

## Policies regarding Lift Capacity

Information compiled August 7, 2007

**The Question:** If a person and their equipment weighs over your lift's capacity (in our case 600 pounds), do you give the person the option of loading their equipment and themselves separately (assuming they can do so), or do you deny them a ride?

**CUBS** says... We give them the option of loading separately if they are able. If they are not able to transfer out of a heavy (electric) chair, we often ask if they can ride in a manual chair for their trip instead. They usually do this. This usually solves the weight issue.

**Everett Transit** says... I do not believe this issue has come up at ET. I suspect however, that if it did we would do the following: If the person could board the bus independent of the w/c and the w/c is non-electric, our operator would assist in loading. If the person could board the bus independent of the w/c and the w/c is electric, we would not load the w/c (the owner of an electric w/c must control the w/c or have a helper with them).

**Grays Harbor Transit** says... To my knowledge we have never run into this scenario. All of our wheelchair lifts have a capacity of 800lbs; so I don't see how they could be loaded separately safely. We would probably deny service.

**Intercity Transit** says... We have one person who exceeds our lift capacity when she is in her wheelchair. We allow her to load separately, because the motor on her wheelchair is easily disconnected by the driver. She has a hard time standing, but is able to do so for the time it takes to board using the lift, then move to a seat. She's the only person we've had make the request, and I believe the only one of our clients able to do this. Let me know if I can help further!

**Jefferson Transit** says... We have simply denied that passenger the ride. The only time we've actually done this was when we suspected a paratransit passenger was over the capacity. We delivered a letter of suspension until actual weight could be determined. The passenger refused to verify the weight for a long period of time, and came back to us after losing weight to be reinstated. In this particular case, the passenger was not able to ride the lift separately.

**Kitsap Transit** says... We deny rides only after all other options have been explored. So yes, we allow them to load separately if that will solve the customer's transportation needs.

**Mason Transit** says... An agency will have to accept the responsibility of any accidents that could happen in the event of overloading a lift's capacity. In most cases when a person and their

equipment exceed 600 pounds, the option of separating them from their equipment to board a bus would be rare. When setting up a client file, the question of, do you have any special needs or equipment? (yes) Is it an extra wide wheel chair? (yes) Approximately how much do you and your equipment weigh? (600 lbs) Do you have another option? (no) Is there anyone that we can contact to help you and us lessen the weight issue to meet our lifts capacity? (hopefully yes) This is another of the ongoing issues between the mobility device industry and public transit providers.

If only the public transit vehicle manufactures would expand into the mobility device industry and build compatible equipment.....

**Pacific Transit** says... We deny them the ride.

**Skagit Transit** says... In our paratransit service we will give the person the option to load their equipment and themselves separately; however, they may require the assistance of a PCA to accomplish this. On Fixed Route, it is very unlikely that we would be able to offer the option to load separately; however, if the individual had assistance from a PCA and was able to load/unload without a serious disruption to the service, we may accommodate this when time permits. Note: We don't allow our drivers to operate the person's mobility equipment for them; and therefore, the person may need the assistance of a PCA or companion to operate their wheelchair to get it off of the lift.

**Twin Transit** says... We give them the option of loading the equipment separately. So far, however, no one exceeding our lift capacity has been able to do so and they have been refused service.

**Whatcom Transit** says... We have the same weight capacity for our lifts as you do (600 pounds). On a Specialized bus If the passenger and their chair weigh over 600 pounds and they are able to walk onto the lift and stand, we give them the option of boarding the bus without their chair and then the Operator puts the chair in neutral and pushes it onto the lift and lifts it into the bus. This is only done on a case by case situation and the Operator will check with our Dispatch first to get permission. Most of our lifts are different on our Fixed Route buses and so we do not offer this service on the Fixed Route side.  
I hope this helps.

**Yakima Transit** says... I am guessing this is for DAR vehicles, but if it's for buses: Deny the ride. How are they going to get the wheelchair on the bus? If they get out of their chair, than the driver maybe the one that has to load the wheelchair onto the bus and than the driver or the company could be liable for any damages that could happen to the chair. What if the passenger falls down while waiting for the ramp or on the ramp? Having said all that, we did have an incident where we

did separate a lady from her chair to load on the bus, but she had family members with her that helped her and the wheelchair onto the bus. Thank goodness for low floor buses.