



## **ADA Customer Service Policy**

### **Plan Statement**

People For People is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are provided with full and equal access to programs, services, and activities provided by People For People. People For People has a sincere commitment to the satisfaction and accommodation of all our customers, regardless of disability.

### **ADA Policy**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. The ADA is a civil rights legislation which requires that persons with disabilities receive transportation services equal to those available on the fixed route service. The ADA prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities.

It is the policy of People For People that, when viewed in their entirety, services, programs, facilities, and communications provided by People For People, directly or by a contracted service provider, are readily accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities to the maximum extent possible. 49.CFR 37.105

### **Fares**

People For People receives funding to operate its transportation services from WSDOT, social service agencies, and private donations. Rider fares are not required in these service areas, but donations are accepted. Grant Transit Authority (GTA) contracts with People For People to provide ADA services in GTA's service area. GTA sets the rider fares for these ADA transportation services in their area.

### **Holiday Closures**

People For People operates half-day transportation services on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. People For People does not operate transportation services on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the Day after Thanksgiving.

### **ADA Customer Service Contact Information**

Human Resource Representative, People For People  
302 West Lincoln, Yakima, WA 98902  
(509) 248-6726, Toll Free TTY/TDD 800-606-1302 or 509-453-1302

### **Requesting ADA Service**

Complementary paratransit and special needs transportation shall be provided by People For People with professionally trained operators and their fleet of ADA accessible vehicles.



Individuals requesting paratransit transportation services may contact People For People's Transportation offices in Yakima at (509) 457-1111 and Moses Lake at (509) 765-9249 Ext. 555. Paratransit services are provided for trips with origins and destinations within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of a route and within 30 minutes of the scheduled fixed route service. Eligibility for ADA paratransit services is as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **ADA Customer Service Notification**

People For People will notify the public of the ADA policy in public brochures, transportation schedules, comment cards, complaint forms, on the website at [www.pfp.org](http://www.pfp.org). The following statement shall be included: "People For People is an equal opportunity employer and provider of employment and training and other services. People For People does not discriminate in providing services on the grounds of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical handicap. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities. To obtain more information on People For People's non-discrimination obligations or to file a Title VI complaint, contact: Human Resource Representative, People For People, 304 West Lincoln, Yakima, WA 98902, (509) 248-6726, TTY 711."

ADA customer service information shall be disseminated to People For People employees during the new employee orientation and annually to remind employees of the ADA policy and their responsibility in their daily work and service to our community.

### **Transportation Compliance**

The Federal Transit Administration works to ensure nondiscriminatory transportation in compliance with the ADA law. Persons with disabilities must be able to receive transportation services equal to those available on the fixed route service. In most small urban and rural communities, this is accomplished by providing a demand-response service instead of fixed-route service. People For People provides demand-response and route deviated services to comply with the ADA law.

People For People is contracted by Grant Transit Authority (GTA) to provide demand-response services to meet ADA requirements for GTA's service area. ADA services are for persons with disabilities who have origins and destinations within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of a GTA fixed route and within 30 minutes of the scheduled fixed route service. GTA's ADA policy provides further details on these ADA transportation services.

### **Operator Training**

Operators shall be trained to safely and proficiently operate ADA equipment on People For People vehicles and to properly assist individuals with disabilities. Operators will be trained by certified trainers of the Passenger Service and Safety Training (PASS) program. PASS is a comprehensive training program that instructs operators on how to provide passenger



assistance techniques and sensitivity skills appropriate for serving passengers with special needs.

### **Approved Equipment**

Passengers will be transported, provided the lift and vehicle will physically accommodate them, unless doing so is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements (e.g. the combined weight of the wheelchair/occupant exceeds that of the lift specifications). Additionally, People For People can accommodate mobility devices that meet the following minimum standards:

- *Wheelchair* means a mobility aid belonging to any class of three or more wheels, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether manually operated or powered.
- Walkers must be collapsible and able to be stored between seats or in the vehicle's trunk.
- The mobility device must be in good working order; with batteries charged, tires inflated, working brakes, footrests attached, and all parts secure. (49 CFR 37.3)
- Segway (a two-wheeled, gyroscopically stabilized, battery-powered transportation device).

### **Mobility Device Brakes**

When occupying a lift or securement area, it is recommended that passengers apply the brakes on their mobility devices; however, they are not required to do so. With power chairs or scooters, it is recommended that the power switch be turned to the "off" position. Again, this is not mandatory.

