

Avoyelles Public Transit

ADA Policy

It is the policy of Avoyelles Public Transit to provide safe and accessible transportation to all riders in our community.

Section 37.3 of the DOT's regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38) defines a "common wheelchair" as a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or four-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. A "common wheelchair" does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two inches above the ground, and does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied.

An electric scooter or other mobility device must be treated as a "common wheelchair" if it meets the physical specifications of a common wheelchair as defined by the DOT's ADA regulations.

Wheelchair Services

Most Avoyelles Public Transit vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts, ramps and securement systems for persons with mobility impairments. Inform our dispatchers of your special needs when scheduling transportation.

Procedure

For safety and liability reasons, Avoyelles Public Transit adheres to the following guidelines:

1. Clients utilizing a wheelchair will be allowed to transfer to a regular seat in the vehicle, if the client requests to do so and is able to complete the transfer with no assistance from the driver. **Drivers are not permitted to lift or pull any client to enable them to transfer into a regular seat.**
2. Avoyelles reserves the right to refuse service to any client who will not allow their wheelchair to be secured utilizing the 4-point securement system within the RSCC vehicle.
3. Avoyelles reserves the right to refuse service to any passenger who has unsafe equipment. The driver will make the final determination of unsafe equipment.
4. Staff will provide assistance with lifts, ramps, and securing systems. A rider who not in a wheelchair may use the lift (with the driver's assistance) if they are unable to enter or exit the vehicle by the use of the stairs.

Avoyelles Pubic Transit Board of Directors follows Louisiana State Laws that all clients must utilize seatbelts. Please advise your driver should you need help with lap and/or shoulder belts, and he/she will be more than happy to assist you.

For new clients, a home assessment will be conducted prior to any scheduled service, Avoyelles will provide service when the client's ramp and outside doors are not accessible according to State and Federal Laws.

1. Ramps and wheelchair paths must be properly maintain and kept clear of obstructions. Drivers will be unable to perform door to door services should they determine that ramps or walkways are unsafe. Curb to Curb services will still be available to clients.
2. APT drivers will not help wheelchair users up and down steps.
3. APT drivers will assist in loading and unloading groceries/packages from the APT vehicle. However, the driver will not carry groceries/packages. Aides may accompany a paying passenger at no extra charge if the aide provides door-to-door assistance for the passenger.
4. APT will provide service to clients using respirators or portable oxygen, providing equipment will be secured while being transported within the vehicle.
5. Clients will be asked to review and sign a Waiver should they elect to remain on a motorized aid vs transferring to a regular seat. Wavier will also be reviewed and signed for all new clients at the time as assessment in conducted. A sample copy of the Waiver has been included in policy.

Service For Disabled Clients

APT is committed to meeting the needs of the disabled community. Our drivers undergo sensitivity and passenger relations training as well as training in evacuation, elderly and disabled passengers. Individual instruction sessions in using the services of APT Public Transit can be arranged for persons with disabilities by contacting the office at 318-253-9771. Suggestions for improvements in our services for the disabled are always welcome. Please call or write our office.

Aides for persons with disabilities may accompany a paying passenger at no extra charge if the aide provides door-to-door assistance for the passenger.

Service animals are permitted to accompany/assist passengers with disabilities.

Passengers needing mobility aids must provide their own. APT complies with ADA by attempting to accommodate all wheelchair and mobility aides in common use including (Amigos, Rascals, and other scooter style devices). Because of the difficulty in providing an effective restraint system for users of scooter for mobility, if physically able, APT clients using any type three-wheeled scooter as their mobility aid will be asked to be seated in a conventional seat while the vehicle is in motion. This request is made so the client will have lap and shoulder restraints available for use. *During the loading or unloading process of the electric mobility aide, power supply switch shall be turned "OFF" while on the lift with the brakes

"SET". After the electric mobility aide is spotted in the bus for transportation service, the power supply switch is to be turned "OFF" during transportation.

Extra time is allowed for loading and unloading of vehicle for clients with disabilities.

Safte

APT Transit Coordinator oversees the maintenance of the agency fleet by routine maintenance, service and repairs. All repairs are performed by qualified technician. Routine maintenance is performed every 3,000 miles. If deficiencies are noted on a vehicle, which would make the vehicle unsafe to operate, vehicle may be pulled from service and will not be returned to service until it has been deemed safe by a qualified technician.

