

Hopelink's

ADA and Paratransit Policy

Revision Date: 6/16/2026

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

Hopelink is committed to providing equal access to its facilities, programs, and services for persons with disabilities. This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the ADA Coordinator at ADA@hopelink.org or by calling (425) 869-6000. People who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Title VI Notice to the Public

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Hopelink is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination under Title VI, you may file a complaint with Hopelink's Title VI Coordinator. For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact Hopelink's Title VI Coordinator at (425) 869-6000 or TitleVI@hopelink.org.

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Change log

Date	Section	Description
5/7/2026	--	New guidance document

Acronyms and abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
DART	Dial-A-Ride Transit
PCA	Personal Care Attendant
WLAD	Washington's Law Against Discrimination

Definitions

The following definitions from 49 CFR 37, the National RTAP ADA Toolkit Glossary, and FTA ADA Circular 4710.1 may be useful while using this policy:

- ***Commuter bus service:*** Fixed route bus service characterized by service predominantly in one direction during peak periods, limited stops, use of multi-ride tickets, and routes of extended length, usually between the central business district and outlying suburbs. Commuter bus service may also include other service, characterized by a limited route structure, limited stops, and a coordinated relationship to another mode of transportation.
- ***Disability:*** With respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.
- ***Fixed Route Service:*** System of transporting individuals which operates along a prescribed route according to a fixed (regular) schedule.
- ***Mobility Device or Aid:*** A device designed to assist an individual with disabilities with locomotion. Examples include wheelchairs, canes, crutches, and walkers.
- ***Deviated Fixed Route Service:*** Transit service that operates along established routes that typically have designated stops. Between these stops, vehicles deviate (depart) from an established route to pick up or drop off riders within a defined off-route service area.
- ***Securement Area or Station:*** On a vehicle, a designated location for riders using wheelchairs, equipped with a securement system.
- ***Securement Device, Equipment or System:*** On a vehicle, equipment used for securing a wheelchair against uncontrolled movement during transport.
- ***Service Animal:*** Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.
- ***Service Animal Trainee:*** Any dog or miniature horse that is undergoing training to be a service animal.
- ***Service Animal Trainer:*** An individual exercising care, custody, and control over a service animal trainee during a course of training designed to develop the service animal trainee into a service animal.
- ***Wheelchair:*** A mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more- wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.

ADA policy introduction

Hopelink is committed to compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law on July 26, 1990; and RCW 49.60, Washington's Law Against Discrimination (WLAD).

These civil rights legislations prohibit discrimination based on disability and require transportation service options be provided to persons with disabilities comparable to those available to people without disabilities.

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

New construction and facility alterations completed by Hopelink will be ADA-compliant. If full ADA compliance is unfeasible due to structural impracticability, facility alterations will be ADA compliant to the maximum extent feasible. For information on upcoming projects and an opportunity to comment on plans, please visit our website or contact our ADA Coordinator: (425) 869-6000 or ADA@hopelink.org.

Hopelink provides ADA-related training to staff during initial training and on an as-needed basis to ensure staff are trained to proficiency, as appropriate to their duties, so they operate vehicles and equipment safely and properly assist and treat people with disabilities in a respectful and courteous way.

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 A.

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

1. Fares

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

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

2. Approved mobility devices

Hopelink can accommodate mobility devices that meet the following definitions and minimum standards:

- A wheelchair is a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices; that is usable indoors; and is designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether manually or power operated.
- A mobility device is equipment designed or intended to assist people with mobility disabilities (i.e., walkers, canes, braces, crutches).
 - Walkers must be collapsible and able to be stored between seats or in the vehicle's trunk.
 - Hopelink may not be able to accommodate equipment that is not primarily designed for use by people with mobility impairments (i.e., shopping carts, skateboards).
 - Mobility devices must be stored out of the path of travel for other passengers.
 - Mobility devices should be maintained in good working order, including having adequately charged batteries (if applicable), properly inflated tires, and all essential components secured.

Hopelink will transport riders with their mobility devices, provided the ramp and vehicle can physically accommodate them, unless:

- Doing so is inconsistent with safety requirements in this policy or by the vehicle's manufacturer specifications (e.g., the combined weight of the wheelchair and occupant exceeds that of the vehicle's ramp specifications).
- The use of the mobility devices poses a direct threat. For more information, see [11. Denial of service](#).

3. Mobility device securement

Operators will do the following when securing mobility devices:

- Use front and rear tie-downs.
- Secure mobility devices at the strongest parts of the device. However, the passenger can indicate the most optimal tie-down spot.
- Secure the mobility device in a forward-facing position unless otherwise requested by the passenger or required by the manufacturer specifications of the securement system.
- Assist riders with securement systems, ramps, and seatbelts.

