



facts

All transit buses in Vermont are accessible, with special space to accommodate wheelchairs.

Transportation

Does your child know how to take the bus? Is there a possibility that he/she might become a driver? What are the transportation options for people who can do neither of the above?

Local Bus

Your child may be eligible for a Medicaid bus pass. This pass is intended for getting to and from a medical appointment or when picking up a prescription. You can also purchase a general pass for your child through your local transportation agency.

Depending on where you live, there may be para/transit services available to people who cannot use the regular bus system because of a disability. For example, in Chittenden County, the SSTA provides pre-arranged transportation on an accessible bus at a cost per ride. Call 2-1-1 to locate services near you.

Busses can be very user-friendly for people with mobility issues. All transit busses in Vermont are accessible, with special space to accommodate wheelchairs. Drivers are trained to help with getting on and off the bus.

Driver's Ed

The New and Potential Driver Program (Fletcher Allen and UVM) can evaluate your young person and design a training

program specific to his/ her needs. They can also suggest adaptive equipment and automobile modifications.

Tips for transportation

Learning to use transportation or to drive can be an important goal in your son or daughter's transition plan.

If it is unlikely your child will be able to drive, it is a good idea to help him/her come to terms with this eventuality before his/her friends are signing up for driver's ed.

Long Distance Travel

If your child will be traveling on a long-distance bus, train or airplane, make plans well in advance for a safe and trouble-free journey. Call the bus, train or airline company to find out about accommodations they offer to travelers with disabilities. Even if you are accompanying your child, accessibility may be a concern for a person in a wheelchair or using a walker.

Always have your child carry identification and contact information



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and make a contingency plan in case you are separated.

Bus

Greyhound has accommodations for people with disabilities if given proper notice (at least 48 hours). Accessible seating and assistance getting on and off the bus are available. Transportation personnel are not allowed to provide personal care assistance, but Greyhound offers a discount for a personal care assistant traveling with a minor if the minor pays full fare. Check with Greyhound or the bus company you plan to use about other services for customers with special needs.

Train

Amtrak offers several services for people with disabilities but you must book your trip early by phone or in person. Your child may qualify for a discount if you can provide documentation of the disability. Anyone traveling with the child as a personal care attendant may also qualify for a discount. Accessible space can be booked ahead of time, even on open seating trains. You can also request assistance boarding and disembarking. Please allow plenty of time before departure to negotiate the station. As always, let the train personnel know your child's needs well in advance in order to have a safe and comfortable trip.

Air Travel

Travel by air may present challenges for people with some disabilities, in particular mobility issues. If your child uses a walker or wheelchair, you will need to consider accessibility of the airplane. Boarding and exiting the airplane may require special equipment if the plane is parked on the tarmac away from jet ways. While larger planes are equipped with accessible lavatories, smaller or older planes may not be. Check your airline's website for more information about accessibility.

Tips for travel from experienced parents

- Prepare your child in advance for the hustle and bustle of the airport. If your child has a problem with noise, consider earphones.
- Check ahead with your airline to learn about accommodations for travelers with disabilities. You may be able to bypass lines.
- Alert Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and flight personnel to any problems, such as communication problems, your young person may have during screening. Check their website for more tips.
- Take extra meds and snacks in case your flight is delayed or canceled. Pack meds, insurance information and extra clothing in your carry on.
- Create an ID and medical information sheet for your child in case you become separated. Put ID information on any equipment that your child uses, such as a walker or wheelchair.
- Take advantage of the invitation for early boarding.
- If traveling for medical reasons, reimbursement for meals, lodging and mileage is possible. This must be arranged ahead of time.

If your child is traveling alone, you may be able to hire an airline escort for gate transfers. Each airline has its own policies, restrictions and fees for escorts so be sure to check around. Paying a bit more for peace of mind is worth it. In any case, be sure your child has all the identification and contact information he or she will need as well as a plan for what to do if flights are delayed or cancelled.