

# Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions

Operational guidelines for passengers  
requiring assistance





# Operational guideline for general access bus operators and drivers – passenger assistance

## Authority

This guideline is issued under clause 3.5 of the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions, this is supported by clause 3.5(b). Nothing in this guideline supersedes an operator's requirements under legislation or the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions.

## Scope

This operational guideline applies to **general access** bus services only. The guideline is aimed at long distance and regional services, where passengers may have more luggage.

General access services operating wholly within the urban areas of Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport are exempt from this guideline.

## Period

This guideline applies to the new contracts **commencing in or after 2020**, until further notice.

## Purpose

Bus drivers must provide **reasonable assistance** to passengers to embark and disembark safely.

## Independent travel

Passengers need to be **capable of independent travel**. This means they must be able to travel without supervision - including the ability to pay fares, interchange between services and to enter and exit the bus by themselves or with the use of a mobility device. If passengers are not capable of independent travel they need to be accompanied by an appropriate parent/guardian or personal assistant/carer.

## Assisting passengers to enter and exit the bus

Due to age, disability or illness, some passengers need assistance when entering or exiting the bus. Passengers with a pram or stroller may also require assistance. This assistance may include:

- deployment of a ramp;
- lowering of the bus;
- use of a wheelchair lift; and

- help with other mobility devices (such as walkers).

Except for deploying a ramp or a lift, **drivers are not expected to leave their driving seat** to assist a passenger to enter or exit the bus, but they have the discretion to do so.

Drivers, at their discretion, may provide direct **assistance to people with mobility devices** if:

- it is reasonable and safe for themselves;
- it is safe for the passenger needing assistance;
- it is safe for other passengers; and
- the vehicle is properly secured.

## Seating

Drivers may need to request other passengers to:

- Make particular seats available for passengers, due to age, disability or illness.
- Vacate seats in designated accessible areas for passengers in a wheelchair or storage of mobility devices or prams.

## Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant bus stops

The Tasmanian Government is working with road managers to ensure bus stops become fully accessible, so that a person with a mobility disability can get on or off a bus safely. Under the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002*, all general access bus services are required to be accessible by the end of 2022.

## Assisting passengers with luggage

Bus drivers may be required to **handle and store luggage** on regional or long distance services, or when passengers interchange between services, where an interchange is nominated in the Approved Timetable under the Passenger Service Contract.

**What is 'luggage'?** Luggage includes:

- general baggage;
- wheelchairs (other than a wheelchair in which a passenger travels);
- mobility devices; and

- prams and strollers.

**Where can luggage be stored?** Where storage is available, luggage can be stored in:

- under-floor luggage bins; or
- designated luggage areas on the bus, including trailers.

**Stowing luggage safely:** Drivers need to ensure that luggage is safely stowed; or does not block any aisle, or interfere with the entry or exit of passengers. These requirements are set out in the *Passenger Transport Services Regulations 2013*.

**Health and safety:** Operators and drivers need to ensure that all workplace health and safety requirements are met. Drivers and other staff (such as booking staff) must be trained to explain clearly and politely to passengers the reasons they may not be able to help with luggage, and the alternatives available to them.

**Luggage allowance and handling:** Passengers need to contact the operator to determine luggage allowances including carriage of large items, excluding unoccupied mobility devices.

Passengers also need to contact the operator to determine if bicycles can be carried on buses and if they are, how they should be packaged.

Passengers should be capable of lifting, carrying and stowing their luggage, including bicycles (if allowed) on board the bus without assistance. On regional/long distance routes, the driver may need to assist with handling and stowing larger luggage items under the bus or in a trailer.

**Safety and security of luggage:** Passengers are responsible for the safety and security of their luggage. Neither the bus operator nor State Growth accept responsibility for loss of, or damage to, passenger luggage.



Department of State Growth

GPO Box 536  
Hobart TAS 7001 Australia

Phone: 1800 030 688

Email: [info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au](mailto:info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au)

Web: [www.transport.tas.gov.au](http://www.transport.tas.gov.au)