

Meeting the Transport Standards

The Transport Standards apply to public transport such as buses, trains, trams, ferries and taxis, but do not apply to water taxis and limousines.

Additionally the Transport Standards exclude dedicated school buses and small aircraft (less than 30 passenger seats) from the physical access requirements.

This means that dedicated school buses, limousines, water taxis and small aircraft are not required to be physically accessible to users of wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

An increasing number of public transport services in Queensland are accessible. All public transport vehicles brought into use after 2002 must meet the Transport Standards.

Public transport vehicles that were brought into use before the Transport Standards were introduced in 2002 must meet accessibility targets over a period of time.

There are a series of targets that operators must meet for improved accessibility of their transport services, requiring all public transport services to be fully accessible by the end of 2032.

Any operator who is unable to meet the specifications set out in the Transport Standards may still comply with the Transport Standards by providing equivalent access without discrimination as far as is possible.

Equivalent access means that an alternative way of access to a public transport service can be provided, with equivalence of amenity, availability, comfort, convenience, dignity, price and safety.

Characteristics of a public transport friendly wheelchair or mobility scooter

The Transport Standards are the minimum accessibility standards that public transport must be designed to accommodate. They are based on assumptions about the size and design of wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

If you use or are planning to purchase a wheelchair or mobility scooter to travel on public transport you should consider the specifications set out below, to enhance your safety and accessibility. If your wheelchair or mobility scooter meets these specifications, you will be able to travel on all accessible public transport in Queensland. If it does not, it may not be suitable for use on public transport and you may not be able to travel as intended.

Transport Standards – Dimensions



Width **750 mm**

Length **1300 mm**

Height **1500 mm**
(Height applies only to wheelchair accessible taxis)



Width **750 mm**

Length **1300 mm**

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Size: fits in an allocated space of **1300mm** by **800mm**.

Total width: less than **750mm** (due to the minimum width of an access path between the front wheel arches of a bus).

Total height: less than **1500mm** when you are seated (or less than **1400mm** if the accessible taxi was introduced into service prior to 1 January 2013) – height limit only applies when travelling in accessible taxis.⁴

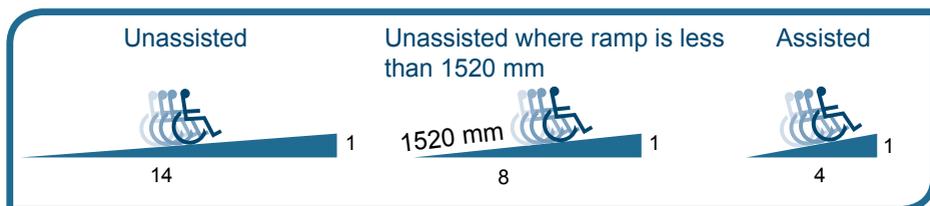
Transport Standards – Weight

Boarding devices such as ramps and hoists can support a total weight of **300kg**. This total includes the wheelchair or mobility scooter, its occupant and carried goods (including your groceries, medical oxygen cylinder, and so on.).

Be mindful that if someone provides assistance with boarding by pushing your manual wheelchair up a boarding ramp, their weight is also included.

Transport Standards – Manoeuvrability

- Cross a horizontal gap up to **40mm** wide.
- Mount a vertical rise (bump) up to **12mm** high.
- Cross grating gaps up to **13mm** wide and **150mm** long.
- Climb a 1:14 grade ramp unassisted.
- Climb a 1:8 grade ramp unassisted if the ramp is less than **1520mm** long.
- Climb a 1:4 grade ramp with assistance.



⁴ From 1 January 2013, the maximum height for a wheelchair or mobility scooter travelling onboard an accessible taxi was increased from 1400mm to 1500mm.

Transport Standards – Turning

To be certain that you will be able to access public transport with your wheelchair or mobility scooter, it needs to be able to turn 180 degrees within an area of **2070mm** by **1540mm**.

Adding fixtures

If you want to continue to travel onboard public transport with your wheelchair or mobility scooter, keep the Transport Standards in mind when attaching fixtures.

For example, if you attach a flag or canopy to your wheelchair or mobility scooter, how do these changes affect its overall height or weight? If a canopy causes your wheelchair or mobility scooter to exceed the specified height under the Transport Standards, you could be refused access to that service.

