

POSITION STATEMENTS

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TRANSPORTATION

People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities¹ (IDD) must have access to both public and private transportation to lead full, self-directed lives.

ISSUE

People with IDD lack sufficient access to reliable, accessible, and safe modes of public and private transportation. Every mode of transportation, including air, water, road, rail, and even pedestrian transportation, presents barriers for individuals with IDD. These barriers prevent people with IDD from meaningful participation in everyday activities that promote high quality community living experiences. In the U.S., millions of individuals with disabilities use public transit to maintain their autonomy and participate fully in society. For many, it is their only transit option. However, even where accessible public transportation exists, adults with IDD consider transportation options inadequate.

Federal and state legislation encourages economic self-sufficiency for people with all types of disabilities, which requires transportation. Inadequate transportation inhibits community involvement, including successful employment. Where there is available transportation, there is often little to no training available to support individuals with IDD to make full use of it. For those providing the transportation, there is insufficient training to understand and meet their customers' needs, including cultural competencies. Those living in rural areas often face the greatest challenge of all due to lack of public transportation, limited private transportation options, and long distances between destinations.

¹ Intellectual Disability (ID) is a lifelong condition where significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior emerge during the developmental period (before adulthood).

Developmental Disabilities (DD), first defined in 1975 federal legislation now known as "The DD Act", are a group of lifelong conditions that emerge during the developmental period and result in some level of functional limitation in learning, language, communication, cognition, behavior, socialization, or mobility. The most common DD conditions are intellectual disability, Down syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, fetal alcohol syndrome, and fragile X syndrome.

The acronym "IDD" is used to describe a group that includes either people with both ID and another DD or a group that includes people with ID or another DD. The supports that people with IDD need to meet their goals vary in intensity from intermittent to pervasive.

POSITION

Transportation industries, agencies, service providers, and advocacy organizations must ensure that:

- Transportation at comparable cost and service models is available to individuals of all abilities.
- When making decisions, planning, and testing transportation options and payment methods, individuals with IDD are involved in the process.
- Improved coordination maximizes existing transportation services.
- Public transportation is adequately funded, fully financially and physically accessible, reliable to meet people's needs, and equipped to suit the physical, sensory, and cognitive needs of all people.
- As technological innovations emerge (such as virtual wayfinding, autonomous vehicles, and digital ticketing), transportation modalities are designed to be accessible, usable, and reliable, including such things as language access, visual cues, safety considerations, and audio and hands-free options to meet individuals' needs and preferences.
- Technological platforms that relay information from users with IDD to transportation providers utilize inclusive research design to ensure accessibility and ease of use.
- Travel training is available for users covering all modes of travel, prioritizing peer-to-peer training where possible.
- Appropriate disability awareness training is available for service and transportation providers.
- As smart city initiatives advance, they are developed for users of all abilities and needs. Data collection and migration tools include users with IDD in the design, to ensure inclusive smart cities.
- The unique challenges and lack of options within suburban and rural areas are addressed.
- Technology and service providers protect a user's privacy by ensuring data such as contacts, camera, photos and files, health and disability status, and locations visited is not shared, or used for commercial or tracking purposes, without permission of the individual. For any information to be accessed or shared, customers must opt-in, versus opting-out, and have clear explanations of with whom and what will be shared. In light of data management, people with IDD must have the opportunity to receive training on self-directed data management and use.
- At the same time, transportation navigation software allows an individual to share appropriate information with a third party, to enhance efficiency and safety – for example, confirming arrival and indicating off-route warnings, as directed by users.
- Innovative vehicles and transportation options do not create additional barriers, based on where vehicles are parked, stored, and operated.
- People with IDD have the option of owning, modifying, and operating vehicles and other transportation options of their choice at affordable costs.
- All vehicles, public and privately owned, meet applicable federal, state, and local safety requirements.

- Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) are fully accessible and universally designed to take into account all individuals' abilities and disabilities to safely access and operate. Regulation of AVs must consider the needs of people with IDD, and avoid unnecessary licensing requirements that would restrict or eliminate access.

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