

## Policies regarding Paratransit Site Assessment

Information compiled May 26, 2006

**The Question:** When conducting a site assessment for a new paratransit pickup, what kinds of things does the evaluator look for to determine if the location is a safe, accessible location? If you have a form, checklist, or other documentation used to evaluate, please include the form in your reply.

**Ben Franklin Transit** says... BFT does not do a site assessment on each approved ADA applicant for paratransit service. Sometimes we respond prior to initiating service due to comments or questions from the applicant that would lead us to believe there may be a problem with either the size of the chair/occupant or the location of the resident. Many times the initial feedback from drivers is what triggers a visit by one of the supervisors who then may publish a rider alert indicating any special instructions associated with that particular customer. We don't have an evaluation form to evaluate a particular site but have thought it might be a good idea. In an ideal world, we would have a supervisory visit to every new customer but we just don't have sufficient staff and time to do that. Please feel free to contact me if you have additional questions.

**Everett Transit** says... We do not have a pro active or formal access check. When I review the applications, I look for clues for access issues - such as the number of steps at an address, or a request for an alley pick up. If we get a question from a driver, or passenger, we will send out the trainer or the safety rep to determine safe access. Home made ramps are something we will take a close look at. We try to follow the ADA guidelines for ramps. Some of the things we look for are:

- \*1 foot in length for every inch of height.
- \*A 1" tall edge along the sides of the ramp to prevent the wheelchair from going off the edge.
- \*A Non-skid surface.
- \*Made of solid material, with no sag to it. (No old doors, or wood without support underneath.)
- \*No side to side movement when someone is on it.
- \*Must be solidly attached to building/house/porch, etc.

If no ramp, we check for the number of steps.

We don't have any set criteria. We evaluate the location within a need to insure Operator and customer safety. Once we determine that there is a real safety concern, we consult ADA

guidelines to see if there are legal reasons that would disallow a decision to place restrictions on the customer's request for accommodation.

Once you have gathered the info from other agencies, can you share the responses with all of us? We would be interested a more formal process.

**Grays Harbor Transit** says... We do not have a form we use, the supervisor checks the ramp and makes sure the bus can access the area and deploy a lift without causing damage to the bus. If it is a rural area with a driveway there must be an area to turn the bus around.

**Intercity Transit** says... We have a form that I can get from Jane Bohannon, our travel trainer, and send to you later. It's in need of updating, though.

Typically, Jane does most barrier assessments for us, but sometimes our ADA Coordinator, Jerry Howell, does some. Depending on an individual location, both report they check the same things:

- Sidewalks with curb cuts

- Nearest intersection accessibility (audio signals, crosswalks, number of lanes to cross and time allowed for crossing, whether or not the road is a major arterial, etc.)

- Ramps to entry

- Incline/decline (but we don't determine degree unless it's readily available)

- Number of steps

- Entry issues such as automatic doors, size of the "lip" on doorway entry (some are too high for a manual wheelchair to easily roll over)

- Vehicle accessibility, such as room to deploy lift near the door of the address, foliage that may damage the van, room to turn the vehicle (or how safe it is to back out, if needed and it's an option), availability of disabled parking

- The distance required to escort passenger to/from the door

- Distance from the address to the nearest bus stop

We often take pictures of locations, to help drivers find pick up and drop off spots that are new, are difficult to find, or that have some unusual attributes. As soon as Jane gets back and sends me the (old) form, I'll send it to you. Sorry again for the delay in responding!

**Island Transit** says... We visit the applicant personally and interview them. We take their picture then if the area is unusual we take a picture of their area. If the driveway is covered with low hanging branches, we ask them to have them cut before we can bring a bus down their drive. If their ramp is dangerous we ask them to have it fixed. If they need help getting from their house to the bus we ask them to have someone there to help them. [Click here](#) to view our form.

**Jefferson Transit** says...We evaluate new pick-up sites. Basically we use the attached standards, which we modified from the Port Townsend Fire Department standards. Of course,

we make concessions based on situation, but we can always fall back on these if we have to. [Click here](#) to view Road and Driveway Standards.

**Kitsap Transit** says... Yes we do have a site survey form that I can send. It is attached. We also ask a series of questions on the eligibility application and I will include those also. Hope this helps. You are welcome to contact me directly if you have other questions or need further information. [Click here](#) for Section D. [Click here](#) for site survey form.

**Link Transit** says... We are mainly investigating liability issues or on site conditions that could potentially jeopardize the safety of the guest, driver or vehicle; looking for a safe boarding/alighting location; safe ravel way between residence and vehicle; and, number of stair steps to be negotiated, particularly if the guest uses a wheel chair as a mobility aid as we have limitations of what extent the driver is expected to assist a wheel chair up stairs. We do not use a formal checklist as our Supervisors conduct the on site evaluation and are very familiar with liability and safety issues.

**Mason Transit** says... [Click here](#) to view the form we use for our first time paratransit riders. We look to make sure the site is marked; the access is safe to enter and exit, the road has clearance for our buses and which buses may not be able to access the address; is there a good and safe place to turn the bus around; how far from the residence will the bus have to park to safely load the passenger; special needs of the passenger and are there barriers that prohibit our drivers from safely assisting the passenger to the bus (example is there a ramp for a passengers wheelchair or no more than on step); are there loose animals and can they be contained when the bus is there.

**Pierce Transit** says... Attached are our guidelines and forms to perform a site investigation. [Click here](#) to view site investigation request. [Click here](#) to view site investigation guidelines.

**Twin Transit** says... Our site assessment is fairly informal and we do not use a checklist. We basically look for 3 things:

- 1) Site must be within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of our fixed routes
- 2) Site is safely accessed. This includes relatively level boarding location, safe entrance and egress.
- 3) Site is accessible by roads adequate for bus traffic (e.g. roads leading to the site must be paved, not too narrow, etc.)

We assess each site on a case by case basis using the above general guidelines.

**Valley Transit** says... This is an issue that has come up for us also. Any information from other WSTIP members would be very helpful.