

Passenger Policies




Tahoe Transportation
DISTRICT

Tahoe Transportation District Policies and Procedures

Effective Date Nov. 1, 2018

www.TahoeTransportation.org



Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) has adopted policies governing the operation of the transit system and the conduct of passengers.

SERVICE AREA

TTD operates local fixed route service in South Lake Tahoe, CA and Stateline, NV with commuter fixed routes connecting to Meyers, Carson City and Carson Valley. The system also includes seasonal service and paratransit service.

PAYMENT OF FARES

Passengers are required to pay the fare at the time of boarding the bus and are expected to have the fare ready. Passengers must pay the exact fare; operators cannot make change. Passengers who cannot pay the fare will not be allowed to board the bus. Only TTD fare cards and cash are accepted. Checks, ATM or credit cards are not accepted. No refunds, exchanges, or credit provided on passes. Passes and fares are not transferable and TTD is not responsible for lost or stolen passes. For more information on fares or passes, please call (530) 541-7149, option 2 or visit TTD's website: tahoetransportation.org/fares

REDUCED FARES

The following persons are eligible for a reduced fare:

- Persons 65 years of age and older;
- Persons who receive Medicare benefits;
- Veterans with a Service Connected Disability designation on their Veteran's Identification Card; and
- Persons with disabilities who meet TTD's eligibility criteria developed under the guidelines established by the ADA and described in Appendix A of the South Shore Area ADA Paratransit Service Policies and Procedures.

Eligible persons must prove eligibility when boarding the bus and/or purchasing a fare.

- Persons over 65 years of age can prove eligibility by presenting a valid photo identification card

- (e.g. state issued ID card or driver's license).
- Persons who receive Medicare can prove eligibility by presenting the Medicare card and a photo identification card.
 - Veterans with the Service Connected Disability designation on their Veteran's Identification Card can prove eligibility by presenting the Veteran's Identification Card.
 - Persons with disabilities who meet TTD's eligibility criteria can only prove eligibility by applying for, receiving and presenting TTD's Paratransit identification card.

For current reduced fare information, please visit TTD's website: tahoetransportation.org/fares.

FREE RIDES

Children ages 4 and under may ride for free, if accompanied by an adult. Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) may ride for free, when accompanying a passenger with a Paratransit identification card with a PCA designation. See Personal Care Attendants below.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is an individual who travels with an ADA eligible passenger to assist that person. This may either be an employee of the eligible passenger, a relative, a friend, or a care provider. The ADA defines a personal care attendant as someone designated or employed specifically to help the eligible individual meet his or her personal needs. PCAs and companions must have the same origin and destination as the eligible passenger they are accompanying.

TTD strongly encourages passengers with health conditions, developmental, or cognitive disabilities to ride with a PCA. Operators cannot serve as caregivers, guardians, or monitor the location where passengers get off the bus. The service area includes many rural and remote regions that could be dangerous for passengers without PCA's. Passengers who require a PCA should complete a TTD ADA Paratransit Application to receive a Paratransit card with a PCA designation. With this card, PCAs ride free of charge.

CHILDREN

TTD's goal is to provide transportation to people of all ages. However, to safely use the TTD transit system, customers must be able to understand written signs and displays, such as those which show bus destinations and route numbers, and to follow instructions issued verbally by employees or over the public address system on the buses. Passengers should also have the maturity to be able to react to unexpected situations that may arise in any transportation system, such as route delays, cancellations or other service disruptions.

For these reasons, children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a responsible adult or youth (at least 16 years old) when riding the bus. Children age 12 and older may ride alone, but we strongly suggest the following:

1. Children should carry identification showing their name, address, home phone number and the name and phone number of the person who will be meeting them.
2. Parents and guardians should review the details of the trip with their child prior to travel, including the bus route they will be riding and the locations where they will be getting on and off the bus. For young children, this information should be given to them in writing, as there are a number of routes and connection points, which can be confusing.
3. Establish a specific location at the destination point to meet the child.
4. No child should be traveling unaccompanied after dark.

TTD is charged with providing safe and reliable service for all customers. We cannot neglect these responsibilities in order to monitor unaccompanied children. Please do not expect operators or customer service representatives to ensure that children board the correct bus, nor expect operators to provide supervision over children on buses or to insure the child departs at their destination.

Children accompanying a Paratransit certified passenger may be considered a PCA or traveling companion. See Personal Care Attendants above.

SIGNAL YOUR BUS STOP

Operators will not necessarily stop at a bus stop unless a passenger onboard signals the operator to stop at the next bus stop. Please use the "stop request" cord to signal the operator to stop.