### **Portable Oxygen Use**

Individuals with disabilities who use portable oxygen devices are allowed to travel with respirators and properly secured portable oxygen supplies. Oxygen supplies must not obstruct the aisle. (49 CFR 37.167(h))

### **Securement Policy**

Operators will use front and rear tie-downs to secure mobility devices. Operators will secure mobility devices at the strongest parts of the device; however, the passenger can indicate the most optimal tie-down spot. The mobility device will be secured front facing unless otherwise requested by the passenger. Operators will assist passengers with securement systems, ramps, and seatbelts; however, operators cannot assist riders using power chairs or scooters with the operation of their equipment. People For People cannot refuse to transport someone whose mobility device cannot be satisfactorily restrained provided that mobility device fits within the definition described in this policy. (49 CFR 37.165)



### **Stop Announcements**

Stops at major intersections, transfer points, and destination points will be announced on fixed route buses. Operators will announce other stops upon request. (49 CFR 37.167 (a-c))

### **Personal Care Attendants**

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) may ride with an individual with a disability at no charge. A PCA is someone who travels with, and helps, a rider who is not able to travel alone. Riders must provide their own PCA if needed and should let People For People know they will be traveling with a PCA when applying for eligibility. This information will guarantee a place for the PCA to ride with the individual with a disability. Guests and companions may also ride with the individual with a disability, as required by 49 CFR 37 (d). Guests and companions must pay the same fare as paid by the individual with a disability. A guest or companion is anyone who rides with the individual with a disability but is not designated as their PCA.

### **Service Animals**

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. In order to ride People For People transportation:

- The animal must be on a leash or in a container, remain under control of the owner, and behave appropriately.
- Birds, reptiles, amphibians, rodents, and cats must be kept in an enclosed carrier/container.
- The animal must remain at the rider's feet or on the rider's lap. It may not sit on a vehicle seat.
- The animal must not be aggressive toward people or other animals. (49 CFR 37.167 (d))

### **Boarding Assistance**

Operators shall position the bus to make boarding and de-boarding as easy as possible for everyone. Operators shall provide assistance to passengers upon request. Passengers with disabilities shall be allowed adequate time to board and disembark the vehicle.

### **Maintenance of Lifts or Ramps**

Operators shall test the lift or ramp during the pre-trip inspection. Break down of accessibility equipment shall be reported immediately to dispatch. A vehicle with an inoperable lift or ramp will be removed from service as soon as possible and will not be returned to service until repaired. If there is a lift or ramp failure, a replacement vehicle will be dispatched if the next trip to the destination of any passenger using a mobility device is scheduled in more than 30 minutes. If the next trip to the destination of any passenger using a mobility device is scheduled in 30 minutes or less, a replacement vehicle will be dispatched if available. (49.CFR 37.163)



### **Priority Seating**

Upon request, operators shall ask – but not require – passengers to yield priority seating at the front of the bus to seniors and persons with disabilities. Operators are not required to enforce the priority seating designation beyond making such a request.

### **Reserved Seating**

Mobility device securement areas on buses are reserved. Passengers using common mobility aids shall be boarded if the securement areas are not otherwise occupied by a mobility device, regardless of the number of passengers on the bus. Operators are required to ask passengers sitting in the securement areas to move to other available seats or to stand.

### **Suspension of Service**

A rider's privileges may be suspended for any of the following infractions on People For People's property, including vehicles or bus stops:

- Smoking or carrying a lit pipe, cigar, e-cigarette, or cigarette (unless in a designated smoking area).
- Discarding or dumping litter in places other than the recognized receptacles.
- Consuming alcoholic beverages or in possession of alcoholic beverages.
- Loud, raucous, unruly, harmful, or harassing behavior.
- Engaging in other conduct that is inconsistent with the intended purpose of the transit facility, station, or vehicle. (RCW 9.91.025)

### **Paratransit**

#### **1. Eligibility Requirements**

Individuals in People For People's service area are eligible to use People For People paratransit service if they indicate they have one of the following special needs: a disability, 60 years or older, 18 years or younger, low-income, or are a veteran. Individuals call People For People Dispatch to sign up for services. If a special needs individual, who is covered by Medicaid, contacts People For People Dispatch they are re-directed to Medicaid Broker services.

#### **2. Categories of Eligibility**

People For People does not classify applicants by the categories: conditional, unconditional, or temporary. All applicants for People For People's paratransit services are fully eligible if they have a disability.

#### **3. Service Area**



People For People's paratransit services are provided in the parts of Adams, Grant, Lincoln, and Yakima counties that are not served by a public transportation provider. Additionally, GTA contracts with People For People to provide ADA services in GTA's service area.

#### **4. Origin to Destination Service**

Based on the functional ability of the rider, the driver will provide either curb-to-curb or door-to-door service in People For People's service areas. (49 CFR 37.129)

#### **5. Trip Scheduling**

Paratransit trips are scheduled Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Paratransit trips must be scheduled at least the day before the trip in Adams, Grant and Lincoln counties, and 48-hours ahead in Yakima County.

