

Transportation Bill of Rights Issued for Persons with Disabilities

Fixed route bus and Paratransit van services are not enough

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, March 2, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The nonprofit Independent Living Partnership has issued a Transportation Bill of Rights for Persons with

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Eula Robertson-Ray

Disabilities. According to Eula Robertson-Ray, President of the Board of Directors, “We concluded that many transportation administrators, planners, and policy makers may not understand what transportation for persons with disabilities should be, so we issued the Bill of Rights to enlighten them”.

The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including transportation. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. What this has meant for transportation is that fixed route buses need to be

available for passengers in wheelchairs and that curb-to-curb service must be provided for those whose disabilities prevent them from using regular public bus service.

But are these accommodations sufficient to provide transportation equity for the mobility challenged? What if we live where no public service is available? What if my disabilities, health, or economic circumstances make it impossible for me to use any of the accommodations that are provided?

Robertson-Ray wonders why people running transportation services think that the bare minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 are enough, or that persons with disabilities should accept the inadequate transportation services that are being provided? She says, “We decided to issue the Bill of Rights to provide guidelines for the development of other services that meet availability, accessibility, acceptability, affordability, and adaptability standards for effective transportation for mobility challenged”.

Richard Smith, ILP's CEO, says it is common knowledge that many persons with disabilities face

big challenges when asked to use most public transportation options. According to Smith, who has directed the transportation service of ILP for the mobility challenged for nearly thirty years, conferences and public comments on the state of transportation services for the elderly and persons with disabilities invariably turn into the airing of complaints about the inadequacy of public transit services. He says that mostly no ideas of what to do emerge.

A January 2022 article in the [Health and Disability Journal](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2021.101209) reported on studies that detail transportation challenges for persons aging with mobility disability (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2021.101209>). According to Smith, "The challenges identified and reported in the study echo the issues foreseen by studies conducted in Riverside County thirty plus years earlier".

He says a 1990 study, teaming the Regional Transportation Planning Organization and the Area Agency on Aging to create effective services for the mobility challenged, asked residents with mobility disabilities what they wanted in a transportation service.

Robertson-Ray asserts that the service, developed by ILP to meet the requirements outlined by the focus groups and listening sessions, and operated throughout the Riverside County since, proves that good transportation for persons with disabilities can be successfully and economically provided. She says, "Our TRIP service was designed to be a reliable, accessible, affordable, convenient, cost-effective service, sufficient to support user needs, and available for those who cannot receive adequate transportation in other ways". She adds, "Every year [ILP's TRIP service](#) gets high marks in customer satisfaction from its riders."

Ivet Woolridge, Chief Operating Officer of ILP says "We know there are people with disabilities and elderly and others for whom transit, paratransit, Lift and Uber do not work because they are our ILP-TRIP clients." Woolridge says that there are older adults, persons with disabilities, sick and chronically ill, isolated, and homebound, low-income residents, in every community, who are not well-served by alternatives that they are expected to rely on for daily transportation needs. The "Transportation Bill of Rights for Persons with Disabilities" outlines the kind of service that needs to be available everywhere."

ILP's TRIP service has been operated successfully since 1993, so far providing more than 2.526

TRANSPORTATION


Bill of Rights

for Persons with Disabilities

The elderly, sick and disabled have the right to transportation that is available, accessible, acceptable, affordable, and adaptable. Whereas the Americans with Disabilities Act specifies the minimum alternative transportation accommodations required under current law, full equity must require that a high-quality transportation experience is always achieved.

1. Riders should always be treated with dignity and respect
2. Travel should be efficient, safe, low-cost or no-cost for riders
3. Transportation should be available when needed and with only minimal advance scheduling requirements
4. Riders should be able to travel for any needed purpose
5. Travel destinations for trips should be determined by the riders
6. Pick-up at origination and destination should be convenient and on time
7. Riders should not be required to wait for pick-up on the street or exposed to inclement weather
8. Assistance should be provided as needed and requested at pick-up origination, enroute, and at destinations
9. Multiple stops should be supported during each outing, as desired by the riders
10. Comfortable transportation should be provided that is fully acceptable, effective, efficient, and satisfactory to riders.

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nonprofit Independent Living Partnership

million one-way trips and more than 35 million miles of volunteer escorted transportation for its mobility challenged riders. Smith says, "If we have been able to provide a cost-efficient and highly effective service for nearly 30 years, we think good services for persons with disabilities should be able to be provided everywhere."

For more information about TRIP, visit [ILPconnect.org](https://ilpconnect.org).

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