

TACT 136: Passenger Escort Policy



Policy: Mid-County Transit Authority dba Town and Country Transit (TACT) has adopted a specific passenger escort policy.

Purpose: TACT has a written passenger escort policy which is distributed via the User Guide and on the TACT web site. This policy is intended to provide clarification as to when an escort is required.

Scope: This policy affects all shared-ride transportation services provided by Town and Country Transit.

Background:

TACT drivers routinely assist passengers in boarding and deboarding our vehicles and in securing passengers' mobility devices; however, some passengers require levels of assistance that exceed our drivers' scope of responsibility.

The need for an escort may be determined by documented demonstrated need by a driver, family member, other interested third party, or at the request of a healthcare or social work professional.

Once a passenger is approved for an escort, when a passenger requests a trip with an escort, the escort's fare will be based on the current escort fare structure approved in the Consolidated Operating Application (COA) through Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).

For ADA Complementary Paratransit (ADA CP) passengers, please see *TACT 125 ADA Eligibility Policies and Procedures*.

Definitions:

Persons with disabilities are generally not required to travel with an escort. However, if a person with disabilities engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct, or if a person with disabilities is otherwise unable to safely travel from origin to destination by themselves without assistance due to physical or cognitive disabilities, TACT reserves the right to require an escort to accompany the person with a disability on trip(s) requested.

Escort – an able-bodied person of competent age to provide required assistance to a person with a disability to facilitate safe travel between points of trip origin and destination.

Escorts must board and disembark at the same time and at the same location as the persons they assist.

When making a trip reservation for a person requiring an escort, the escort must be identified by name. Only one escort is permitted per trip.

The terms "escort" and "personal care attendant" (PCA) are similar, with the exception that PCAs do not pay a fare on ADA Complementary Paratransit service. Escort fares for other transportation programs are determined by the current approved fare structure per program.

Passenger Assistance – Drivers will assist passengers with boarding and disembarking the vehicle. This includes standing at the bottom of the steps (or ramp) to offer a hand / arm for steadiness.

Passengers must be able to stand under their own power as the driver is not permitted to pull the passenger to a standing / walking position.

Wheelchair / Mobility Device Use – Drivers will move passenger wheelchairs to / from the vehicle to the origination and/or destination door. Drivers are not permitted to cross the threshold of any residence or business under any circumstance. There are no exceptions to this rule. This includes passengers' home, garage, enclosed porch, outbuildings, destinations, etc.

For the driver to push / pull the passenger over the threshold, the threshold may not exceed one inch (1") in height.

Acceptable wheelchair surfaces must be present for drivers to be expected to assist passengers with pushing wheelchairs. Acceptable surfaces include smooth or firm surfaces such as asphalt, pavement, or packed gravel. Surfaces must be free from debris and snow and ice.

Drivers are not expected to control powered mobility devices.

Drivers are not expected to physically transport / carry mobility devices, such as wheelchairs / walkers up or down stairs or to buildings.

Drivers are required to fasten security belts on rear and front of lift.

All passengers are required to have properly secured lap and shoulder belts fastened prior to the vehicle moving.

Revision History:

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Requested By
0.0	03/22/2017	Initial Release	Patti Lynn Baker General Manager
1.0	07/01/2019	Update logo, font, formatting	Tiffany Chaffee Operations Manager
2.0	11/09/2022	Update policy to add details for clarification	Patti Lynn Johnston General Manager
3.0	06/14/2023	Update logo, font, formatting, and minor details	Patti Lynn Johnston Executive Director