

Hopelink ADA Policy (December 2020)

ADA Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. The ADA is civil rights legislation which requires that persons with disabilities receive transportation services equal to those available on the fixed route service.

It is the policy of Hopelink that, when viewed in their entirety, services, programs, facilities, and communications provided by Hopelink, directly or by a contracted service provider, are readily accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities to the maximum extent possible. 49. CFR 37.105

For additional information regarding Hopelink's ADA policy or to request this policy in accessible formats, please contact Hopelink's ADA Coordinator at (425) 869-6000 or ADA@hopelink.org, or visit Hopelink's administration office located at 8990 154th Avenue Northwest, in Redmond WA.

1. Notification of Policy

Hopelink will notify the public of the ADA policy on the website and in writing.

2. Accessibility

Access to buildings, documents, and tools must comply with [Title 42 chapter 126, Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities](#).

3. Complaint Process

Hopelink is committed to providing safe, reliable, and accessible transportation options for the community. Hopelink has established a Customer Complaint Policy and customers wishing to file a complaint and/or obtain a copy of the Customer Complaint Policy may contact Hopelink at (425) 869-6000, or in person at Hopelink's administration office located at 8990 154th Avenue Northwest, in Redmond WA. (RCW 46.07b)

The Customer Complaint Form (Attachment A) can be found on our website.

Hopelink Employees

Excerpted from Employee Handbook, revised June 2010:

A. Equal Employment Opportunity

Hopelink is an equal opportunity employer. This means Hopelink does not discriminate in employment decisions or policies in violation of law on the basis of any legally protected status. This may include, but is not limited to race, gender, color, national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, political ideology and veteran status, gender identity, military status, genetic information and any other basis protected by state or local law. Hopelink's policy of non-discrimination applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, reduction in force, transfer, compensation, and training. In addition, we actively recruit employees who have skills, knowledge, and abilities in working with diverse populations. Hopelink also has built in monitoring mechanisms to assure compliance and harassment/discrimination reporting procedures. We comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment.

B. Employees with Disabilities

We comply with our legal duty to provide reasonable accommodations to allow people with disabilities to apply for and perform their jobs. If you have a disability that affects your job performance, you must let us know as soon as possible, preferably in writing. An appropriate staff member will then discuss with you the reasonable accommodations available to enable you to perform the essential functions of your job. If you become unable to perform the essential functions of your job, even with the reasonable accommodations, please ask about assistance in identifying and applying for other jobs at Hopelink that may become available and for which you may be qualified.

Mobility Management Services

Mobility Management meetings and events take place at accessible facilities and documents (e.g. meeting agendas and materials) can be made available in alternative formats. Appropriate staff contact information is publicized in advance for public to request accommodations. Sample notification:

“[Group Name (Hopelink or applicable mobility coalition)] encourages everyone to participate, regardless of ability. For accommodations or accessibility information, we request you please contact [Organizer Name] at [Phone Number] or [Email] at least two weeks prior to the [event/meeting].”

More information on Hopelink Mobility’s Reasonable Accommodation policy can be found in Attachment B.

To request reasonable modification or accessible formats, please contact Hopelink Mobility at mobility@hopelink.org or call (425) 943-6760.

Transportation Services

The below ADA policies pertain to the Hopelink's Medicaid Transportation brokerage and DART service (performed under contract with King County Metro Transit). Generally, the policies listed below apply to all of these transportation services; when policies differ between services they are noted.

1. Fare

Fares for Hopelink's Transportation Services are determined by the funding source. DART fares are set by King County Metro and are published online at:

<http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/bus/fare/fare-info.html>.

2. Holiday Closures

King County Metro DART service, operated by Hopelink, will run on a limited schedule as determined by King County Metro. The holidays they recognize are Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, and from Christmas Eve to New Year's Day.

There are no holiday closures for Hopelink's Medicaid Transportation Brokerage.

3. Approved Equipment

Passengers will be transported, provided the lift and vehicle can physically accommodate them, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements (e.g. the combined weight of the wheelchair/occupant exceeds that of the lift specifications). Additionally, Hopelink can accommodate mobility devices that meet following minimum standards:

- *Wheelchair* means a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or more wheels, usable indoors, designed or modified for and use by individuals with mobility impairments, whether manually operated or powered.
- Walkers must be collapsible and able to be stored between seats or in the vehicle's trunk.
- The mobility device must be in good working order; with batteries charged, tires inflated, footrests attached, and all parts secure. (49 CFR 37.3)

4. Mobility Device Brakes

When occupying a lift or securement area, it is recommended that passengers apply the brakes on their mobility devices; however, they are not required to do so. With power chairs or scooters, it is recommended that the power switch be turned to the "off" position.