Hopelink does not require but recommends that riders apply brakes on their mobility devices when occupying a securement area; however, riders are not required to do so. For power chairs or scooters, Hopelink recommends that the power switch be turned to the "off" position while in securement areas. Operators cannot assist riders using

power chairs or scooters with the operation of their equipment.

Hopelink DART's initial training includes mandatory mobility device securement training and, as needed, afterward.

Hopelink will not refuse to transport someone whose mobility device cannot be satisfactorily restrained provided the mobility device fits within the definitions in [2. Approved mobility devices](#).

4. Portable oxygen equipment

Hopelink allows riders to travel with respirators and portable oxygen supplies, consistent with applicable U.S. Department of Transportation rules on the transportation of hazardous materials in [49 CFR Subtitle B, Chapter 1, Subchapter C](#). Riders must secure portable oxygen equipment safely and the equipment must not obstruct the aisle.

5. 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))

6. Service animals and service animal trainees

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, miniature horse, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. A service animal trainee is any dog or miniature horse that is undergoing training to be a service animal. Hopelink allows service animals and service animal trainees to accompany people with disabilities in all organization vehicles and facilities. Riders may use more than one service animal.

Hopelink does not charge a fare for service animals or service animal trainees. If a service animal or service animal trainee causes damage to Hopelink vehicles or facilities, the user of the service animal or service animal trainee may be charged for those damages. Passengers should inform Hopelink at the time of the ride request if you will be traveling with a service animal or service animal trainee.

To ride Hopelink services, service animals and service animal trainees:

- Must be on a leash, tether, or harness unless use of such a device would interfere with the task the service animal or service animal trainee performs, or the person's disability prevents use of such devices. In these cases, the handler must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the service animal or service animal trainee.
- 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.
- Must not be aggressive toward or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of Hopelink staff, other riders, or other animals. (49 CFR 37.167 (d))
- Must be potty-trained.

Hopelink staff will not request written certification that a rider's animal is a service animal or service animal trainee, or request demonstration of service animal or service animal trainee's task(s). However, Hopelink staff may ask users of service animals or service animal trainees the following questions:

- Is the animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the animal been trained or is in training to perform?

Hopelink may deny a service animal service or service animal trainee if the animal is out of control of the handler, posing a direct threat, not potty-trained, or if its handler refuses to answer the questions about the animal noted above.

If Hopelink denies the service animal service or service animal trainee, the handler/person with a disability may still use Hopelink services. Hopelink staff will provide the handler/person with disability information on how to appeal the service animal/service animal trainee's service denial and, if applicable, options to remedy the situation so the service animal/service animal trainee can be allowed to use Hopelink vehicles and facilities.

7. Boarding assistance

Hopelink operators will position the vehicle to make boarding and disembarking as easy as possible for everyone, minimize the slope of the ramp, and use the vehicle's kneeling option as needed. Operators will allow riders with disabilities adequate time to board and disembark the vehicle.

Operators will use vehicle accessibility equipment to assist customers (i.e., vehicle annunciators, ramps). For information on procedures when vehicle accessibility equipment is not functioning, see [8. Maintenance of ramps](#).

When necessary or upon request, operators will provide riders assistance using ramps and securement systems. Upon request by the rider, operators may assist riders using manual wheelchairs up vehicle ramps if doing so does not constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of the operator. For more information, see [11. Denial of service](#).

Hopelink does not require operators to assume the controls of a power wheelchair or assist a passenger in/out of their wheelchair. Riders are welcome to ride with a personal care attendant to accomplish these tasks. For more information, see [5. Personal care attendants](#).

8. Maintenance of ramps

Hopelink will use and maintain vehicle and facility accessibility features and repair malfunctioning features promptly.

All operators must test the ramp during the pre-trip inspection. Break down of accessibility equipment must be reported immediately to dispatch. A vehicle with an

inoperable ramp must be removed from service as soon as possible and cannot be returned to service until repaired. (49.CFR 37.163) All vehicle ramps shall be maintained at a minimum to the manufacturer's specifications. When an operator discovers a vehicle's ramp is out of order, the operator will report it immediately to dispatch.

Hopelink will take the following steps for services with malfunctioning features:

- Hopelink will remove fixed route vehicles with inoperable ramps from service as soon as possible and no later than before the vehicle's next service day. If a fixed route vehicle is operating with an inoperable ramp and a rider requires the ramp and if the next vehicle on the route is not scheduled to arrive at the stop for over 30 minutes, Hopelink will dispatch alternative transportation immediately to transport that rider.
- Demand responsive service vehicles with an inoperable ramp may remain in service for the remainder of the day if Hopelink can assign riders requiring this accessibility equipment to another vehicle.
- All vehicles found to have an inoperable ramp will not be returned to service until the ramp is repaired, with the FTA-permitted exception of the following: if Hopelink does not have a spare vehicle to replace the vehicle with an inoperable ramp, Hopelink may return the vehicle to service temporarily, for a maximum of three days while making preparations to repair the ramp.