PASSENGER BEHAVIOR AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Passengers are expected to follow common-sense guidelines for behavior (hereinafter referred to as the “Code of Conduct”):

- Pay the right fare
- Respect the operator and other passengers
- Do not cause safety problems
- Use headphones
- No eating, smoking or littering
- No alcoholic beverages
- Do not harass operator or other riders
- Do not lie down on the seats; use only one seat
- Respect transit property
- Use TTD services and facilities for transportation purposes only

TTD will not provide transit services to passengers who have exhibited behavior that is violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal (hereinafter referred to as “Prohibited Conduct”). Prohibited Conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct, including smoking/vaping, eating, or drinking alcohol on the bus;
- Threats of physical harm to operators, other passengers, or any other service personnel;
- Inappropriate physical contact of any kind with an operator;
- Physical assault or battery on a operator or other passengers;
- Verbal abuse, including the use of profanity, intimidation, or altercation with an operator or other passengers;
- Failure to obey an operator’s lawful direction;
- Harassment of an operator or other passengers;
- Damage to bus equipment or transit property;
- Use of audio or visual equipment that creates sounds;
- Failure to maintain reasonably acceptable personal hygiene standards, which could expose operators or passengers to health and safety risks; and
- Any criminal conduct.

The operator’s primary job is to operate the bus safely. If a passenger engages in Prohibited Conduct, the operator’s first priority is to determine if a passenger’s safety or security is at stake. The operator will assess the severity of the problem and resources available and respond accordingly. The operator, at his/her discretion,

may choose to talk to the passenger, call for assistance, submit a report on the incident at the end of the shift, or take no immediate action.

PRIORITY SEATING

When an individual with a disability enters a bus, and because of a disability, the individual needs to sit in a seat or occupy a wheelchair securement location, the operator will ask passengers to move in order to allow the individual with a disability to occupy the seat or securement location. This includes individuals, except other individuals with a disability or elderly persons, sitting in a location designated as priority seating for elderly persons and persons with disabilities (or other seat as necessary) or individuals sitting in a fold-down or other movable seat in a wheelchair securement location.

BICYCLES

Bicycles may be transported on all TTD fixed and commuter express routes, if the bus in service is equipped with a bike rack. If the bike rack is full, bicycles may be transported inside the bus only if there is space available and it is the final boarding of that stop for the day.

Transportation of bicycles shall be in accordance to the following guidelines:

- Bicycle racks are provided on a first come – first served basis and are allocated on a space available basis. TTD makes no guarantee adequate space will be available.
- There is no additional fare for using the bike rack.
- Persons using the bike rack must have the physical ability to load / unload their bike, or be accompanied by a person willing to assist them.
- For safety reasons, the operator cannot get off the bus to assist passengers. The passenger is responsible for operating and securing their bicycle and the bicycle rack. At no time, shall the operator handle the bicycle.
- No cargo (bags, backpacks, walkers, etc.) shall be allowed or placed in the bicycle rack.
- The passenger utilizes bicycle racks at their own risk and TTD is not responsible for damage to the bicycle or injuries resulting from the use of the bicycle racks.
- The passenger assumes all responsibility for the bicycle at all times.
- The owner of the bicycle, by transporting their bicycle on TTD, accepts responsibility for any damage occurring to the bus and/or any injury

to a person or persons on the bus, any damage or injury caused to persons or property caused by improperly storing or securing the bicycle. The bicycle owner has sole responsibility for the bicycle.

Specific guidelines for transporting bicycles inside a bus:

- The decision to transport a bicycle inside a bus is at the sole discretion of the Road Supervisor on duty.
- The bicycle shall not be allowed on the bus if it would displace seated passengers or require additional passengers to stand after boarding at a future stop.
- The front wheel shall be removed before boarding and shall remain detached from the bicycle during transit.
- The bicycle and front wheel shall be stored with owner at all times and shall not be moved while in transit.
- The bicycle shall be clean and shall not dirty the interior of the bus.
- The bicycle shall not have any sharp edges, which can cut or blemish the interior of the bus.
- When the passenger accompanying the bicycle reaches their destination, the passenger shall remove the bicycle from the bus only after all other passengers getting off the bus at that stop have exited the bus.

CARRY-ON ITEMS

Operators cannot assist passengers with carry-on items. In general, carry-on items are limited to what can easily be contained and controlled by the passenger and/or companion(s). Items too large or too numerous to be reasonably controlled, carried or handled by a passenger are prohibited. In general, packages with a combined weight of no more than 30 pounds are welcome. All items must be stowed out of the aisles or walkways, may not be placed in unoccupied seats and must remain within the passenger's immediate control. Hazardous materials or firearms are prohibited from the buses and transit facilities. Operators may refuse to transport carry-on items.