5. Portable Oxygen Use

Individuals with disabilities who use portable oxygen devices are allowed to travel with respirators and properly secured portable oxygen supplies. Oxygen supplies must not obstruct the aisle. (49 CFR 37.167(h))

6. Securement Policy

Operators will use front and rear tie-downs to secure mobility devices. Operators will secure mobility devices at the strongest parts of the device; however, the passenger can indicate the most optimal tie-down spot. The mobility device will be secured front facing unless otherwise requested by the passenger. Drivers will assist passengers with securement systems, ramps, and seatbelts; however, drivers cannot assist riders using power chairs or scooters with the operation of their equipment. Hopelink Transportation cannot refuse to transport someone whose mobility device cannot be satisfactorily restrained provided that mobility device fits within the definition described in Section 3. (49 CFR 37.165)

7. Stop Announcements

Stops at major intersections, transfer points, and destination points will be announced on fixed route buses. DART operators will announce other stops upon request. (49 CFR 37.167 (a-c))

8. Personal Care Attendants

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) may ride with a passenger at no charge. A PCA is someone who travels with, and helps, a rider who is not able to travel alone. Passengers must provide their own PCA if one is needed. Passengers should notify Hopelink that they will be using a PCA when they reserve a ride. This information will guarantee a place for the PCA to ride with the passenger. (49 CFR 37 (d))

9. Service Animals

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. In order to ride Hopelink Transportation:

- The animal must be on a leash or in a container, remain under control of the owner, and behave appropriately.
- Birds, reptiles, amphibians, rodents, and cats must be kept in an enclosed carrier/container.
- The animal must remain at your feet or on your lap. It may not sit on a vehicle seat.
- The animal must not be aggressive toward people or other animals. (49 CFR 37.167 (d))

Passengers should inform Hopelink at the time of the ride request if you will be traveling with a service animal.

10. Boarding Assistance

Operators shall position the bus to make boarding and de-boarding as easy as possible for everyone, minimize the slope of the ramp, and use the kneeling option as needed. Bus operators shall provide assistance to passengers upon request. Passengers with disabilities shall be allowed adequate time to board and disembark the vehicle.

11. Maintenance of Lifts or Ramps

All operators must test the lift or ramp during the pre-trip inspection. Break down of accessibility equipment must be reported immediately to dispatch. A vehicle with an inoperable lift or ramp must be removed from service as soon as possible and cannot be returned to service until repaired. (49.CFR 37.163) All vehicle lifts and vehicles shall be maintained at a minimum to the manufacturer's specifications.

12. Priority Seating

Upon request, DART operators shall ask - but not require - passengers to yield priority seating at the front of the bus to seniors and persons with disabilities. Drivers are not required to enforce the priority seating designation beyond making such a request.

13. Reserved Seating

Mobility device securement areas on DART buses are reserved. Passengers using common mobility aids shall be boarded if the securement areas are not otherwise occupied by a mobility device, regardless of the number of passengers on the bus. Bus operators are required to ask passengers sitting in the securement areas to move to other available seats or to stand.

14. Suspension of Service

DART riders must comply with King County Metro's Code of Conduct. Anyone in violation of the Code of Conduct may be asked to leave the Metro vehicle or facility, and risk suspension of their privileges to use Metro transit or enter transit property. The Code of Conduct is available online at: <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/bus/ruleride.html>.

15. Eligibility Requirements

Hopelink's Medicaid Transportation brokerage coordinates transportation to and from medical appointments for individuals on Medicaid assistance, based on eligibility requirements set forth by the Health Care Authority. Hopelink screens passengers to assure they meet these requirements.

DART service is available to the general public.

16. Complaint Process

Hopelink Transportation is committed to providing safe, reliable, and accessible transportation options for the community. Hopelink Transportation has established a Customer Complaint Policy and customers wishing to file a complaint may contact Hopelink Transportation at 800-923-7433 or 1-800-246-1646. Complaints are also accepted by fax, mail to any Hopelink facility, and via email, which is included on Hopelink's website at: <http://www.hope-link.org/contact>.

17. Reasonable Modification

Requests for modifications of Hopelink policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate an individual with a disability may be made either in advance or at the time of the transportation service. Hopelink is best able to address and accommodate a request when customers make their requests before the trip. Contact Hopelink at 425-943-7555 for questions.

