

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN & DISABILITY SERVICES
Division of Transportation Services (DTS)

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS TO TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Under title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), state and local governments are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination. However, the ADA provides that government agencies are not required to make any accommodation that would impose an undue hardship on the agency. An undue hardship means that there will be significant administrative burden or agency expense to provide the accommodation.

TRANSPORTATION ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

While standard fixed route accessible bus service will remain the primary mode of transportation available for persons with disabilities, DTS may provide non-emergency 'curb- to-curb' advanced reservation transportation services for eligible persons, where such services do not overlap existing services, and are economically and logistically feasible to provide.

DTS will evaluate all accommodation requests based on the specific nature of the individual's transportation needs, the cost to provide the services, and the available financial and human resources of the Division.

When deemed reasonable to provide curb-to-curb transport, DTS may additionally offer certain polite assistance services where individually appropriate. Polite assistance will only be offered upon prior request, and may, for example, include:

- 'offering an arm' to riders when boarding a vehicle
- assisting rider with personal mobility devices on and off vehicle
- fastening shoulder straps and lap belts when requested
- assisting rider with loading/unloading shopping cart/bags, etc., onto and off the vehicle at scheduled pick-up and drop off zones
- other similar services as agreed

HANDLING ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

DTS will engage with individuals requesting accommodations beyond standard fixed route services, to gather information and identify reasonable transportation solutions for riders with disabilities. DTS will interact with requestors to:

- determine the physical or mental impairment that qualifies the individual for services
- discuss possible solutions to requestor's transportation needs determine whether request is feasible to provide
- suggest alternatives when accommodation is not readily achievable or unsafe to provide
- identify threats posed by requested accommodation or risk of harm to rider or others analyze any obstacles or physical hazards posed by requested accommodation
- analyze any obstacles or physical hazards posed by requested accommodation

Based on individual assessments, DTS will determine whether the accommodation may be reasonably provided. If a non-fixed transit accommodation is deemed feasible, and within its capacity to provide, DTS will establish parameters of service, and ensure that appropriate staff

receive required training, to ensure the safety of requestor, driver and other riders.

Providing Temporary Transportation Accommodations

While many transit accommodations may not be feasible long-term, some accommodation requests may be made available on a temporary basis. When an impairment is temporary, and accommodation is deemed practicable, DTS may provide limited accommodations until is no longer medically required by requestor.

Denial of Accommodation

While DTS will make every effort to grant County residents' requests for reasonable transportation accommodations; such accommodations will not be approved if the request is deemed to be an administrative or financial burden to the agency; create a direct threat to the health or safety of others; or when the individual would be able to use other services provided by DTS without modification.

Documentation of Eligibility

If an applicant for a transportation accommodation is determined to be eligible, DTS will provide requestor, in writing, with specifics of services to be provided and rider responsibilities.

Notice of Determination

If DTS determines that a person is not eligible for transportation accommodations, notification to requestor will state the reasons for the finding. Applicant eligibility will be determined by DTS within 21 calendar days of the submission of a completed transportation accommodation request. No services will be provided unless and until the requestor is found to be eligible.

Circumstances Under Which Service Can Be Denied

DTS can refuse to provide fixed route or paratransit services to persons with disabilities if they engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct. In determining what constitutes seriously disruptive or violent behavior, DTS will rely on local ordinances, established laws and standards that define unacceptable public behavior.

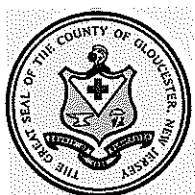
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The County of Gloucester complies with all state and federal rules and regulations against discrimination in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, and activities. In addition, County encourages participation of people with disabilities in its programs and activities and offers special services to all residents 60 years of age and older. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the County's ADA Coordinator at (856) 384-6842/ New Jersey Relay Service 711.

ADA Transportation Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires state and local governments which operate fixed route transportation services to provide 'curb to curb' paratransit services to eligible persons who, because of disability, are unable to use the standard system.

While standard accessible bus service is intended to be the primary mode of public transportation for persons with disabilities, the County of Gloucester may provide non-emergency advanced reservation ADA paratransit services for eligible persons, where such accommodation is reasonable to provide.

County paratransit services are intended to offer a comparable level of service to that provided by standard fixed route service. It is not required nor intended to meet all of the transportation needs of persons with disabilities.

Who is eligible?