Mobility Devices: Passengers may bring mobility devices, such as wheelchairs, walkers and rollators, onto the bus. However, TTD fixed route buses can only accommodate a mobility device which does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length measured two (2) inches above

ground, and does not weight more than 600 pounds when occupied.

Use of Portable Oxygen: Oxygen bottles are allowed for passengers who require oxygen. The passenger must maintain control of the oxygen bottle. If the passenger cannot transport the oxygen bottle or maintain control of the bottle, the passenger must have a PCA to perform those functions.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Under DOT ADA regulations, the definition of a service animal is an animal “individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.” If an animal’s only function is to provide emotional support or comfort for the passenger, that animal would not fall under the regulatory training-based definition of a service animal. Pets and animals that are not service animals are not permitted on TTD buses or in transit facilities. TTD is committed to providing safe and comfortable service to all passengers, including passengers with disabilities who travel with trained service animals or service animals-in-training. Trained service animals may accompany passengers free of charge. Please review the rules and important responsibilities for service animals on buses and in transit facilities.

The owner is responsible for controlling and directing the service animal. Do not ask operators or other passengers to hold the animal’s leash.

- Service animals must ride with their owner at all times.
- Service animals must be under the complete control of the passenger they serve at all times.
- Aggressive or dominant behavior will not be tolerated. This includes snarling or growling at other passengers, the operator, or other service animals; jumping on passengers or the operator; or any other behavior that represents a safety concern for the operator or other passengers.
- Service animals must not block the bus aisle, path of travel, or exit doors.
- Service animals must not occupy passenger seats on buses or at transit facilities.
- Customers accompanied by service animals are expected to promptly clean up after their animals, whenever necessary and without being requested. Animals must be clean and pest-free. Please respect the health and safety of other passengers and service animals.

- Service animals that appear abused or mistreated will be reported to the appropriate organizations.

FOOD/DRINK/TOBACCO/ALCOHOL/MARIJUANA

Passengers are prohibited from consuming food on the bus. Drinks are allowed ONLY in an appropriate non-spill travel container that is securely sealed. Passengers are also prohibited from consuming tobacco, alcohol and marijuana products in any form on the bus (including vaping/e-cigarettes).

PASSENGER HYGIENE

TTD strives to make the transport of passengers a pleasant experience. Any person(s) transported by TTD should be mindful of other passengers and their right to a clean environment. Good personal hygiene is necessary to ensure that everyone on board the bus is comfortable while being confined with others in a closed area.

Therefore, all passengers are required to adhere to the guidelines set forth in this policy. Any passenger that refuses to follow the good personal hygiene policy, which includes proper bathing and wearing clean clothing, may be refused transportation services. The hygiene policy extends to service animals.

SAFETY

A passenger may be subject to any reasonable accommodation requirement that will ensure the safety of themselves, other passengers and operators. For example, a passenger may be asked to ride with a PCA, if they are unable to safely board a bus. If an individual is suspended for bad behavior, a PCA may be required if the individual's behavior improves in the presence of the PCA.

REASONABLE MODIFICATION

Regulations require public transportation entities to make reasonable modifications to their transit service policies, practices, and procedures to ensure that programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Individuals with disabilities may request that TTD make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, and procedures in order for that individual to fully use transit services. TTD will accommodate requests provided that:

1. The requestor would not be able to fully use the service without the modification;
2. The fundamental nature of the service, program or activity is not altered;

3. It does not cause a direct threat to the health and safety of others; and
4. It does not cause an undue financial and administrative burden.

Any person seeking a reasonable modification who wants to appeal a reasonable modification determination, or who believes he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of a disability, may submit a modification request, appeal, or complaint for handling in accordance with related procedures that are described in TTD's South Shore Area ADA Paratransit Service Policies and Procedures.

OPERATOR ASSISTANCE POLICY

Operators will assist individuals with disabilities with the use of ramps, lifts, and securement systems. If it is necessary for the operator to leave his or her seat to provide this assistance, they will do so. On buses that use a ramp for entry, the operator may have to assist in pushing a manual wheelchair up the ramp, particularly if the ramp slope is relatively steep. Operators will ensure that passengers with disabilities are able to take advantage of the accessibility and safety features on the bus.