APT drivers are properly trained and licensed in accordance with State and Federal laws. APT drivers receive quarterly/annual training in safety including emergency procedures, seat-belt and wheelchair securement, evacuation procedures and other areas.

APT drivers inspect their vehicles (including lift and ramp equipment) on a daily basis through the use of a Pre-Trip and Post Trip Inspection. If a problem with lift equipment is noted, the vehicle will be immediately removed from service until the problem is corrected. A spare vehicle will be used for service on route if available.

Every APT driver is trained and understands the manual operation of the lift or ramp so, in the event that the need arises, the driver will be able to accommodate passengers. If a lift or ramp cannot be manually operated in order to accommodate a passenger, dispatch is contacted and arrangements are made to send a replacement vehicle and the defective vehicle is removed from service until repaired.

Lift and Securement

All APT drivers are properly trained to use wheelchair lifts, ramps and corresponding securement equipment. Following is a brief description of operator instructions:

Using the Lift:

- APT recommends backing the wheelchair onto the lift; however, the American Disabilities Act (ADA) allows the passenger to make the choice.
- Set the brakes on the wheelchair. ALWAYS ask the client to turn off the power to a motorized chair.
- Place one hand on the wheelchair and the other hand on the control panel, and inform the W/C client that you are going to start the lift.
- After reaching floor level, push the wheelchair into the vehicle, set brakes, then proceed inside the vehicle to bring the client completely inside.
- Drivers WILL NOT ride the lift with wheelchair clients. Riding the lift with standees is not permissible and the driver must determine the passenger's capability to safely ride the lift alone. Passenger must have both hands on safety rails.

Lift Operations:

- Vehicle should be running
- Transmission should be in "PARK"
- Emergency brake set
- Lift power switch turned on. At this point the "Lift Ready" green light should activate
- If the lift ready light is on, you may open the lift doors and the lift should be fully operational
- In the event the lift does not operate, close lift doors and repeat the steps listed above
- If lights are activated and lift does not work, push "UP" button on lift controls to see if lift has settled while sitting or driving (Bleed Off).

Manual Override of Lift Operation

It is the policy of APT that the manual override of a Ricon lift operation is performed by maintenance personnel or a trained Supervisor. Drivers have been trained in the manual operation of all other lifts.

- Manual back-up pump
- To lower platform and unfold, roll stop place slotted end of pump handle into back-up pump release valve and turn counterclockwise (open 1/2 turn only). When platform reaches desired height and roll stop unfolds turn release valve clockwise to stop. Valve should be tight but **DO NOT** over tighten.
- To fold roll stop and raise platform, place the slotted end of the pump handle into the back-up release valve and turn clockwise to close securely. **DO NOT** over tighten. With pump handle in back up pump stroke until the desired height to the platform is reached.

Ramp Operations

Some APT's vehicles are equipped with wheelchair ramps. Ramps that are deployed at the sidewalk level may be boarded by the passenger wither forward or backwards, depending on their preference. The APT driver will offer assistance and will remain nearby to ensure that the wheels of the wheelchair do not go over the lip of the ramp. If the ramp is deployed at the street level with no sidewalk and the ramp is at an incline, the APT driver will maintain full control of the passenger and wheelchair. The wheelchair will be pushed up and backed down the ramp. This will ensure that the passenger does not tip or fall out of the wheelchair while moving up or down the ramp.

Wheelchair Securement Techniques

It is the policy of APT that all wheelchairs will be secured by the 4 point floor system to anchor the wheelchair to the floor. It is mandatory that all passengers are secured with lap belts. We do not ask the passenger if they would like a shoulder belt. The passenger must request this for it to be used. The company policy is within compliance guidelines of the ADA.

- Install straps track fittings approximately 3 inches outside the front wheels

- Place straps around W/C frame, pull tie-down straps until snug
- Place rear strap track fitting just inside rear wheels directly to rear of chair, attach straps to rear frame and tighten.
- The strap "keeper" must always face away from W/C both front and rear
- Tighten rear straps so that W/C has no movement. DO NOT over tighten, damage to the W/C could result.
- All tie-down straps should be placed so they are at a 45 degree angle if possible. All straps should be placed around frame of W/C.
- Always secure the lap belt and shoulder harness to the tie-down system, never to the wheelchair.