Belongings

Be aware that carrying heavy belongings will add extra weight to your wheelchair or mobility scooter. This may cause problems when boarding public transport if it causes you to exceed the specifications of the Transport Standards. The maximum weight that boarding devices can support is **300kg**.

Medical oxygen cylinder

A medical oxygen gas or air cylinder is permitted on public transport if it is medically prescribed for you, weighs no more than **5kg** when full and is restrained to your device or in a travel pack.

You also need to ensure that transporting this equipment will not endanger yourself or other passengers, for example, ensuring that cylinders, valves and regulators, where fitted, are protected from damage that could cause inadvertent release of the contents.

Distribution of weight

Consider how unevenly distributed weight could affect the balance of your wheelchair or mobility scooter, particularly when you are turning or travelling onboard public transport, which may unexpectedly brake or accelerate.

Restraints for a wheelchair or mobility scooter on public transport

Restraints and anchoring points are compulsory in taxis and your wheelchair or mobility scooter must have appropriate anchorage points. The minimum standard for wheelchair restraint assemblies in accessible taxis in Queensland is a four-point restraint system⁵.

To be confident that your wheelchair or mobility scooter will be able to be securely anchored in a taxi, it should be fitted with four tie-down points – two at the front and two at the rear⁶.

It is a good idea to consider buying a wheelchair or mobility scooter with this anchorage system in case you wish to travel with it by taxi (see page 29 for more information about taxi travel).

Restraints and anchoring points are not compulsory in buses, trains, trams and ferries, so you may not be able to tie down your wheelchair or mobility scooter while onboard these vehicles.

Seatbelts

If it is compulsory for all passengers to wear a seatbelt, then it is compulsory for a person travelling onboard in a wheelchair or mobility scooter to wear one that is fitted to the vehicle.



⁵ The specifications are set out in Australian Standard 10542:2009 (Wheelchair Tiedown and Occupant Restraint Systems)

⁶ The mobility device should meet Australian Standard 3696:2009 (Wheeled mobility devices for use as seats in motor vehicles)

Travelling on different modes of public transport

Assistance from the driver or operator

By law, transport operators must give passengers reasonable assistance to safely board or leave a vehicle⁷. However, how much assistance they have to give is not stated. Operators and drivers must decide how much assistance they consider is reasonable to give you.

Here are some examples of the assistance that transport drivers and operators may provide:

- extending an accessible ramp
- lowering a bus to kneeling position for ease of boarding
- waiting until a passenger has positioned their wheelchair or mobility scooter in an allocated space on a bus before driving away
- securing anchorage straps in accessible taxis.

The transport operator is responsible for ensuring the safety of all passengers. They have the right to refuse access if they believe a wheelchair or mobility scooter does not meet the specifications in the Transport Standards (page 18).

Travelling with a carer

You may need to travel with a carer if you need assistance when travelling. For example, you may need assistance to:

- move from your mobility scooter into a fixed seat when travelling in a taxi
- board public transport by having your wheelchair pushed up the boarding ramp.

A transport operator may not be able to provide the kind of assistance you require for health and safety reasons.

Transport providers must also consider the safety of all passengers and their drivers.

⁷ Queensland Government 2005 Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005, Section 132

The department's accessible taxi policy states that at a minimum, a lap-sash belt must be fitted for each seating position.

If you wish to travel in a wheelchair, you must be secured facing forward with your wheelchair anchored.

If you relocate to a fixed seat, it is safe for your wheelchair or mobility scooter to be carried in an accessible taxi. However, it must have four anchorage points for securement and must not be too large to fit in the allocated space.

Taxi fares/fees

All taxis in Queensland are required by law to have a fare sticker displaying all relevant charges. If you are travelling in a wheelchair, you cannot be charged an additional surcharge for requesting an accessible taxi.

The taximeter can be turned on:

- for a booking – when the taxi has arrived at the pick-up address and you have been notified of the taxi's arrival
- for a hail or taxi rank hiring – when you enter the vehicle
- for a booking for a specific time – at that time or the time when you enter the taxi, whichever is earlier.

It is reasonable for the meter to be turned on once the vehicle is ready for wheelchair anchorage (for example, seats have been folded up and the anchorage straps secured).

However, the driver of the taxi must turn off the meter:

- before asking for, or receiving payment or a voucher, or
- before exiting the vehicle to help unload luggage.

The driver must not drive the vehicle to the hirer's destination in a way that involves excessive charging (for example, travelling via an indirect route to the destination).