

Transportation Sector

Providing a Welcoming, Inclusive Experience for Travellers with Disabilities

Public transportation plays an important role in connecting tourists to various destinations in Nova Scotia. In 2019-2020, Halifax Transit carried over 1.4 million passengers to tourist destinations, such as the Halifax Waterfront, Citadel Hill, and Peggy's Cove.



This transportation sector information sheet provides ways to enhance services, improve ease of access and offers tips on how to provide an inclusive guest experience for people with disabilities. This resource pairs with a broader accessibility guide for all tourism businesses.

Booking and Arrival

- Offer accessible ticket pricing for travelers with disabilities and their accompanying support people.
- Ask if guests require any support during booking (whether online or in-person). Ask for details on what support is needed. This assistance could be helping with luggage and on-boarding for people with mobility limitations or alerting a deaf guest when you've reached their destination.
- Vehicles should be equipped with a lift or roll-in access.
- Drivers should have a pen and paper available to communicate with deaf or hard-of-hearing guests.
- Provide an accessible pick-up and drop-off area designated for people with disabilities. Ensure the area is sheltered, includes seating, and is barrier-free.

During the Trip

- Designate priority seating for people with disabilities, including space for their entire party and room to store mobility aids.
- Offer pre-recorded/audio descriptions (an auditory brochure that provides a complete description explaining the experience).
- Provide a schedule to passengers outlining the route, stops, and trip timing. Offer this information in alternative formats, such as braille/tactile, large print, and audio.
- Delivering announcements visually and with audio can provide clarity for people with various disabilities.
- Inform guests of the areas/times available for service animals to relieve themselves. Do not engage with service animals unless permitted by the owner.

Provide Personal Assistance

- Ensure drivers and staff are easily identified on the premises and prepared to help customers needing support.
- Traveling somewhere new can be challenging for many people, but people with disabilities may encounter additional challenges with navigating transportation options. Ensure staff are trained and available to guide and assist passengers when needed.
- Provide guests with a detailed description of what level of mobility is required to access the vessel, vehicle, or tour. Consider every location and activity your guests will encounter, from when they arrive (for example, curbs, automatic doors) to their use and access to the washrooms and, ultimately, their disembarkation at the end of travel.
- Avoid assumptions. Ask guests who require support if you can help them.
- Ensure all guests know the requirements, timeline, and services available. This information can be vital in multi-modal transportation services, including car, bus, boat, plane transfers.
- Offer to periodically update guests on the status of the trip.
- Be mindful of the Sunflower Lanyard program, which provides a discreet way for individuals with hidden disabilities to identify themselves as someone who may require additional support (by wearing a sunflower lanyard).



Resources

- Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate provides resources, guidelines, and tool kits.
- The Canadian Transport Agency provides a best practices guide for transportation service providers which align with the Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR).
- Canadian Standards Association – Accessible Design for the Built Environment - see section 8.5 transit stops.