1. Any person who is unable, because of a disability, to independently board, ride or disembark from any vehicle in the fixed route system without the assistance of another individual.
2. Any person with a disability who is able to use a lift or ramp-equipped vehicle, but for whom the fixed route they want is not available with such equipped vehicles.
3. Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents them from traveling to/from or boarding or departing from a fixed route stop.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION SERVICES The County recognizes that disabilities are as diverse as the individuals they and recognizes the need to help identify transportation solutions riders with disabilities who wish to use its services.

Under Title II of the ADA, state and local governments are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination. However, government entities are not required to, make accommodations that would impose an undue hardship on the agency.

For those riders who require additional assistance, the County Division of Transportation will endeavor to accommodate reasonable requests for transportation services by following the procedures outlined below:

1. Riders must identify the specific type of additional assistance sought at the time paratransit reservation request is made, providing at least 1-week advanced notice.
2. Reservationist will advise Transit Dispatcher of the specific rider need/request. Dispatcher will log the information within the client information system and determine the resources required to accommodate rider.
3. Dispatcher will provide preliminary evaluation of the request and report to the Dispatch Supervisor whether the accommodation is reasonable to perform.
4. If the Dispatch Supervisor deems the service requested to be unreasonable to perform or to repeat on a regular basis, the Supervisor must cite specific reasoning to support the finding and inform the Director of Transportation Services.
5. If the Director of Transportation Services concurs with the finding of the Dispatch supervisor, the rider will be so informed via phone call at least 48 hours before the requested/scheduled trip. The finding will also be communicated to the rider expeditiously by written correspondence.
6. Riders may appeal any such decisions by following established AD grievance procedures. Complaints that a county program, service or activity is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the Director of the Division of Human & Disability Services.

Gloucester County is an equal opportunity/ADA compliant government agency

NOTICE UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

In accordance with the requirements of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the County of Gloucester will not discriminate against qualified individuals on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities.

Employment: The County of Gloucester does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with all regulations promulgated by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Effective Communication: The County of Gloucester will, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities to allow equal participation in County programs, services, and activities. Such aids may include qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures: The County of Gloucester will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all County programs, services, and activities. Examples may include relocation of a specific program, service or activity to a more accessible location; or, welcoming individuals with service animals into County facilities, where pets are generally prohibited.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a County program, service, or activity, should contact the County's ADA Coordinator, through the Division of Human and Disability Services at (856) 384-6842/ New Jersey Relay Service 711, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

The ADA does not require government entities to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services, or impose an undue financial or administrative burden. Complaints that a County program, service, or activity is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the ADA Coordinator.

The County of Gloucester will not place a surcharge on a particular individual with a disability or any group of individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy.

The County of Gloucester complies with all state and federal rules and regulations against discrimination in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, and activities. In addition, County encourages participation of people with disabilities in its programs and activities and offers special services to all residents 60 years of age and older. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the county's ADA Coordinator at (856) 384-6842 / New Jersey Relay Services 711.

County of Gloucester Grievance Procedure Under The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

This Grievance Procedure is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"). It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability by the County of Gloucester in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits. The County of Gloucester's Personnel Policy governs employment-related complaints of disability discrimination.

The complaint should be in writing and contain specifics regarding the alleged discrimination. Complainant must state his/her name, address, phone number and the date and description of the discriminatory action(s). Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint will be made available to persons with disabilities upon request.

The complaint should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation to:

ADA Coordinator
c/o Division of Human & Disability Services 115 Budd Blvd.
West Deptford, New Jersey 08096

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator, or designee, will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within 15 calendar days of the meeting, the ADA Coordinator will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of the County of Gloucester and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA Coordinator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her designee may appeal the decision within 15 calendar days after receipt of the response to the County's Director of Human Resources.

Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the appeal, the Director of Human Resources, or designee, will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions.

Within 15 calendar days after the meeting, the Director of Human Resources will respond in

writing, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

All written complaints received by the ADA Coordinator, appeals to the Director of Human Resources, and responses from these two offices will be retained by the County of Gloucester for at least three years.

COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER

NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Grievance procedures have been established by the County to allow prompt and equitable resolution of disability discrimination complaints, and include ADA Coordinator contact information, and an appeals process. Non-Discrimination Notice procedures have also been established by the County to inform residents that reasonable modifications will be made to allow people with disabilities to receive services and to ensure participation in County programs, activities and employment.

Additional information concerning the ADA may be obtained by contacting the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) through a toll-free information line at (800) 514-0301 (Voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY). Resources are also available on the website at www.ada.gov.