



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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DCAB GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON PUBLIC TRANSIT FIXED ROUTE BUS AND PARATRANSIT SERVICES

These guiding principles are to assist DCAB in preparing testimony or offering comments on Federal, State, and county government proposed laws, rules, polices, and procedures.

- 1) The cost per one-way trip for paratransit service should never be higher than the standard one-way adult fare for fixed route bus service (ADA allows the fare per paratransit trip to be up to double the fixed route bus fare).
- 2) Paratransit fares should only be raised annually and in small increments to avoid having a large impact on people living on fixed incomes.
- 3) Subsidies should be provided to those who qualify as extremely low income.
- 4) To incentivize the use of fixed route bus service by paratransit users, the discounted fare to use the fixed route bus service (for paratransit users only) should be lower than the fare for paratransit service.
- 5) Preferred methods to address the increasing demand for paratransit service and on time performance metrics include, but are not limited to: fleet expansion, taxi subsidy programs, higher fares for paratransit trips that exceed the time or distance requirements under the ADA (same operating hours as fixed route and within 3/4 mile corridor of fixed route), higher fares for subscription service and agency trips, and grants for agencies to purchase vehicles to transport their own clients. Fare increases should be the last method used to decrease the demand for paratransit service and to achieve on time performance.
- 6) If a farebox recovery policy is established for paratransit service, it should not be linked to the farebox recovery policy for fixed route bus service. This is because fixed route bus users have multiple options; such as monthly and annual passes, and Medicare and youth fares; which paratransit users do not have. Therefore, linking any paratransit service farebox recovery policy to that of the fixed route bus service would be incongruous and misguided.
- 7) A public entity should not provide paratransit service to persons other than individuals who are paratransit eligible under the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) definition if the provision of service to such persons would cause a public entity to deny, delay or otherwise prevent the provision of paratransit service to ADA paratransit eligible individuals.

- 8) A person's body odor should not be used as a reason to deny service on public transit or paratransit service unless it poses a health or safety risk to transit personnel or patrons.
- 9) Paratransit eligibility should be determined by County personnel or an entity under contract with the County to ensure the application of uniform eligibility standards by objective health care professionals.
- 10) The procurement of public transit vehicles should include specifications that exceed Federally required accessibility minimums, consider the preferences of riders with disabilities, and prioritize electric vehicles.

Adopted by the Board at its General Meeting on May 16, 2019.
Revised by the Board at its General Meeting on April 18, 2024.