

Frequently Asked Questions: The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation

To request this information in an alternate format, contact 204-945-7613 or MAO@gov.mb.ca

For questions related to compliance, please call (204) 792-0264 or email accessibilitycompliance@gov.mb.ca

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Legal disclaimer: This document does not provide legal advice. It aims to assist organizations to understand [the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation](#). The information does not replace the content of the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation or [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#). If there is any conflict between this resource and the regulation or the act, the latter two shall prevail.

Table of Contents

What is the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation?.....	3
Who benefits from the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation?.....	3
Who needs to comply with the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation?.....	3
When do organizations have to comply?.....	3
As a person experiencing barriers, what can I expect as a transit customer?.....	4
What are the different classes of transit providers?.....	4
What are the compliance requirements for Conventional and Paratransit service providers?	5
What are the compliance requirements for vehicles-for-hire?	7
What are the compliance requirements for schools?	8
What are the compliance requirements for municipalities?	8
Which municipalities outside of Winnipeg have transit and paratransit services?	9
Who must receive training on the requirements of the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation and how often?	9
What must the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation training include?	9
What happens in the event of a service disruption?.....	10
What is a service animal?	10
Are conventional transportation providers and paratransit providers responsible for receiving and responding to feedback or complaints about accessible transportation?	11
I am a member of the public. What if an organization does not respond to feedback I provided on accessible transportation?	11
What are the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standards and where can I view them?	11
How will the government monitor and ensure compliance with this regulation?.....	12
Does meeting the requirements of the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation protect service providers and/or operators from human rights complaints?	12
Contact Information.....	13

What is the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation?

The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation makes transportation more inclusive for all Manitobans, regardless of abilities. There are requirements for training, policy development, communication about accessibility features and service disruptions, operating and emergency procedures, equipment, and vehicle design. Operating matters such as fares, hours of service, routes, and paratransit eligibility appeals also included in the standard.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Who benefits from the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation?

Accessible Transportation benefits everyone. Accessible public transportation ensures that people with disabilities can participate in all aspects of daily life, be it work, education, attending medical appointments, socializing and more. The standard also benefits expecting mothers, families with children, and older Manitobans, by clearly communicating about accessibility features such as priority seating. The standard benefits transit operators and service users alike by setting out clear requirements so that Manitobans of all abilities can travel safely when using a conventional, paratransit or vehicle-for-hire service of their choice.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Who needs to comply with the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation?

The following organizations are required to follow the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation:

- ✓ conventional transportation providers
- ✓ paratransit providers
- ✓ municipalities
- ✓ schools
- ✓ vehicles-for-hire

[Back to table of contents](#)

When do organizations have to comply?

Obligated organizations have until **January 1, 2027**, to meet accessibility requirements.

In addition, new conventional transportation vehicles purchased after January 1, 2027, will have to meet accessible design requirements. The exception applies to existing

conventional transportation vehicles, which have 15 years to upgrade (i.e., January 1, 2042).

A conventional transportation vehicle is not required to comply with design requirements if the vehicle requires a modification or retrofit to comply with the provision and making the modification or retrofit would impair the structural integrity of the vehicle.

[Back to table of contents](#)

As a person experiencing barriers, what can I expect as a transit customer?

You can expect to ride with your service animal, medical equipment, mobility aid, or a support person, at no extra charge. Expect to pay the same fare with conventional transportation and paratransit service providers. Expect communication about priority seating, service disruptions, accessibility equipment failures and emergency procedures. When you are embarking and disembarking, you can expect assistance from the transit operator, including assistance with fare payment and storage of your mobility or medical device, as required. You can expect that there will be on-board audible announcements and visual announcements of the next transit stop. When a transit stop is not accessible, you can expect assistance from the operator to identify and deboard at the closest available location along the route.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What are the different classes of transit providers?

Conventional transportation services:

In Manitoba, a transit bus or motor coach provides conventional transportation service.

Paratransit service providers:

Paratransit service providers are public transportation for people who are unable to use conventional transit services due to a disability. Winnipeg Transit Plus and Brandon Access Transit are examples.

Vehicles for hire

A vehicle designed to seat ten or less people and hired for single trips is a vehicle for hire. The passenger controls the route travelled or the destination. A taxi is an example of a vehicle for hire. For more information see [The Local Vehicles for Hire Act](#).

Personal Transportation Provider

A personal transportation provider is a vehicle for hire that is not a taxi and includes a limousine or rideshare vehicle.

Rideshare Provider

Rideshare providers have an app for mobile devices, or websites for customer to order a ride.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What are the compliance requirements for Conventional and Paratransit service providers?

Conventional and Paratransit service providers are required to:

Policies, measures, practices

All conventional and paratransit service providers must establish and implement measures, policies, and practices on accessible transportation.

Create documents available to the public on accessible transportation measures, policies, and practices and make these documents available in an accessible format, upon request.

