Greater Peoria Mass Transit District ("GPMTD") Reasonable Modification Procedures Updated February 13, 2017

Background

On March 13, 2015, as part of the Federal Register Vol. 80, No. 49 (80FR13253), the Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a Final Rule effecting 49 CFR Parts 27 and 37: Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities; Reasonable Modification of Policies and Practices. The purpose behind this final rule is:

"...specifically to provide that transportation entities are required to make reasonable modifications/accommodations to policies, practices, and procedures to avoid discrimination and ensure that their programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities."

To view the Final Rule: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-13/pdf/2015-05646.pdf

Policy

GPMTD is committed to providing equal access and opportunity to qualified individuals with disabilities in all programs, services, and activities. GPMTD recognizes that, in order to have equally effective opportunities and benefits, individuals with disabilities may need reasonable modifications to policies and procedures. GPMTD will adhere to all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable modifications, as necessary, to afford equal access to programs for persons with disabilities. GPMTD does not discriminate based on disability in admission to, participation in, or receipt of services and benefits under any transit program or activity. GPMTD will take appropriate steps to ensure that persons with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate.

No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of GPMTD, or be subject to discrimination by GPMTD.

Reasonable Modifications

A reasonable modification is a change or exception to a policy, practice, or procedure that allows disabled individuals to have equal access to programs, services, and activities. GPMTD will make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures when necessary to ensure access to transit services for qualified individuals with disabilities, unless:

- 1. Making the accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of GPMTD's services, programs, or activities;
- 2. Making the accommodation would create a direct threat to the health or safety of other passengers;
- 3. Without the requested modification, the individual with a disability is able to fully use GPMTD's services, programs, or activities for their intended purpose;
- 4. Where granting the request would cause an undue financial and administrative burden.

Eligibility Criteria

An individual is eligible to be considered to receive a reasonable modification if that individual has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual, a record of such impairment, or been regarded as having such impairment.

Requests for Reasonable Modifications

GPMTD provides information about how to make requests for reasonable modifications readily available to the public through its website at www.ridecitylink.org. GPMTD will follow these procedures when taking requests:

- 1. An Individual requesting the modification will describe what he/she needs in order to use GPMTD's services. An Individual should state his/her impending trip date within the request, if possible. A Modification/Accommodation Request form is located at www.ridecitylink.org.
- 2. An Individual requesting modification is not required to use the term "reasonable modification" when making a request. Personnel at GPMTD will determine if the request represents a reasonable modification and proceed in accommodating the request accordingly.
- 3. Whenever feasible, requests for modifications/accommodations should be made and determined in advance before GPMTD are expected to provide the modified service.
- 4. Where a request for modification cannot practicably be made and determined in advance (*e.g.*, because of a condition or barrier at the destination of a paratransit, demand response, or fixed route trip of which the individual with a disability was unaware until arriving), operating personnel will make a determination of whether the modification should be provided at the time of the request. If necessary, operators will consult with GPMTD's Dispatcher before making a determination to deny the request. Any denials for modifications/accommodations that cannot be granted shall be written up as an Incident Report by the Driver and turned into Dispatch at the end of the Driver's shift. Dispatch will provide a copy of the Incident Report to the Director of Mobility by the end of the next business day.

Requests for modification/accommodation can be submitted in any written format (i.e. modification/accommodation request form, letter, email). Alternative means of filing a request, such as personal interviews, phone calls, or taped requests, will be made available for persons with disabilities if unable to communicate their request in writing or upon request. The reasonable accommodation process begins as soon as the request for accommodation is made.

In determining whether to grant a requested modification/accommodation, GPMTD will be guided by the provisions of United States Department of Transportation 49 CFR Appendix E, Part 37.169. (pages 13261-13263) http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-13/pdf/2015-05646.pdf

Interactive Process

When a request for accommodation is made, GPMTD will make every effort to engage in a good faith interactive process with the individual requesting an accommodation to determine what, if any accommodation shall be provided. Communication will be a priority throughout the entire process.

That communication will include information about the request, the process for determining whether an accommodation will be provided, and the potential accommodations.

Time Frame for Processing Requests and Providing Reasonable Modification

GPMTD will process requests for reasonable accommodation and then provide accommodations, where appropriate, in as short a time frame as reasonably possible, typically within 21 days from receipt of request. GPMTD recognizes, however, the time necessary to process a request will depend on the nature of the accommodation(s) requested and whether it is necessary to obtain supporting information.

Granting a Reasonable Modification Request

As soon as GPMTD determines a reasonable accommodation will be provided, that decision shall be immediately communicated to the individual. This notice must be in writing in order to maintain the required information for reporting purposes. Upon request, alternative means of response will be provided in addition to the written response.

Any approved modification for a passenger with a disability shall be noted, and printed on the driver instructions (schedule) when picking up the passenger. All GPMTD Dispatchers will have access to approved Reasonable Modifications.

Denying a Reasonable Modification Request

As soon as GPMTD determines a request for reasonable accommodation will be denied, GPMTD will communicate the basis for the decision in writing to the individual requesting the modification. Any denials of formal requests prior to the trip will be confirmed with GPMTD's General Manager to ensure no other accommodations could be made to allow the individual to receive transit service. The explanation for the denial will clearly state:

- 1. Specific reasons for the denial;
- 2. Any alternative accommodation that may create the same access to transit services as requested by the individual; and
- 3. The opportunity to file a complaint relative to the GPMTD's decision on the request.

All denials, including reasoning, will be documented for reporting purposes to the Federal Transit Administration upon request.

Complaint Process

Any person who believes he/she has been discriminated against in obtaining a reasonable modification may file a formal complaint. GPMTD's complaint and reasonable accommodation procedures and forms are available on GPMTD's website at www.ridecitylink.org or by an individual's request to GPMTD. For a copy of these procedures, please call GPMTD at 1-309-676-4040.

Designated Employee

GPMTD's designated employee responsible for processing reasonable modification requests is:

Andrew Dwyer, Director of Mobility Greater Peoria Mass Transit District 2105 NE Jefferson Ave. Peoria, IL 61603 (309)676-4040

Record Retention

GPMTD will maintain all records related to reasonable modification requests and denials for at least three (3) years.

Greater Peoria Mass Transit District ("GPMTD") Modification/Accommodation Request



Section I		
Name:		
Address:		
Telephone (Home):	Telephone (Work):	
Electronic Mail Address:		
Please circle the type of service you will be using:	Fixed Route "CityLink"	Paratransit "CityLift"
Section II		
Modification/Accommodation Request Please describe any modifications to GPMTD policies, practices or procedures in order for you (an individual with disabilities) to access GPMTD services.		
Location (if applicable)		
Section III		
Printed name:		
Signature:		Date:
Form must be signed and dated		
	Greater Peoria Mass Transit District Attention: Director of Mobility 2105 NE Jefferson Ave. Peoria, IL 61603	
*** FOR OFFICE USE ONLY ****		
Received by:		Date:
Approved/Denied Notes:		
Responded by:		Date: