



**CODE OF PRACTICE**

# **Code of Practice for Disabled Customers**

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## **1. Introduction**

Albatross Bus & Coaches Ltd (“the Company”) is committed to providing accessible, safe and inclusive transport services for all customers, including those with disabilities, reduced mobility, or additional support needs.

This Code of Practice outlines how the Company supports disabled customers and ensures that services are delivered in a fair, respectful and non-discriminatory manner.

The Company recognises that disabilities may be visible or non-visible and will take reasonable steps to accommodate individual requirements wherever it is safe and reasonably practicable to do so.

## **2. Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

This policy is implemented in accordance with applicable UK legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000

The Company is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled customers are not placed at a substantial disadvantage when accessing its services.

## **3. Commitment to Accessibility**

The Company aims to ensure that all passengers can travel with dignity, comfort, and safety.

We are committed to:

- Treating all customers with respect and equality
- Providing assistance where reasonably required
- Training staff in disability awareness and customer care
- Continuously improving accessibility standards
- Listening to feedback to enhance services

Accessibility is considered at every stage of service delivery, including booking, boarding, travel, and disembarkation.

## **4. Booking and Notification of Assistance Requirements**

Customers are encouraged to inform the Company of any specific requirements at the time of booking. This allows the Company to make appropriate arrangements and ensure a safe and

comfortable journey.

While advance notice is recommended, the Company will make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests made at short notice where operationally feasible.

Information that may be requested includes:

- Mobility requirements
- Wheelchair specifications
- Assistance needs during boarding or travel

Failure to provide advance notice may limit the Company's ability to guarantee specific arrangements.

## **5. Wheelchair Accessibility**

The Company operates vehicles equipped with wheelchair access facilities, including lifts or ramps where applicable.

Wheelchair users may:

- Travel in their wheelchair where the vehicle and securing systems allow
- Transfer to a passenger seat, with the wheelchair safely stored

To ensure safe travel, the Company may require details of the wheelchair, including:

- Dimensions and weight
- Type (manual or powered)
- Any modifications

The Company will assess compatibility to ensure that the wheelchair can be safely accommodated and secured.

Where it is not possible to safely accommodate a wheelchair, the Company will explain the reasons and, where possible, suggest alternatives.

## **6. Boarding and Assistance**

Drivers will provide reasonable assistance to passengers when boarding and alighting, including:

- Deploying wheelchair lifts or ramps
- Assisting with boarding where safe to do so
- Providing guidance and support

However, drivers are not permitted to provide personal care or lifting assistance beyond what is

considered safe and reasonable. Passengers requiring continuous or specialist assistance should travel with a companion or carer.

## **7. Assistance During Travel**

The Company's staff and drivers are trained to provide appropriate assistance throughout the journey.

This includes:

- Offering clear communication and instructions
- Providing help where safe and appropriate
- Ensuring accessible seating where required (subject to availability)

Passengers are expected to follow all safety instructions and cooperate with staff to ensure a safe journey.

## **8. Mobility Equipment and Aids**

The Company will make reasonable efforts to accommodate mobility aids such as:

- Wheelchairs
- Walking aids
- Mobility scooters (where suitable for transport)

Where mobility equipment is stored, it must be done safely and securely. The Company may refuse carriage of equipment that:

- Cannot be safely secured
- Exceeds weight or size limitations
- Poses a safety risk

## **9. Hidden Disabilities**

The Company recognises that not all disabilities are visible. Passengers with hidden disabilities are encouraged to inform the Company of any assistance requirements. Staff will respond with discretion, sensitivity and respect. The Company will make reasonable adjustments where required, without requiring unnecessary disclosure of personal information.

## **10. Safety Considerations**

Passenger safety remains the highest priority at all times. The Company may refuse travel or restrict certain arrangements where:

- Safety cannot be assured
- Legal requirements cannot be met
- Equipment or conditions pose a risk to passengers or staff

All decisions will be made reasonably and in line with legal obligations.

## **11. Training and Awareness**

All relevant staff receive training to ensure they:

- Understand disability awareness and inclusion
- Can provide appropriate assistance
- Communicate respectfully and effectively
- Comply with legal obligations

The Company is committed to ongoing staff development in accessibility and customer service.

## **12. Feedback and Complaints**

The Company welcomes feedback regarding accessibility and service quality. Customers are encouraged to raise any concerns so that improvements can be made. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the Company's complaints procedure.

## **13. Continuous Improvement**

The Company will regularly review its accessibility practices, policies, and procedures to ensure compliance with legislation and alignment with best industry practices. Customer feedback, operational experience, and regulatory updates will be used to improve services.

## **Approved by**

Managing Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval Date: 15 October 2018