Offer fare parity for similar transportation services. Conventional, paratransit, and alternative services providers must offer eligible riders the same fee.

Provide a process to receive feedback (including complaints) on accessible transportation. Respond to the feedback in a suitable and timely manner, upon request.

Training

Train all frontline staff including employees, contractors, agents, and volunteers. Train the people who develop or apply accessible transportation measures, policies and practices. Train the people who buy transportation equipment.

Training must include:

- how to safely use accessibility equipment.
- how to handle equipment failure.
- emergency preparedness and response procedures;
- a review of The Human Rights Code, The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation.

Accessible transportation training policies must be documented. They must include a summary of the training content and when training is provided.

Training must be provided as soon as possible after duties are assigned. Training must be redone, at least once every two years and when updates or changes are made to policies, measures, or practices.

Equipment and Accessibility Features

Meet technical design requirements provided for accessible lifting devices, priority seats, stop requests, mobility aid spaces, steps, grab bars and handrails, floor surfaces, lighting, and route signage.

Take reasonable steps to ensure that accessibility equipment is working. This includes things like ramps and lifting devices. If equipment is not working, providers must make repairs as soon as possible.

Display emergency preparedness and response procedures as well as contact information to request additional information. Communicate publicly on buses in circulation when accessibility equipment is not working or out of service including when a transit stop is not accessible.

- For situations when accessibility equipment is not working, the transit provider must take reasonable steps to accommodate a person who otherwise would use the equipment or arrange alternate transportation for the person.
- For situations when the transit stop is not accessible, including due to snow accumulation, the operator must immediately inform the authority responsible for the transit stop(s). The authority must take reasonable steps to inform the public when a transit stop is not accessible, share information about the closest accessible transit stop, and make the transit stop accessible within a reasonable time period.

Clear transit stops of obstacles including snow. If a stop is not accessible, a person must be allowed to disembark the vehicle at a more accessible location.

Annual Public Meeting

Hold at least one public meeting every year to review measures, policies, and practices. Allow members of the public, including persons disabled by barriers, to provide feedback.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Additional Requirements for Conventional Service Providers

Do not charge people with disabilities a higher fare than people without disabilities. Do not charge for storing mobility aids or mobility assistive devices, such as wheelchairs or walkers.

Provide on-board audible and visual stop announcements.

Provide clearly marked priority seating for people with disabilities (one or more).

Develop a public communication strategy about priority seating and mobility aid spaces policies. Consult persons with disabilities or organizations representing them when developing the communication strategy.

If there is a service disruption, to either the route or schedule, offer an alternative accessible arrangement and provide accessible communication about the disruption.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Additional Paratransit Service Providers Requirements

Develop a process and assessment criteria to determine eligibility for paratransit services. Document the assessment criteria and make it publicly available in accessible formats.

Providers must review paratransit applications within 14-days of submission. If they cannot meet this deadline, the service provider must offer a temporary pass.

Provide a written explanation if the applicant is found not eligible for paratransit services and include information about how the decision can be appealed.

Do not charge a paratransit application or assessment fee. Do not charge for storing mobility aids or mobility assistive devices, such as wheelchairs or walkers while onboard.

Make services available to eligible non-Manitoba residents when they visit the province.

Do not restrict the number of trips that a person with a disability can request. Do not prioritize trips based on destination or purpose.

Allow for same-day reservations, when possible. If same-day reservations are not possible, accept reservations up to three hours before the end of the service period on the day before the intended travel day.

Offer comparable hours and days of service to conventional service providers within the same municipality.

Inform riders of a delay through their preferred contact method if the service is delayed 30 minutes or more.

Allow passengers to travel with a companion, child, or support person.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What are the compliance requirements for vehicles-for-hire?

Vehicles-for-hire operating in a municipality with a vehicle for-hire by-law must:

- Not charge a higher fare for a person disabled by a barrier or charge a fee for the storage or transportation of their mobility aid or medical device.
- Not refuse or deny service because a person is disabled by a barrier or requires reasonable assistance.
- Not refuse or deny service to a person using a service animal.

The owner or operator may deny service if the vehicle specifications make transporting a person disabled by a barrier unsafe.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What are the compliance requirements for schools?

Manitoba school boards are required to provide integrated accessible school transportation services. If this is not possible, because of safety concerns or because of the nature of the student's barrier, the board must arrange alternative accessible transportation.

Independent schools are required to provide integrated accessible school transportation, up to the point of undue hardship. School buses run by independent schools must meet minimum accessible design requirements.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What are the compliance requirements for municipalities?

Municipalities are required to have accessibility plans in place. In addition to requirements under section 33 of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act, these plans should also include the following information:

- State the number of accessible vehicles for hire required in the municipality.
- State the number of accessible vehicles for hire that operate in the municipality.
- Address a plan to fulfil the service deficit, if applicable.

If a municipality offers conventional transportation services, the municipality must develop a policy or bylaw on accessible transit stops.