#### **6. Trip Cancellation/Missed**

If an individual schedules a ride and cannot meet the vehicle, the individual must cancel the scheduled ride at least two (2) hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time. The individual will be considered a "no show" if the individual is not at the pick-up point within five (5) minutes of the scheduled pick-up time and the trip is not canceled at least two (2) hours prior to the scheduled pick-up time or if the individual chooses not to ride after the vehicle arrives.

Customers may have their travel privileges suspended if they exhibit a pattern or practice of repeated "no shows," cancellations, or failures to board. Warning letters will be sent to individuals with a "no show" for first and second offenses. After the third offense, these persons may be suspended from using the service for a 30-day period. Suspensions may be appealed.

If People For People fails to pick up an individual at the scheduled time, the individual should contact the People For People's Transportation Office to report the "missed trip" and every attempt will be made to re-schedule the trip.

#### **7. Paratransit Hours**

People For People paratransit services operate the same hours as the fixed route system. Service is typically provided Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

#### **Visitor Eligibility**

Visitors are eligible for People For People's paratransit transportation services if they indicate they have one of the following special needs: a disability, 60 years or older, 18 years or younger, low-income, or are a veteran. They may schedule a ride by contacting People For People's Transportation offices in Yakima at (509) 457-1111 or Moses Lake at (509) 765-9249 Ext. 555.



### **Reasonable Modification**

Requests for modifications of People For People's Transportation policies, practices, or procedures to accommodate an individual with a disability may be made either in advance or at the time of the transportation service. People For People's Transportation Department is best able to address and accommodate a request when customers make their requests before the trip. For questions, please contact People For People's Transportation offices in Yakima at (509) 457-1111 or Moses Lake at (509) 765-9249 Ext. 555.

### **Direct Threat**

If a person is violent, seriously disruptive, or engaging in illegal conduct, People For People's Transportation Department may, consistent with established procedures for all riders, refuse to carry the passenger. A person who poses a significant risk to others may be excluded from People For People's service if reasonable modifications to the public accommodation's policies, practices, or procedures will not eliminate that risk. (49CFR 37.5 App. D/ 29 CFR 36.208)

Behaviors that may cause immediate exclusion from the system include:

- Destruction of public property (the vehicle, and/or its furnishings).
- Doing violence to others or to oneself.
- Behavior that is seriously unruly, seriously disruptive, threatening, or frightening to others.
- Behavior that interferes with the safe operation of the vehicle.
- Violations of service animal policy by failing to control one's service animal.
- Violations of operating rules governing the provision of transportation system-wide.
- Engaging in illegal conduct.
- Other conduct judged by People For People's Transportation Department to represent an actual or potential threat to the health, safety or wellbeing of oneself, the operator, other passengers, and/or transit personnel.

Passengers who are excluded from the system due to a direct threat have the ability to request an administrative appeal by following the complaint process described below.

### **Complaint Process**

People For People has established the customer complaint procedures for customers wishing to file a complaint as shown below.

#### **1. Complaint Policy**

People For People is committed to providing safe, reliable, and accessible transportation options for the community.



## **2. How to File a Complaint:**

The complainant may file a signed, written complaint up to one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of the alleged discrimination. The complaint should include the following information:

- Your name, mailing address, and how to contact you (i.e., telephone number, email address, etc.).
- How, when, where, and why you believe you were discriminated against. Include the location, names, and contact information of any witnesses.
- Other information that you deem significant.

The complaint form located on People For People website: [www.pfp.org](http://www.pfp.org) may be used to submit the complaint information. The complaint may be filed in writing with People For People at the following address:

Transportation Department, People For People  
302 West Lincoln, Yakima, WA 98902

*Note: People For People encourages all complainants to certify all mail that is sent and/or ensure that all written correspondence can be easily tracked.*

## **3. What happens to the complaint after it is submitted?**

All complaints alleging discrimination, on the basis of disability, in a service or benefit provided by People For People, will be directly addressed by People For People. People For People shall make every effort to address all complaints in an expeditious and thorough manner.

A letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be mailed within seven days. Please note that in responding to any requests for additional information, a complainant's failure to provide the requested information may result in the administrative closure of the complaint.

## **4. How will the complainant be notified of the outcome of the complaint?**

People For People will send a final written response letter to the complainant. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the complainant is advised of their right to:

- Appeal the decision within seven calendar days of receipt of the final written response from People For People.
- File a complaint externally with the appropriate governing entity.

## **5. Complaint Tracking:**





All ADA complaints shall be tracked with the following information:

- Type of complaint, investigation, or lawsuit.
- Date of complaint, investigation, or lawsuit.
- Summary of the complaint, investigation, or lawsuit.
- The status of the complaint, investigation, or lawsuit.
- Action taken in response to the complaint, investigation, or lawsuit.

All documents shall be retained for six years following the final action regarding the complaint, investigation, or lawsuit.