



ASK Transit

Inquiry on Riding the Lift with Paratransit Passengers

Information compiled on April 16, 2010

The Question: When loading a passenger onto the lift of a DAR/Paratransit coach, does the Operator ride up with the passenger? If not, why not?

Ben Franklin says ...It depends on the driver here at BFT. Some drivers will and others won't. Some reasons they do not ride are: no room due to large wheelchair, too much weight with client/chair/driver, some drivers can't reach wheelchair lift controls. We leave it up to the drivers' discretion.

Columbia County Public Transportation says...We do not allow the driver to ride up on the lift with the passenger because this was something we have been instructed on over and over in PASS train the trainer training by Otis. The reason being, safety. The driver needs to be on the ground and not risk being knocked off of the lift for whatever reason.

Community Transit says...Community Transit (DART) never allows a driver to go up on the lift with the passenger due to safety reasons.

Everett Transit says... We specifically don't allow our Operators to ride the lift with the passenger. There would be nothing for them to hold onto. They would have to try to keep the passenger safe and steady while they would not be able to. The Operator would have nothing to hold onto. The Operator's hands would not be free as they would be operating the lift control buttons.

Let's say that our Operator had an unsteady, standee passenger on the lift. Should the passenger lose their balance, the Operator on the ground might be able to keep them from falling off the lift by applying support on the passenger's back. If the passenger and Operator are on the lift, it is likely, should the passenger lose their balance, they would knock the Operator off the lift as they fell or the Operator could lose their balance and pull off the passenger.

Grays Harbor Transit says...We ride up if there is room and no excess weight issues. Some of our elderly passengers feel more secure.

Intercity Transit says...Generally, our drivers do not ride up on a lift with a passenger. One concern is possibly maxing out the weight on the lift in certain circumstances. Another concern is if the lift fails while the driver and client are on it, it would potentially place both client in an unsafe situation, with the driver

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also unable to help. Normally, if the driver is on the ground and the lift fails, they can manually finish deploying it. In the event that a client is very unstable, we would most likely suggest they consider traveling with a personal care attendant.

Island Transit says...Absolutely not. It is dangerous. If the lift malfunctions and the Operator falls the passenger would be helpless, also it adds weight to the lift. We train NOT to ride up the lift with the passenger. If they choose to ride up the lift with the passenger and something happens, they will be held responsible.

Jefferson Transit says.... No we do not. We follow the guidelines of PASS training program; safety dictates the driver not be on the lift.

Kitsap Transit says... Kitsap Transit does not recommend riding up on the lift; however, if the operator thinks it would be safer for an unstable passenger if the operator rode on the lift, then it is permitted.

Link Transit says... We teach **not** to have the Operator ride up with passengers. A training recommended is PASS (Passenger Service and Safety Certification) it also instructs not to ride the Lift. The lift manufacture (RICON) in training films also strongly recommended not riding up the Lift with the passenger. The safest location for the Operator is on the ground beside the lift. If the Operator rides the lift with the passenger in a mobility device it may cause an overload also the Operator has no safe place to stand. The Operator may be forced off the lift or get caught up in the lift itself or hit his head on the entrance door or trip over the end plate or get caught between the lift platform and the floor of the Van/bus. Again with a standing passenger we teach **not** to have the Operator ride up with passengers. The standing passenger should board the lift the direction they are traveling (facing the bus/van boarding and away from the bus while deboarding) and hold onto the guard rails. An Operator can easily be pulled off the lift by the standing passenger especially if they lose their balance. Some Operators believe it is safer or quicker to ride the lift however it is only a false sense of security and is dangerous. A food for thought if a passenger is injured or falls from a lift the Operator can possibly help or call for assistance but if the Operator does the same what happens who can help or call for help?

Mason Transit says... The driver does not normally ride the lift with the passenger. We do allow the driver to ride the lift with the passenger if there is a concern about the passenger's stability when riding the lift. We feel the driver's ability to assist a passenger if they lose their balance or cannot support themselves when the lift is in motion is very limited with the driver on the ground. Normally the driver should not be on the lift because of the limited space on the lift platform and the extra weight on the lift.

Pierce Transit says...Pierce Transit Shuttle does not allow operators to ride the lift with the customer.

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Our thought is that the operator needs to stay on the ground to control the lift and the area surrounding the vehicle. There is just not sufficient room on the lift for the operator and a regular size person to be on the lift at the same time.

Valley Transit says... We normally do not allow Operators to ride the lift with the passenger. The reasons are lift capacity and safety. We feel it is safer if the person who is operating the lift is on the ground instead of moving with the lift. There may be some unique circumstances where it is safer to have the operator on the lift with the passenger. In those situations we do allow the operator to ride on the lift.

Whatcom Transit says...We train operators to ride up on the lift with passengers when doing paratransit service. However, we do find that oversize or extra heavy wheelchair-and-rider combinations prevent this practice in some cases. So the driver stands beside the lift on the ground and operates it from there, generally stabilizing the mobility device with one hand and operating the lift control with the other.

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