Municipalities that have a vehicle-for-hire-bylaw are required to:

- Consult with the public at least once every two years to identify the number of accessible vehicles-for-hire that are required in the municipality.
- Inform operators of vehicle-for-hire of the requirements outlined in Standards for Mobility Aid Securement Devices and Occupant Restraint Systems and the Related Exemptions Regulation.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Which municipalities outside of Winnipeg have transit and paratransit services?

The extent of public transit services outside of Winnipeg varies. The following table indicates when types of public transit exist in the 10 largest cities and towns outside Winnipeg. Paratransit services are present in nine of these communities, but there are only four communities that have conventional public transit.

Public Transit in 10 most populous cities/towns outside of Winnipeg

Town/City	Conventional Transit	Paratransit
Brandon	Yes	Yes
Steinbach	No	Yes
Thompson	Yes	Yes
Portage la Prairie	No	Yes
Winkler	No	No
Selkirk	Yes	Yes
Morden	No	Yes
Dauphin	No	Yes
The Pas	No	Yes
Flin Flon	Yes	Yes

[Back to table of contents](#)

Who must receive training on the requirements of the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation and how often?

Each conventional transportation provider and paratransit provider must ensure that accessible transportation training is provided at least once every two years to all people who:

- provide front line service to the public, including employees, contractors, agents, or volunteers.
- develop or apply the provider's measures, policies, and practices about accessible transportation; and
- purchase or procure transportation equipment for the service provider.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What must the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation training include?

The training must include:

- instruction of the safe use of accessibility equipment.
- instruction about acceptable changes to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment fails; and
- instruction about emergency preparedness and response procedures for persons disabled by barriers a review of [The Human Rights Code](#), [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#) and [The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation](#).

To learn how to meet basic training requirements, please visit the Manitoba Accessibility Office's learning portal at AMALearningMB.ca.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What happens in the event of a service disruption?

If a temporary change is known prior to a route or scheduled service, information on transportation options must be provided to the public so they can be informed and plan their trip or make alternate transportation arrangements.

For situations when a route or scheduled service is temporarily changed but alternative transportation arrangements are not accessible, then the conventional transit provider must transfer persons disabled by barriers to their destination.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What is a service animal?

Manitoba's accessibility legislation uses the definition of "service animal" found in [The Human Rights Code](#). Manitoba **does not** have a formal certification process or registry for service animals. In this context **any animal trained to help a person with a disability related need** may be considered a service animal. This includes service animals trained by their owners (self-trained). An example of a service animal would be a dog that works as a guide for a blind or partially sighted person.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Are conventional transportation providers and paratransit providers responsible for receiving and responding to feedback or complaints about accessible transportation?

Yes. Conventional transportation and paratransit providers must receive and respond to feedback. This includes complaints about accessible transportation. The feedback process must be suitable for people with disabilities. The organization must also document all resulting actions taken to resolve the complaint. This information must be available on request.

[Back to table of contents](#)

I am a member of the public. What if an organization does not respond to feedback I provided on accessible transportation?

Feedback to a conventional transit or paratransit provider should receive a response in a timely manner. You may contact the [Accessibility Compliance Secretariat](#) to report alleged non-compliance under [The Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation](#). Contact information for the Accessibility Compliance Secretariat is on the last page of this document.

[Back to table of contents](#)

What are the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standards and where can I view them?

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) is now known as the **CSA Group**. It standardizes terminology, product specifications, protocols and more across public and private sectors. CSA Group publishes standards in print and electronic form. Its training and advisory services that can be purchased below:

CSA Group Website: <https://www.csagroup.org>

The CSA Group standards that are cited in the proposed Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation are:

Accessible Transit Buses Standard

CSA D435: <https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/D435-16>

School Buses Standard

CSA D250: <https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/2701798>

Motor Vehicles for the Transportation of Persons with Physical Disabilities Standard

CSA D409: <https://www.csagroup.org/store/product/D409-16>

[Back to table of contents](#)

How will the government monitor and ensure compliance with this regulation?

Once in force, Manitoba's Accessibility Compliance Secretariat will monitor and enforce compliance. Compliance officers will review accessibility policies and plans, as well as vehicle design, among other requirements. The first step will be to provide organizations with information about the regulation and free tools to comply. If this approach is ineffective, activities may be escalated to include sanctions, such as orders to comply and the levying of administrative monetary penalties.

Does meeting the requirements of the Accessible Transportation Standard Regulation protect service providers and/or operators from human rights complaints?

No. While accessibility measures speak well of an organization, they do not eliminate the possibility of discrimination as outlined in The Human Rights Code (Manitoba). The Human Rights Code is higher than all other provincial laws and regulations, unless specifically noted.

[Back to table of contents](#)

Contact Information

If you have any questions about compliance with the accessible transportation standard regulation, please contact:

Accessibility Compliance Secretariat

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