

Factsheet



Wheelchair Accessible Taxis Frequently Asked Questions

Wheelchair accessible taxis play an important role in the point to point transport industry providing safe passenger services for people in wheelchairs. This fact sheet answers frequently asked questions regarding the management of wheelchair accessible vehicles and their drivers.

Everyone involved in the provision of wheelchair accessible services has specific safety obligations which ensure the vehicle being used is safe and compliant. As a person involved in the provision of wheelchair accessible services it is important that you understand your safety duties and obligations. Go to our [website](#) for more information on safety standards.

COVID-19

COVID-19 precautions are currently in place - Service providers and drivers of point to point transport vehicles should familiarise themselves with their requirements under the current [Public Health Order](#) and carry out good hygiene and safety practices to protect themselves and passengers from the spread of illness.

For information and advice about the coronavirus (COVID-19), service providers and drivers can refer to the [COVID-19 Resources Page](#) (<https://www.pointtopoint.nsw.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-updates>)

What are the requirements of a vehicle providing wheelchair accessible passenger services?

Wheelchair accessible taxis must:

- contain a space at least 1,300 mm long by 800 mm wide by 1,500 mm high for each wheelchair carried by the taxi [see image below]
- have no intrusions into that space, other than adjustable restraint devices
- comply with specified safety standards relating to hoists and ramps for people with disabilities, wheelchairs in motor vehicles, and wheelchair tie-down and restraint systems
- comply with the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport
- carry an appropriate number of wheelchair restraints
- be supplied with an approved child restraint



When can the fare calculation device be started and stopped?

- The fare calculation device (meter) can be started once the passenger and their wheelchair have been secured safely into the vehicle at the start of your trip.
- The driver is required to turn the meter off when the taxi arrives at the specified destination, before assisting the passenger from the taxi or unloading their wheelchair from the vehicle.
- The driver should pause the meter off when the journey has temporarily stopped, for example, to refuel the vehicle.
- The meter should be stopped when the driver asks for fare payment.

Are passengers allowed to travel while seated in their wheelchair or mobility scooter?

- Passengers are not permitted to travel while seated in a mobility scooter. **They must be seated in the normal passenger seats and restrained with a seat belt prior to the scooter being loaded and secured.** This is for their own safety and that of the driver and any other customers in the taxi.
- A scooter must only be loaded if it can be safely loaded, carried and adequately secured using approved restraints. The scooter must be secured using all restraints to prevent movement of the scooter during the journey.
- Passengers may travel while seated in a wheelchair only if it can be adequately secured using a four-point restraint system.
- If the wheelchair does not have a four-point restraint system, then the passenger cannot be transported while seated in the wheelchair. In this case, the **passenger will need to be seated in the normal passenger seats and restrained with a seat belt.**
- For more information visit <https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/accessible-travel/travelling-by-wheelchair-accessible-taxi>

Do drivers need to give priority to bookings for passengers in wheelchairs?

Yes. WATs must give priority to hirings for people who use wheelchairs, but the vehicle may be used to carry other passengers when not engaged with wheelchair bookings. It is important to remember that WATs support transport services for people in a wheelchair who might not otherwise have greater mobility.

As part of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Preferential Hiring Compliance Policy, ongoing compliance monitoring takes place to ensure wheelchair accessible taxi drivers are giving preference to customers in wheelchairs.

The Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Preferential Hiring Compliance Policy can be found [here](#).

What are the rules around Transport Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TTSS) dockets?

Transport for NSW is responsible for the TTSS.

- Anyone using a wheelchair or mobility scooter can travel in a WAT, but the driver will only receive the TTSS subsidy payment if the passenger pays with an M50 docket. If a passenger pays with any other type of docket, the driver will not receive the subsidy payment. The WAT subsidy only applies to passengers who are approved members in the WAT scheme using M50 dockets travelling in a WAT.
- Only the person named on the docket can use it
- Only one docket can be used per trip
- TTSS Dockets can only be used in taxis and the meter must be used to determine the fare
- Taxi drivers are permitted to charge waiting time for a TTSS participant who is not ready to commence a booked journey; for passengers travelling in wheelchairs, waiting time must not be charged while the wheelchair is being loaded or unloaded.
- TTSS Dockets can be used to pay half of the fare up to a maximum of \$60. For example: If the total fare is \$80, the passenger can use a docket to pay \$40 towards the fare and pay the remaining \$40 themselves. If the total fare is \$140, the passenger can use a docket to pay \$60 (maximum subsidy) of the fare and pay the remaining \$80 themselves.
- For more information visit:
 - <https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/ways-to-get-around/taxi-hire-vehicle/taxi-subsidy-scheme>
 - <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/programs/point-to-point-transport/wheelchair-accessible-taxis>
 - <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/programs/point-to-point-transport/transport-disability-incentives-and-subsidies>

