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MEMORANDUM

**TO:** HRM Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities  
**FROM:** Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator Taxi & Limousine Service  
**DATE:** October 1, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Taxi Driver Handout, About Passengers With Disabilities

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Since September 2009, the HRM Taxi & Limousine Services has been circulating the above note handout during training sessions and at our licencing counter. This handout was developed and provided by the HRM Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities and in junction with Transport Canada's "Getting On Board" is part of the industries disabilities awareness training.

The HRM Taxi & Limousine Service would like to request that the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities review their current handout for any possible changes or additions they would like to have included.

Sincerely

Kevin Hindle  
Regional Coordinator  
Taxi & Limousine Services  
Halifax Regional Police

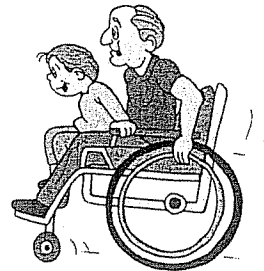
cc: Taxi & Limousine Advisory Committee

# Important Information For Taxi Drivers in HRM

## About Passengers with Disabilities

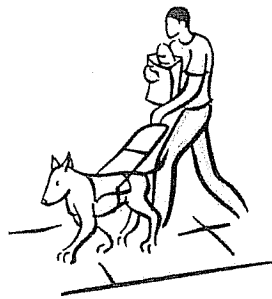
From the HRM Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities

### PASSENGERS WITH WHEEL CHAIRS



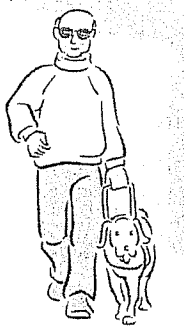
- When you have a passenger who uses a wheel chair, you cannot charge extra to carry the chair in your vehicle (trunk or cabin).
- On arrival, you should offer assistance and follow all direction given by the passenger, as best you can. They may need assistance and extra time to get seated.
- If a wheelchair is loaded into the trunk of a taxi when it is raining or snowing, drivers should be sure that the trunk can be closed and/or tied closed. This keeps the seat of the wheelchair from getting wet.
- Be carefull not to damage the chair as you handle it during loading.
- People who use wheelchairs may need help with parcels. Assistance carrying parcels is always appreciated.

### PASSENGERS WHO ARE BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED



- Passengers who are blind, or have vision loss, have different levels of ability and different needs. They may be using a white long cane, a white support cane, a white Identification cane, a walker, or they may be with a guide dog. They may not see you arrive, or know if you are the cab they have called, or just another car.
- Say the name of your taxi company when you arrive. Get out of your vehicle to offer assistance if required. Ask the person if they prefer to sit in the front or rear, or tell them which door you are opening (they may not be able to see which door it is).
- When you arrive at the passenger's destination, offer assistance again, or provide specific direction ("the door is 5 meters away, slightly to the left"). Saying "over there" and pointing is not helpful to a person who can not see. They may want you to assist them to the door at their destination. Offer your arm to them, but never grab a blind or partially sighted person.
- Tell the person with vision loss if there is ice, water, snow or mud in their footpath before they get out of your cab.

## PASSENGERS WITH A GUIDE DOG OR OTHER TYPE OF SERVICE DOG



- You are required, By Law, to allow any person with a registered guide dog (also known as Seeing Eye dog), or any other type of registered service dog (hearing dog, seizure dog etc) or registered service animal, to ride in your vehicle. The only exception to this, is for the driver who suffers from a severe medical condition arising from close proximity to dogs, and whose doctor has provided a written medical exemption which is on file with the Taxi Commission.\* Some drivers of a Muslim or Islamic faith tradition, should be aware that their faith's practice of avoiding contact with dogs, has recently been addressed by some Canadian bodies which interpret Muslim law or practices; They have advised drivers that it IS ACCEPTABLE within Muslim practice to be near a service dog during the

course of their work as taxi drivers, and that they should transport these service dogs and their handlers. This arose following a recent British Columbia Human Rights case.

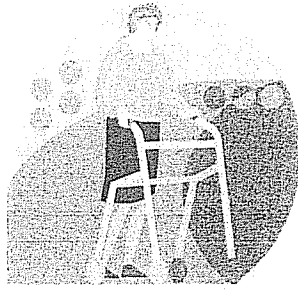
- The passenger may want to sit in the front seat with their dog sitting on the floor between their legs in the well, or in the back, with the dog on the floor. Allow them to choose. It is their responsibility to control their dog.
- Do not pet or otherwise touch the dog without permission from the handler. Never feed it.
- You can not add any extra charge to a passenger's fare for transporting a service dog. Doing so, is grounds for loss of liscence.

## PASSENGERS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING



- Passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing also have different levels of disability and different needs. They may have a hearing aid.
- Speak clearly and look directly at the deaf person as you are speaking to them (so they can see your mouth and face). If it is dark, turn the cabin light on to speak to them.
- A passenger who is deaf or hard of hearing, might choose to provide you with a paper with the destination written on it for you to read. You should read it, acknowledge that you understand by nodding to the passenger, and then drive to that location.
- When you arrive at the destination, allow the passenger to see the fare on the meter if they cannot hear you ask for it.

## PASSENGERS WITH WALKERS OR OTHER AIDS



- Be equally carefull with walkers and canes when loading them into the vehicle's cabin or trunk. You can not charge to carry these items.
- Offer assistance if the passenger needs help with packages or bags.
- Be patient and allow the passenger extra time to gather their belongings and to get in or out of your vehicle.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS



- Some individuals suffer from asthma, other lung conditions or chemical sensitivity. Try to keep your vehicle scent-free and avoid wearing scented personal care products (cologne, body sprays).
- Children or adults with learning disabilities may have some difficulty expressing themselves. Be patient and speak clearly to ensure that you know where they want to go.
- Someone who suffers from depression, anxiety or other mental illness, may also have difficulty when speaking with you. Be patient, calm and respectful. (Note: 1 in 5 Nova Scotians will be impacted by mental illness in their lifetime)

\*Drivers who are physically unable to lift parcels, luggage, bags, and heavier objects (wheel chairs) must also obtain and register a medical exemption certificate with the Taxi Commission.