



## POLICY CSD-12: Ride Norfolk – Accessibility Policy

### Community Services

**Approval Date:** November 20, 2013  
**Approval Authority:** Senior Leadership Team  
**Effective Date:** November 20, 2013  
**Revision Date/s:**

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to address the accessibility requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11) and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07), under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

#### **Policy Statement:**

Ride Norfolk is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Ride Norfolk recognizes the diverse needs of all our riders and will respond by striving to provide services that are accessible to all.

#### **Definitions:**

**Service Provider:** The contractor which the Corporation of Norfolk County has established an agreement with to provide a safe, secure and reliable public transportation service.

**Operator:** The staff of the Service Provider, the drivers, the equipment and all services provided by the Service Provider to perform the service of Ride Norfolk.

**Ride Norfolk:** The public transit system collaboratively developed by the Ride Norfolk Transportation Committee members to provide service within the geographic boundaries of Norfolk County. Ride Norfolk includes the Ride Norfolk Transportation Committee and the Public Transportation Coordinator.

**Public Transportation Coordinator (PTC):** The paid employee of Norfolk County. The PTC is responsible for transit operations and planning on behalf of the Ride Norfolk Transportation Committee.

**Ride Norfolk Transportation Committee:** Cooperative venture of service agencies operating in Norfolk County that provide the overall guidance and direction in the development, implementation and operation of a fixed route and on demand public transit service in Norfolk County.

## **Implementation Procedure:**

### **General Standards**

Ride Norfolk is an initiative of Norfolk County to provide a public transportation system. Ride Norfolk is a designated public sector organization under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) as it falls under Norfolk County's timelines for compliance.

### **Establishment of Accessibility Plans**

Norfolk County shall produce a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to include the requirements of Ride Norfolk. The plan shall be available on Norfolk County and Ride Norfolk's websites and shall be made available in an accessible format or with communication supports upon request. Progress on the measures taken to implement the strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements shall be provided annually. The plan shall be reviewed and updated at least once every five years. Ride Norfolk may choose to develop an individual Accessibility Plan.

### **Establishment of Accessibility Policies**

Norfolk County maintains policies governing how the County shall meet its requirements under the AODA. Ride Norfolk shall achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements referred to in the AODA, Ontario Regulation 191/11 and Ontario Regulation 429/07.

### **Procurement of Goods, Services, Facilities and Kiosks**

When procuring goods, services, facilities or self-service kiosks, Ride Norfolk shall incorporate accessibility features and criteria. When it is not feasible to incorporate accessibility features and criteria, Ride Norfolk shall provide an explanation upon request.

### **Accessibility Training**

Ride Norfolk and the Service Provider shall conduct accessibility training to employees, volunteers, those involved in the Ride Norfolk Transportation Committee and for all persons who participate in developing policies, provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of Ride Norfolk. The accessibility training shall include training on:

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)
- The requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11) as it pertains to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons

- The Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities
- Safe use of accessibility equipment and features
- Acceptable modifications to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails
- Emergency preparedness and response procedures related to the safety of persons with disabilities

Training will be provided to staff, volunteers and third parties as soon as practicable after they are assigned the applicable duties as well as on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the Ride Norfolk policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

Ride Norfolk's Public Transportation Coordinator and the Service Provider are responsible to keep a record of the training provided including dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

### **Consultation**

Ride Norfolk will consult with its Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities in the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters.

Norfolk County will identify planning requirements for accessible bus stops and shelters including steps that will be taken to meet the goal of accessible bus stops and shelters in its Accessibility Plan. When Norfolk County enters into an arrangement with a person respecting the construction of bus stops and shelters in its jurisdiction, it shall ensure that the person participates in the consultation and planning.

### **Transit Stops**

Operators will ensure that persons with disabilities are able to board and disembark the vehicle at the closest available safe location along the same transit route if the operator determines that the official stop is not accessible. When determining where the safe location may be situated, the Service Provider and Operator will give consideration to the preferences of the person with a disability. Operators shall promptly report to the Public Transportation Coordinator where a transit stop is inaccessible or temporarily inaccessible or where a temporary barrier exists.

### **Stops and Shelters**

Ride Norfolk shall consult with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities in the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops or shelter.

### **On-Board and Pre-Boarding Announcements**

The service provider will make announcements slowly, clearly and precisely at all destination points or available route stops while the vehicle is on route or while the vehicle is being operated. The service provider will ensure that on request, pre-boarding verbal announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop will be

made. Upon request, the operator will make alternate arrangements with a passenger who is hard of hearing or deaf to communicate the announcements prior to departure.

### **Availability of Information on Accessibility Equipment**

Ride Norfolk will make publicly available their current information on the accessible equipment and accessibility features of their vehicles, routes, and services. Information will be available at [www.ridenorfolk.ca](http://www.ridenorfolk.ca) and available in brochures where appropriate.

Information will be provided in accessible formats upon request.

### **Technical Requirements of Vehicles**

The Service Provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles that are manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 are in compliance with the following sections outlined in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11):

- Section 53. Requirements re grab bars, etc.
- Section 54. Floors and carpeted surfaces
- Section 55. Allocated mobility aid spaces
- Section 56. Stop-requests and emergency response controls
- Section 57. Lighting features
- Section 58. Signage
- Section 59. Lifting Devices, etc
- Section 60. Steps
- Section 61. Indicators and alarms

### **Non-Functioning Accessibility Equipment**

If the accessibility equipment on the vehicle is not functioning and equivalent service cannot be provided, Ride Norfolk will take reasonable steps including arranging alternative transportation to accommodate people with disabilities. The Service Provider will repair accessibility equipment as soon as practicable.