Where can the driver park to load and unload the passenger?

Drivers of WATS can stand and stop the vehicle in the same areas as other taxis. Drivers must obey any signage and park **legally and safely** when dropping off and picking up passengers.

How can a WAT licence be renewed?

Applications and renewals for wheelchair accessible taxi licences can be made on the Industry Portal.

There are no fees applying to wheelchair accessible taxi licences. However, all wheelchair accessible taxi licences are monitored for compliance with the conditions of the licence which include giving preference to wheelchair users. Failure to comply may result in a licence not being renewed.

Drivers must understand their safety duties and obligations and ensure they comply. Go to our [website](#) for more information on safety standards for drivers.

What do drivers of WAT vehicles need to know and do?

Taxi Service Providers, facilitators, and Booking Service Providers must ensure the driver of a WAT is competent. The drivers must:

- be able to demonstrate competence in safely loading, restraining and unloading a person.
- be competent in communicating with, and assisting, passengers with differing levels of ability
- accept a hiring for a person in a wheelchair in preference to a hiring for a person not using a wheelchair.
- ensure that the wheelchair is safely secured to the vehicle throughout the hiring.
- not start the fare calculation device (meter) before the taxi is ready to safely transport a passenger in a wheelchair and must terminate the hiring when the taxi stops at the destination.

Do drivers need to be trained to provide passenger services in a WAT?

Yes, Taxi Service Providers, facilitators, and Booking Service Providers must ensure the driver of a WAT is competent in loading, unloading and transporting passengers in a wheelchair. This must meet elements 3 and 4 of the Commonwealth issued document: *TLIC2040 Provide wheelchair accessible taxi services to passengers with disabilities*. This competence must apply in different types of wheelchairs; in different locations; and in different situations such as accidents, medical incidents, building sites, etc.

See [Point to Point Transport \(Taxis and Hire Vehicles\) Regulation 2017 clause 26](#)

Whether you are a taxi service provider, facilitator of a service or booking service provider providing wheelchair accessible vehicles, you are required to ensure your drivers are competent.

Once a WAT driver has been on boarded and trained, do they need further training?

Drivers of WATs must be assessed as competent in safe loading, restraint and unloading of a person in a wheelchair and **continue to remain competent**.

- It is not enough to provide one off training to drivers either internally or externally. To fully comply with the law and to ensure safety of passengers, Taxi Service Providers, facilitators, and Booking Service Providers must ensure ongoing competency of drivers. Training and assessment processes must be effective in maintaining and assessing drivers' skills on an ongoing basis.

Who delivers training to drivers of WATs?

Training can be delivered in-house, on the job, via third party providers or by combining these methods to suit your business requirements. However, as Taxi Service Providers, facilitators, and Booking Service Providers you must continue to provide opportunities and resources for drivers to maintain their skills.

- The Point to Point Transport Commissioner's Auditors will audit these training plans and programs.
- The plans and the records of the training which has been provided to drivers form part of the service provider's Safety Management System.

More information

For information on the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Driver Incentive Payment, the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme (TTSS) and interest-free loans for wheelchair accessible taxis, please visit [Transport for NSW](#).

Read the following policy and procedures for more information on wheelchair accessible vehicle and taxi compliance policies:

- [WAT Licence Compliance Policy](#)
- [WAT Preferential Hiring Procedure](#)
- [WAT Competency Self-Assessment Guide](#)

DISCLAIMER

The material in this fact sheet is for general information only. It does not reflect all the technicalities of the relevant law and you should seek legal advice in relation to your particular circumstances. The Point to Point Transport Commissioner does not accept any liability for any action taken in reliance on this document.