



## **SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY AT VTA**

VTA's must meet service accessibility requirements of the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** to allow persons with disabilities equal access to transportation services, facilities and information. Following is a brief description of the services that are required to ensure that VTA is accessible to all of its customers:

**ADA Paratransit Services:** The ADA requires that public transit systems provide paratransit services that are comparable to regular fixed-route services. Paratransit services are specialized door-to-door services that are provided to persons with disabilities who are unable to use regular bus and rail services. VTA contracts with a local non-profit agency, Outreach, to provide paratransit services.

Accessible Services staff are responsible for managing and administering this contract to ensure compliance with the ADA. Paratransit services are offered to eligible persons during days and times that VTA buses and light rail operate. Where buses and light rail operate 24-hours a day, paratransit service is offered 24-hours/day in these transit corridors. VTA has arrangements with transit operators in neighboring counties to provide paratransit transfer trips.

Customers are charged a fare of \$4.00 per one-way trip. Persons who are interested in using these services must first become certified according to ADA criteria. Interested applicants must contact VTA's paratransit broker Outreach and Escort, Inc. (Outreach) to take part in a telephone interview for paratransit eligibility certification. Once the interview is completed, the applicant is notified of the outcome of the eligibility certification process within 10 business days. During FY 2009, VTA provided 1,067,115 paratransit trips. This represents an increase of 1.1% compared to the prior year.

Outreach can be reached at **408-436-2865, or TDD 408-436-0155.**

**Regional Transit Connection Discount Program (RTC):** The RTC Program is a regional program offered throughout the Bay Area that provides seniors aged 65 years and older and persons with qualifying disabilities with a discount for bus and rail services. While not a requirement of the ADA, a program like the RTC Program is required by other federal regulations. At VTA, the RTC Program provides people with a picture ID, which entitles them to purchase a sticker each to ride bus or light rail services at no charge when boarding. If a monthly sticker is not purchased, or is not affixed to the card, the cardholder may show the RTC card to the bus operator when boarding and pay the senior/disabled discounted fare. In addition to VTA's administrative office and Downtown Customer Service Center, there are several sites throughout the community where people can obtain a RTC Program card. While persons with other forms of ID, (i.e. Medicare card, DMV Placard ID) can obtain the senior/disabled discounted cash fares or day passes, a RTC Program ID card is required to make use of the monthly sticker.

**Accessible Transit Services:** VTA must ensure that transit services and facilities are accessible. The ADA specifies requirements, including but not limited to:

- Calling Stops and Announcing Routes and Destinations at Multiple Stops
- Ensuring Priority Seating
- Assisting Persons with Disabilities with Boarding, Disembarking and Securement of Mobility Devices
- Allowing Service Animals On-board Buses and Light Rail Vehicles,
- Keeping Wheelchair Lifts in Working Order
- Providing an Option within 30 Minutes if a Wheelchair Lift Strands a Customer. Contacting Radio Control if a Lift is Inoperable When Attempting to Board a Customer.

The ADA also includes design requirements that apply to any new construction of facilities, to purchase of equipment and vehicles and to development of any new service that may be offered to the public. Examples of accessibility features included in the design of new light rail facilities include:

1. Station platform warning bands - truncated domes
2. Hazardous Vehicular areas - truncated domes before pedestrian track crossings
3. Station Visual Message Boards
4. Signage
  - a. Sign on platform entrance naming station - Braille and Raised letters
  - b. Sign on each side of platform - seen from each side of train – station name
  - c. Emergency exit sign - Braille and Raised letters
  - d. Accessible Entrance signage - especially for stations with elevators
  - e. Information signage - specific requirements
6. Platform entrance ramps - must have handrails if exceeding minimum slope. Ramps have specific requirements for slope, length etc.
7. Direct connections - any other transit facilities built as part of project (i.e. Park and Ride) must have direct connection to station platform, including accessible route.
8. Elevators - specific access requirements for signage, call lights and alarms, window panel, etc.
9. Fare Vending machines - with audio instruction and Braille and Raised letters, with specified reach range to operable controls and sufficient clearance around machine to allow side-reach to operable controls.
10. Accessible Route - minimum width for circulation around platform, avoidance of platform furniture (Le. benches, shelters, planters etc) and route to platform in surrounding area.
11. Illumination - Shall minimize glare on signage
12. Pedestrian Track crossings - route surface shall be level and flush with rail top at the outer edge and between the rails, except for a maximum 2-1/2 inch gap on the inner edge of each rail to permit passage of wheel flanges.
13. Rail to platform height coordinated with floor height of new vehicles maximum vertical difference between floor of vehicle and platform when vehicle at rest, and maximum horizontal gap. Exceptions specified.
14. Escalators - specified width, operational requirements, tread strip color, slip resistance

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