Operators are not permitted to maneuver a mobility device up or down stairs, or to physically lift passengers. Operators are not permitted to carry objects or to load or unload passenger's carry-on items. It is the passenger's responsibility to load, unload and control all carry-on items. Passengers needing more assistance than the operators are allowed to provide are encouraged to make other arrangements for assistance at their pick-up and drop-off points. Any passenger who may require assistance with carrying packages is asked to have a PCA or companion.

USE OF SAFETY BELTS

On those buses equipped with seatbelts, all passengers, including wheelchair and scooter users should use lap and shoulder belts provided. The operator will assist with the belts as needed. Postural support belts attached to the wheelchair are usually not positioned correctly to restrain the occupant safely by themselves, and are not strong enough to withstand crash forces. The terrain and road conditions (e.g., snow and ice) in the Tahoe region make securement and use of lap and shoulder belts especially important.

WHEELCHAIR LIFTS

Boarding: Wheelchair and scooter users should board lift platforms with their back facing the bus (facing outward, not looking into the bus). This is important for properly maneuvering the passenger's wheelchair, and for safety reasons as recommended by lift manufacturers. If a passenger is unable to board facing outward, or if they need to face inward for their own maneuverability reasons, they should alert the operator.

Wheel Locks: Wheelchair and scooter users are required to set the wheel locks or power off the device when riding up or down on a lift.

Boarding Belts: Passengers are strongly encouraged to use a boarding belt, which is a special, separate belt that is used to secure a passenger to their wheelchair while using a lift. Boarding belts are used to prevent serious injuries that could occur if a passenger falls from a lift or ramp. Operators will apply the belt as needed.

WHEELCHAIR LIFT FAILURES

If lifts fail to operate when trying to board passengers, the operator will:

- Inform the passenger that they will contact dispatch to obtain further information.
- Contact dispatch to determine whether a scheduled accessible bus will arrive within 30 minutes and, if not, what alternative transportation solution is planned.
- Communicate the alternative transportation plan to the waiting passenger.

The requirement to provide alternative transportation does not apply if the only reason that a bus cannot accommodate a passenger who needs to use the lift is that the particular bus is full. "Full" can mean:

- The waiting passenger needs to use a securement location, but all securement areas are already occupied by passengers who use wheelchairs, or
- The bus is at capacity, with no space to accommodate any additional passengers.

When there is no space on the bus, TTD is not obligated to provide alternative transportation.

WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT

TTD owned buses accommodate wheelchairs, as defined by the ADA. This includes manual wheelchairs, power wheelchairs, and mobility scooters (both 3- and 4-wheeled). Mobility device users must be able to maneuver into and out of designated securement locations. TTD buses can accommodate wheelchairs up to 30 inches wide and 48 inches long, and can accommodate some larger ones that are able to maneuver into the seating area. However, certain less-maneuverable and very large devices may not fit on lifts, or inside buses. If a passenger is unsure if a wheelchair will fit, please call (530) 541-7149, option 2.

TTD buses with lifts can safely accommodate mobility device/user combinations of up to 600 lbs. Mobility devices exceeding the rated capacity of vehicle lifts may be denied access if they create safety or mechanical problems. Wheelchairs may not be transported with seats in a fully reclined position.

TTD has a mandatory mobility device securement policy to ensure the safety of passengers and limit potential damage to mobility devices. All mobility devices should be secured to the floor of buses during transportation. Operators will secure the wheelchair or scooter. Passenger must set the wheel locks or power off the device when secured. Mobility devices must remain secured while the bus is in motion. Passengers who fail to comply with this policy may be denied transportation, in accordance with ADA regulations. Operators will call their supervisor or dispatch to report the refusal and the refusal will also be captured and preserved on video.

If a wheelchair or scooter cannot be secured adequately because of its design, or if vehicle tie-down equipment is broken or missing, the passenger will still be allowed to ride. The passenger will be informed that riding unsecured is a potential hazard to themselves and other passengers, and in the case of broken or missing tie-downs, what alternative transportation is available.

For safety, passengers using scooters (either 3- or 4-wheeled) or wheelchairs are strongly encouraged to transfer to a regular bus seat whenever possible, as recommended by most scooter manufacturers. The scooter will then be secured in the wheelchair area. Manual wheelchairs should be folded and placed out of the aisle, or secured as needed. Power wheelchairs will be secured in the wheelchair space.

If both securement locations are occupied and there is a passenger in need, the operator will contact the dispatcher and advise the passenger when the next bus will arrive.

WALKERS AND ROLLATORS

Walkers must be placed out of the aisles. Rollators (4-wheeled walkers with seats) must be folded and placed out of aisles. Walker and rollator users must always sit in a regular bus seat. Walkers and rollators cannot be used as a seat while riding the bus.

CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITY

TTD recommends that a PCA accompany passengers with health conditions, or who are mentally or cognitively impaired or have severe memory problems. Passengers with cognitive impairments will only be allowed to use the service if the passenger exhibits safe behavior on the bus. An attendant or caregiver must be present at the pick-up and drop-off points for passengers who cannot be safely left on their own at either the pick up or drop-off point. It is the responsibility of the passenger's caregiver or family to inform TTD of such passengers. Operators have no special responsibilities for these passengers and no responsibilities whatsoever after these passengers exit the bus.

An adult accompanying a child is responsible for the child. Operators are not permitted to carry children on or off the bus. Children under the age of eight or under 4 feet 9 inches tall, are required by law to use a child safety seat or other safety restraint system. Passengers are responsible for providing such safety equipment and for securing it and the child.

SUSPENSION OF SERVICE

Service will immediately be suspended to passengers who engage in Prohibited Conduct and a notice of suspension will be mailed to the passenger. TTD shall conduct an investigation of the Prohibited Conduct that may include interviewing the passenger, other passengers, the operator, and others witnesses, as well as reviewing surveillance video footage. TTD shall make a determination regarding the length of the suspension within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the incident resulting in the suspension.

In determining the length of the suspension and the conditions for the reinstatement of the suspended

passenger's riding privileges, TTD shall consider the cause of the Prohibited Conduct and TTD's ability to resolve the matter in conjunction with the suspended passenger and/or the other parties involved to ensure that the Prohibited Conduct will cease. Past incidents of Prohibited Conduct will also be considered when determining the length of the suspension. Passengers may present information opposing the suspension of their service by contacting the TTD office. Information concerning the passenger's right to present information will be included in the notice of suspension.

Prohibited Conduct that is determined to be due to a disability of the passenger may not result in a suspension. However, TTD may require the passenger to travel with a self-provided PCA. When service is reinstated for an individual whose service had been suspended for violation of this Policy, the individual's behavior will be monitored for a period of sixty (60) days to determine that the individual can control his/her behavior. If Prohibited Conduct reoccurs, the individual may be required to travel with a self-provided PCA or transit services may be suspended in accordance with TTD's South Shore Area ADA Paratransit Service Policies and Procedures.

LOST AND FOUND

Passengers are responsible for keeping track of personal belongings. If a passenger discovers that something was left on a bus, please call (530) 541-7149, option 8. The passenger will then be contacted if the item is located. The passenger will have 30 days to retrieve the item before it is donated to charity or disposed.

WINTER REMINDERS

Take an earlier bus: Buses only move as quickly as traffic allows. Consider taking an earlier bus to ensure arrival to the destination on time.

Play it safe: Buses can slide on snow and ice. Stay back from the curb until the bus comes to a complete stop.

Be visible: During the increased darkness of winter, it is important passengers make themselves visible to the approaching bus. Wear light-colored clothing and use a flashlight or illuminated phone to signal presence to bus operator.

Step carefully: Bus steps and sidewalks become slippery from snow. Use the handrails when entering or exiting the bus.

Dress warmly: Pack or put on an extra layer. Even a short wait at a bus stop can be dangerous if not dressed for the conditions. Bus doors open frequently and the temperature in the bus interior is variable.

Pack a little patience: Remember the operator is doing his or her best to make sure everyone arrives at their destination safely.

SAFETY, SERVICE, SCHEDULE

TTD's operations order of priority is safety, service, and schedule. While TTD's goal is to maintain the schedule, the considerations for passenger and staff safety will always come first.

CONTACT

Passenger feedback is valuable and problems can only be resolved if TTD staff is aware of the issue, so please do not hesitate to call. If there are questions, suggestions, compliments, or complaints, please call (530) 541-7149, option 2. If there is a complaint about service, please contact TTD and be prepared to provide name, address, phone number and a detailed explanation of the complaint (e.g., date and time of incident, vehicle number, operator's name, etc.). This will allow staff to more completely investigate and respond to the complaint and improve service.

If the complaint is still not resolved to your satisfaction within ten (10) business days, you may submit the complaint in writing to:

TTD
Transit Systems Program Manager
P.O. Box 499
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448

You may request to meet personally with the Transit Systems Program Manager to discuss the problem and/or request a written response within ten (10) business days. The Transit Systems Program Manager has discretion to enlist the assistance of other resources, as appropriate, in resolving your problem. The decision of the Transit Systems Program Manager shall be final.

We welcome your feedback!

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