

TOOLBOX TALK

69. BOARDING & ALIGHTING THE MINIBUS (AMBULANT PASSENGERS)

What?

- We have a duty of care to our passengers and want to ensure that they have a comfortable and safe journey.
- Open Country works with a lot of different people with a wide range of needs including those with physical and sensory impairments, mental health issues and learning disabilities.
- Some of these passengers may need help getting on and off the minibus to prevent them from falling and injuring themselves.



Why?

- Drivers and volunteers need to be aware in advance of the needs of passengers travelling in the minibus, so they can be offered appropriate assistance to get on and off the bus in a safe manner.
- The passenger lift can be operated to help ambulant people board or alight the bus if appropriate, but hand rails should be used at all times and people informed when the lift is being raised or lowered.
- Places where passengers are picked up and dropped off should be pre-arranged and consideration given to the safety of passengers waiting for the minibus to arrive and boarding and alighting the minibus at these places.
- It is important to report any concerns to the members' home and to your manager and colleagues, such as a passenger who is very unsteady and likely to fall.

Do ✓

- ✓ Always use the fold down step and use both hands to lower it carefully – don't let it drop down suddenly!
- ✓ Always supervise passengers when they are boarding or alighting the minibus especially members with a visual impairment who will need guiding on and off
- ✓ Encourage passengers to use the handrails and/or their walking aids if they have them
- ✓ Carry passengers' bags if appropriate, to make it easier for them to move independently, even if they don't want help in other ways
- ✓ Help to steady people by placing your hand under their forearm but don't let them lean on you too much or lock arms as they may pull you to the ground if they fall
- ✓ Always ensure that passengers are seated safely and comfortably; some may need help with their seatbelts
- ✓ Check that no bags or clothing are caught in the doors

Don't ✗

- ✗ Don't hurry passengers - this could make them more likely to fall; be kind and respectful
- ✗ Don't let members operate the sliding door; ideally it should be opened and closed by a staff member or volunteer from the outside who should check it is clear of obstructions - including fingers!
- ✗ Don't leave luggage & equipment blocking gangways
- ✗ Don't let members or untrained volunteers operate the passenger lift
- ✗ Don't park with the sliding door over a puddle, or next to uneven or icy ground
- ✗ Don't allow passengers to board or alight until the vehicle is at a complete standstill and safely parked by a pavement or other traffic free area
- ✗ Don't use the off-side sliding door if you can avoid it

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