet the maximum weight restrictions to safely board. It has occurred only a couple of times and the customers worked with us very well. We work each case on a very individualized basis and with heightened sensitivity. One customer actually committed to a weight loss program just so he could continue to ride on public transportation. He was successful and it ended up be a win/win solution!

Twin Transit says...We have had this situation several times, resulting in a bent or broken lift. We contact the passenger, explain about our lift capacity and the ADA common wheelchair dimensions that our buses are built to handle, and then discontinue service. We try to give them referrals to other services if available and encourage them to contact us again if/when they get a smaller, lighter chair, or lose weight or both.

Valley Transit says...We have never had this problem since our lifts are rated at 800 lbs plus. We did have a passenger that exceeded the ADA weight limits, but they were under the rating of our lifts so we did transport them. If we did have a passenger that exceeded the lift rating I would think we would not be able to transport them.

Whatcom Transit says...We do our best to continue providing service, as long as vehicles and equipment can operate safely. The wheelchair lifts on our para transit buses are rated to 800 lbs. When we have a rider whose combined weight approaches or exceeds the 800 lbs., lift operation usually begins to deteriorate. Sometimes, depending on the exact layout at specific locations, other aspects of safe boarding can become compromised as well, i.e. the bus tips unsafely, or there's extra difficulty moving from the ground surface to the lift platform.

In this kind of situation, we try to assess the matter directly, problem-solve if we can, and talk frankly with the rider about whatever options might be available. For example, some riders are able to get out of their wheelchair to board, and then their mobility device can be put on the bus separately. We have had to decline service to a few people over the years who have become too heavy to transport with any of our equipment. We have also had to find a way to weigh one or two riders.

Yakima Transit says...We've never had that problem yet, but when we have problems with the wheel chair lifts we have an American van that's W/C accessible we send out to pick up the passenger. As our fleet gets older we have noticed how underpowered some of the lifts have gotten, but so far we haven't had to have someone verify the weight of their chair with them in it.