Riders who notice accessibility features that are not in working order are obstructed should notify the vehicle operator immediately.

Hopelink will work with riders who require reasonable modifications due to an accessibility feature being out of order. See the [14. Reasonable modification](#) for information on making these requests.

9. Priority/reserved seating

All Hopelink fixed route vehicles contain signage designating priority/reserved seating at the front of the vehicle for older adults and people with disabilities and at all wheelchair securement locations. The signage instructs riders to comply with the bus operator's request to make these seats available to older adults and people with disabilities who prefer to use them.

Hopelink drivers will allow riders using mobility aids to board if securement areas are not otherwise occupied by a mobility device, regardless of the number of riders on the vehicle.

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.

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.

10. Stop announcements

Hopelink's fixed route services will make on-board announcements at stops at major intersections, destination points, transfer points with other fixed routes, and at sufficient intervals along the route. Operators will announce other stops upon request.

11. Denial of service

Hopelink may deny, suspend, or exclude any rider from its facilities and/or services for engaging in conduct that is violent, seriously disruptive, illegal, considered a "direct threat" to others, or for other behaviors/actions as described in this policy, [King County Metro's Code of Conduct](#) and [RCW 9.91.025, Unlawful transit conduct](#).

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:

<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/metro/about/policies/code-of-conduct>.

A direct threat is a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by a reasonable modification to Hopelink policies, practices, procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aides or services, such as traveling with a personal care attendant. A direct threat does not occur when a person's disability results in an appearance or involuntary behavior that may offend, annoy, or inconvenience others.

Riders suspended or excluded from Hopelink property and/or services may request an appeal of this decision by contacting Hopelink. See [13. Complaint process](#) for Hopelink's contact information.

12. ADA complementary paratransit services

Hopelink offers deviated fixed route services through DART and Community Van in contract with King County Metro. These services are available to the general public and are not considered ADA complementary paratransit services.

13. Complaint process

Hopelink is committed to providing safe, reliable, and accessible transportation services and welcomes customer feedback. ADA complaints and questions about Hopelink's ADA complaint process may be submitted to Hopelink's ADA Coordinator using the following methods:

- Email: ADA@hopelink.org
- Call: (425) 869-6000
- Send mail to: 8990 154th Ave NE, Redmond, WA 98052

Hopelink will respond promptly to all complaints that have valid contact information.

Hopelink will retain copies of complaints, investigation, and resolution documentation; and Hopelink's response to the complainant in accordance with the complaint record

retention requirements of the ADA, Washington State Archives Office, and Washington State Department of Transportation Consolidated Grant Program.

To share information about its ADA complaint process, Hopelink will use the same means it uses to inform the general public about its policies and procedures. This includes through the organization's website. The Customer Complaint Form (Attachment B) can be found on our website.

14. Reasonable modification

Requests for modifications of Hopelink policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate a person with a disability may be made either in advance or at the time of service. Hopelink is best able to address and accommodate requests when made in advance.

Advance requests for reasonable modifications may be made to Hopelink by emailing ADA@hopelink.org or calling (425) 869-6000. The request should contain an explanation of the modification needed.

For requests at the time of service, Hopelink operators will determine if the modification can be provided. Operators may consult with Hopelink management before deciding to grant or deny the request.

Hopelink will only deny requests based on one or more of the following:

- Granting the request would fundamentally alter the nature of Hopelink's services, programs, or activities.
- Granting the request would create a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
- Without the requested modification, the person with a disability can fully use Hopelink's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose.

When Hopelink denies a request for a reasonable modification, the organization will take other actions to ensure that the person with a disability receives the services provided by Hopelink to the maximum extent possible.

Hopelink commits to sharing information with the public about its ADA reasonable modification request procedures using the same means used to inform the public about other organization policies and procedures, including on the organization's website.

Attachment A: 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

Attachment B: Hopelink Title VI, ADA, and General Complaint Form



I am filing a:

☐

Title VI Complaint

☐

ADA Complaint

☐

General Complaint

Section I:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Accessible Format Requirements?

☐

Large Print

☐

TDD

☐

Audiotape

☐

Other:

Section II:

Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If yes, skip to Section III

If no, please supply the name and relationship of the person on whose behalf you are filing:

Please explain why you have filed for a third party:

Have you received permission from the third party to file on their behalf? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section III:

TITLE VI ONLY

I believe the discrimination I experienced was based on (check all that apply)

☐

Race

☐

Color

☐

National Origin

Date of incident:

Please explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. Describe all persons who were involved. Include the name and contact information of the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as the names and contact information for any witnesses (if known)

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 TitleVI@hopelink.org or mail to:

ATTN: Chief Operating Officer

Hopelink

PO Box 3577

Redmond, WA 98073-3577