18. Staff Training

Hopelink provides comprehensive training to DART employees before they begin providing service. Trainers are certified by a nationally recognized program in passenger service for disabled passengers (in our case, the Community Transportation Association of America PASS program-Passenger Assistance Service and Safety) Our PASS training includes:

- The history and general implications of the ADA and specific training on ADA compliance in public transportation;
- Disability awareness;
- Sensitivity in communicating and assisting passengers with disabilities;
- A survey of mobility aid devices; and
- Training on boarding and securing mobility aids.

Our training also includes the King County Metro standards for customer service and the ADA, including passenger sensitivity, meeting ADA requirements, standards for ADA required callouts, etc. Finally, staff are also trained to understand Hopelink standards for customer service for people with disabilities which, in some cases, exceeds King County and ADA standards.

Our partners/subcontractors for the Special Needs Transportation Brokerage are required to train drivers to meet the standards outlined in the PASS training description above. Most partners use the PASS program, administered by a third party. Additionally, partners train their staff in Hopelink service standards that exceed PASS requirements. Hopelink occasionally provides PASS training to their partners.

19. Direct Threat

If a person is violent, seriously disruptive, or engaging in illegal conduct Hopelink may, consistent with established procedures for all riders, refuse to carry the passenger. A person who poses a significant risk to others may be from service if reasonable modifications to the public accommodation's policies, practices, or procedures will not eliminate that risk. (49CFR 37.5 App. D/ 29 CFR 36.208)

Behaviors that may cause immediate exclusion from the system include:

- Destruction of public property (the vehicle, and/or its furnishings)
- Doing violence to others or to oneself
- Behavior that is seriously unruly, seriously disruptive, threatening, or frightening to others
- Behavior that interferes with the safe operation of the vehicle

- Violations of service animal policy by failing to control one’s service animal
- Violations of operating rules governing the provision of transportation system-wide
- Engaging in illegal conduct.
- Other conduct judged by Hopelink to represent an actual or potential threat to the health, safety or wellbeing of oneself, the operator, other passengers, and/or transit personnel.

Passengers who excluded from the system due to a direct threat have the ability to request an administrative appeal by contacting Hopelink at 425-943-7555.

Approved by:  _____
Geoff Crump
COO

Date: 12/30/2020 _____

Attachment A
Hopelink Customer Compliant Form

Hopelink Title VI, ADA, and General Complaint Form

Section IV: TITLE VI ONLY

Have you previously filed a complaint with this organization? Yes No

Section V: TITLE VI ONLY

Have you filed this complaint with any other Federal, State, or local agency, or with any Federal or State Court?
 Yes No

If yes, please check all that apply

Federal Agency: _____ State Agency: _____
 Federal Court: _____ Local Agency: _____
 State Court: _____

Please provide contact information for the agency/court where the complaint was filed.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Section VI: For ADA or General Complaints

Name of person or program this complaint is against:

For non-Title VI complaints, please use the space below to explain the issue/experience:

Signature

Date

Please email this form to hopelink@hopelink.org or mail to:
ATTN: Chief Operating Officer
Hopelink
PO Box 3577
Redmond, WA 98073-3577

Attachment B
Hopelink Mobility Management's Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Accessibility – Reasonable Accommodation

Purpose: To inform potential attendees of their rights to reasonable accommodation.

Applies to: Any event or meeting hosted by Hopelink Mobility that's open to the public.

Policy: Include the following tagline in all marketing of an external event or meeting. This includes all promotional materials such as emails, flyers, e-newsletters, and calendar invites.

“[Group Name (Hopelink or applicable mobility coalition)] encourages everyone to participate, regardless of ability. For accommodations or accessibility information, we request you please contact [Organizer Name] at [Phone Number] or [Email] at least two weeks prior to the [event/meeting].”

Include this messaging in all marketing materials that advertise the event/meeting and in any reminder emails that are sent out before the accommodation request deadline.

Note: You should be promoting an event/meeting at least one month in advance. However, you will need to modify the notice date depending on how early or late you market the event/meeting. Work with your supervisor to determine how far out to set the deadline for accessibility requests.

All event invitations, emails, flyers, etc., should clearly display what language services, if any, will already be provided. (For instance: “American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) will be provided.”) Ensure the interpreters are confirmed prior to advertising or consider using language like “ASL interpretation has been requested” in promotional material. This way the interpreters are not considered guaranteed if we cannot find any in time.

Please see Hopelink’s ADA Policy for additional guidance on reasonable modification.

Last Revised: 12/24/2020

Author: Staci Sahoo

Approved by: Staci Sahoo