### **Alternative Accessible Methods of Transportation**

Ride Norfolk will provide persons with disabilities with an alternative accessible method of transportation if the person with a disability cannot use our conventional transportation service. Ride Norfolk will make arrangements with local agencies that provide transportation to persons with disabilities.

### **Emergency Preparedness and Response Policies**

Ride Norfolk and the Transportation Committee establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities and make those policies available to the public.

### **Fares**

Ride Norfolk will not charge people with disabilities a higher fare than it charges to people without disabilities for the same trip. Ride Norfolk will not charge a fare to a

support person who is accompanying a person with a disability, when the person with a disability has a need for a support person to travel with them.

### **Accessible Fare Payment**

Alternative fare payment options are available to persons with disabilities who cannot, because of their disability, use fare payment. The bus driver will provide assistance with putting fare in the box or will take the box to the person. Alternative arrangements for payment can be made through the Public Transportation Coordinator or the bus driver.

### **Service Animals**

People with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal are permitted access to all public areas of Ride Norfolk. All service animals must be under the care and control of their handler at all times. A service animal must not place passengers or bus operators at risk.

All people using a service animal must meet the requirements stated in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005. Passengers with service animals may be asked to present a letter from a physician or nurse stating that the animal is required for reasons of a disability.

### **Support Person**

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be permitted to have that person accompany them while using Ride Norfolk services. There shall be no charge to support persons accompanying a person with a disability while using Ride Norfolk. It is the responsibility of a person with a disability to demonstrate to the service provider their need for a support person to accompany them.

Ride Norfolk may deem it necessary to require a support person for a person with a disability in order to protect the health and safety of that person or others using the service. This will only occur after a consultation with the person with a disability and when it is the only means to allow the person with a disability to access the service.

### **Assistance and Requirements to People with Disabilities**

The Operator of Ride Norfolk will:

- Deploy lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates upon the request of a person with a disability.
- Ensure that adequate time is provided to persons with disabilities to safely board, be secured and deboard transportation vehicles and that assistance will be provided, upon request for these activities.
- Assist with safe and careful storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices used by persons with disabilities. Operators will store and return mobility aids and mobility assistive devices to people with disabilities who use them.

Ride Norfolk will not charge a fee for the storage of a mobility aid or a mobility assistive device.

### **Courtesy Seating**

Ride Norfolk will designate courtesy seating at the front of the vehicle. These seats are reserved for people of all ages with disabilities who have difficulty moving within the bus. Signage depicting the courtesy seating and such wording as “priority seating must be vacated for persons with disabilities” will be prominently displayed adjacent to these seats. The use of the seats will not incur any extra cost to the passenger.

A communication strategy will be designed to inform the public about the purpose of the seating through Ride Norfolk’s website and Norfolk County’s corporate advertising as well as through Ride Norfolk’s brochures when updated. The Public Transportation Coordinator will inform the public during education sessions.

### **Service Disruption**

Where a route or scheduled service is temporarily changed and the change is known in advance of the commencement of the trip, Ride Norfolk and the Service Provider shall:

- Make available alternate accessible arrangements to transfer persons with disabilities to their route destination where previous alternate arrangements deemed inaccessible.
- Ensure information on alternate arrangements is communicated in a manner that takes into account the persons disability.

### **Communication and Feedback Process**

Ride Norfolk, the Service Provider and Operators will communicate with people with disabilities in a way that takes into account their disability.

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way Ride Norfolk provides goods and services to people with disabilities can do so in any form (i.e. in person, by telephone, in writing, email, fax, online)

Norfolk County comment cards are available at County Administration Building customer service counters, on the Norfolk County website and on Ride Norfolk buses.

All feedback will be directed to:

The Public Transportation Coordinator  
4077 Highway #3 East  
Simcoe, ON N3Y 4T2  
Telephone: 519.428.3178  
Email: [info@ridenorfolk.ca](mailto:info@ridenorfolk.ca)  
Fax: 519-428-0074

All feedback will be kept in strict confidence and used to improve customer service. An answer to feedback is not mandatory, however depending on the situation, it may be appropriate to respond to the customer. Should an answer be deemed appropriate and should the customer have chosen to supply his or her contact information, the customer will be provided with a response.

Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public on Ride Norfolk's website and other appropriate locations.

**Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

Except as otherwise provided by the AODA, Ride Norfolk shall, upon request provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner and take into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability, and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

Ride Norfolk will consult with the person requesting the document to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. Final determination of the alternate format or communication support is undertaken by Ride Norfolk.

Ride Norfolk will only provide accessible formats and communication supports for information that Ride Norfolk produces.

Printed material and publications of Ride Norfolk shall notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports upon request and include relevant contact information.

**Documentation**

Ride Norfolk will post notice on its website that this policy and any other documents required will be made available, upon request, in the appropriate format or communication support.

**Contact Information**

For more information about this policy, or questions related to accessibility at Ride Norfolk please contact us:

**Ride Norfolk**

4077 Highway #3 East, Box 732 Simcoe Ontario, N3Y 4T2

Telephone: 519-428-3178

Fax: 519-428-0074

Email: [info@ridenorfolk.ca](mailto:info@ridenorfolk.ca)

**Links**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_05a11\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm)

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws\\_src\\_regs\\_r07429\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws_src_regs_r07429_e.htm)

Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2011/elaws\\_src\\_regs\\_r11191\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2011/elaws_src_regs_r11191_e.htm)

Ministry of Community and Social Services

<http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario>

AccessON

[www.accesson.ca](http://www.accesson.ca)