
REPORT

TO: MEMBERS ADA Transit Subcommittee to the Transit & Parking Commission
FROM: Crystal Martin, Paratransit Program Manager
SUBJECT: **ADA TRAINING FOR METRO TRANSIT OPERATORS**
DATE: 3/22/10

New Operators are hired as part time drivers and work exclusively on assigned school dodgers. The focus on this period of employment is good vehicle handling skills and good work habits. Broadly speaking, passenger skills exposure is limited to managing disruptive passenger behavior.

When operators are promoted to full time fixed-route service, they must complete a 6 week training program with extensive customer service training that includes Americans with Disabilities Act training. Training objectives are listed here:

Operator ADA Training

- Serving Customers Who Are Elderly and Customers With Disabilities
- General Guidelines For Providing Service To Customers Who Are Elderly Customers with Disabilities
- Signs Of Disabilities
- General Guidelines For Assisting customers With Disabilities
- Using ADA Equipment
- Americans With Disabilities Act
- Video's - Securement / Serving Passengers with Disabilities
- Passenger's with Disabilities Quiz
- "Riding the Bus with a Disability" (Our operators have this experience)
- Para Transit Training

Objectives:

- Apply customer relations skills when dealing with customers who are elderly and those who have disabilities.
- Know the importance of providing service to elderly customers or customers with disabilities
- Understanding the physical characteristics common to the aging process and knowledge of providing the safest service
- Aware of obstacles that transportation presents to customers who have disabilities
- Interpret the importance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Know the duties and responsibilities of bus operators under ADA legislation
- Discuss the concept of empathy and how to apply it when interacting with customers with disabilities
- How to communicate with customers with various disabilities
- How to assist customers who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices

The training includes riding on Metro Paratransit, where they learn how to secure the broad range of mobility devices passengers use.

Once operators have completed training and have experience on the road, Metro Transit cycles each operator through re-fresher training every 2 years. It takes 2 years to complete a cycle.

Paratransit operators that pick into a permanent opening in the small bus unit must complete 2 weeks of on-the-job training with an experienced paratransit driver/trainer. Small bus operator assignments have traditionally been to very senior drivers with commiserate experience. In addition, Metro Transit has experienced long term stability in the small bus unit's driver corps which has enhanced its efficiency and customer familiarity.