

A photograph showing a woman with blonde hair and sunglasses sitting in a wheelchair. She is being loaded into the back of a white van through a wheelchair lift. A man wearing a black beanie and a dark vest is standing behind her, holding the lift's control panel. The van's rear hatch is open, and the interior of the lift is visible. The background shows a parking lot with other vehicles and trees under a blue sky with light clouds.

Your guide to:
**Transporting
Passengers In
A Wheelchair
Accessible Vehicle
(WAV)**

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Glossary of Terms

Assistance Animal	An animal that is specially trained to help a person manage the effects of a disability.
Booked Service	A taxi or Rideshare trip that has been booked in advance by a passenger
BSP	Booking Service Provider – an organisation authorised to manage bookings, dispatch, and payments for CPV drivers.
CPV	Commercial Passenger Vehicle – includes taxi, rideshare vehicles and WAVs
CPV accreditation	The mandatory accreditation a driver must hold to operate a CPV. It is a prerequisite before obtaining a WAV endorsement.
Driver	A person accredited to operate a CPV under the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Act 2017. A Driver must comply with all accreditation conditions, safety duties and regulatory requirements under the Act.
Floor Restraints	Four-point ratchet or tie-down systems designed to meet Australian standards. They are used to secure mobility devices to the floor of a WAV to prevent movement during travel.
Hoist / Lifting Platform	A mechanical device that raises or lowers a passenger using a mobility device to or from the floor height of a WAV for boarding or disembarking.
Mobility Device	Equipment such as wheelchairs, mobility scooters, walking frames, or other aids that assist passenger mobility.
MPTP	Multi-Purpose Taxi Program – a government subsidy program supporting accessible transport for people using wheelchairs or mobility aids.
Permission Holder	A person or organisation registered as the owner of a CPV vehicle
Seatbelt	A lap and sash or lap and harness safety restraint worn by a passenger in a mobility device in a WAV. It is fixed to the vehicle (not the wheelchair) and meets Australian safety standards to help prevent injury in a crash.
Security Camera	A video recording device installed in WAVs to capture footage of passengers and drivers for security and safety purposes, helping to prevent and resolve incidents.
Unbooked Service	A CPV trip where passengers hail a CPV on the street or pick a vehicle from a rank without prior booking.
VASS	Vehicle Assessment Signatory Scheme – a certification system ensuring modified or imported vehicles comply with Australian vehicle standards for CPV registration
WAV	Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle - a vehicle modified to safely carry passengers using wheelchairs or other mobility aids.
W or WAV endorsement	An additional endorsement required for CPV drivers to legally operate a WAV, shown as a "W" on the driver's CPV accreditation certificate.

Introduction

This guide provides practical guidance for drivers of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) as well as for others who have duties or obligations.

The purpose is to support safe, comfortable, and inclusive delivery of WAV services to:

- passengers who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids.
- passengers with disabilities who require accessible transport options.

This guide aligns with requirements set out in the:

- Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Act 2017 (the Act)
- the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Regulations 2018 (the Regulations), and
- the standards and expectations set by Safe Transport Victoria (ST Vic), including the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Code of Practice and related regulatory guidance.

It complements existing training, accreditation, and operational procedures by offering clear, actionable guidance that can be applied in day-to-day practice.

While the primary audience is WAV-endorsed drivers, this guide is also a relevant resource for Booking Service Providers (BSPs), vehicle owners, trainers, and others involved in the provision of safe accessible transport services.

Topics include:

- Assisting passengers with accessibility needs.
- Safe operation of WAV equipment and hoists.
- Vehicle and equipment safety checks.
- Assisting passengers with mobility aids.
- Transporting wheelchairs safely and securely.
- Communicating respectfully with passengers.
- Transporting assistance animals.
- Applying Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) subsidies correctly.

By following this guidance, service providers will be better equipped to uphold the safety, dignity, and comfort of every passenger — while meeting their legal and professional obligations under Victoria's commercial passenger vehicle framework.



Requirements to Drive a WAV

To provide WAV services in Victoria, a driver must hold a valid CPV driver accreditation. They must also have a WAV endorsement (also called a W endorsement) on that accreditation.

WAV-endorsement (W endorsement)

This endorsement is an additional authorisation that recognises the specialised responsibilities involved in operating a WAV. WAVs play a critical role in providing accessible transport for people with disability, and this endorsement reflects both the unique operational requirements of WAVs and the duty of drivers to deliver safe, inclusive, and equitable transport services.

Drivers are required to complete approved training and pass an assessment to obtain their WAV endorsement.

Drivers must not operate a WAV until this endorsement has been issued.

For details on booking an assessment, visit the [Safe Transport Victoria website](#).

Transporting Passengers with Accessibility Needs

Prioritising Passengers Who Use Wheelchairs

WAVs are specially designed to support passengers who use mobility aids. While they can also transport other passengers—such as families or groups with luggage—and are sometimes referred to as “maxi taxis,” their main purpose is to provide safe and accessible transport for people with mobility needs.

Drivers with a W endorsement must follow specific legal conditions, which reflect the importance of keeping WAVs available for those who rely on them. These conditions may change, and drivers should always check the latest version on the Safe Transport Victoria website.

One key condition is that WAV drivers must prioritise passengers who use wheelchairs.

This means that when a request comes from a person using a wheelchair, that trip must be accepted over general or high-occupancy passenger bookings.

WAV drivers must not accept fares or bookings from passengers who do not use a wheelchair unless **both** of the following conditions are met:

- The driver is not currently transporting a passenger in a wheelchair AND
- There are no current booking requests from or for a passenger in a wheelchair

This ensures that WAVs remain available for the people who rely on them most. Upholding this responsibility is not only a legal requirement, but also a key part of delivering fair, respectful, and inclusive transport for people with disability.



Providing Respectful and Inclusive Assistance

Drivers play an important role in ensuring that every passenger is treated with dignity, fairness, and respect.

All passengers—particularly those with disability, reduced mobility, or communication differences—must receive safe, inclusive, and professional service, including appropriate assistance when entering, travelling in, or leaving the vehicle.

Respect and Inclusion in Practice

Be reliable:

Arrive on time for booked trips and greet passengers politely.

Ask, don't assume:

Always ask before offering help, and follow the passenger's directions.

Communicate appropriately:

Ask how the passenger prefers to communicate, for example, by speaking, writing, pointing, or using a device.

Allow sufficient time for passengers to respond - do not rush or interrupt.

If you're unsure, ask politely, for example "Is there another way you'd like to tell me where you're going?"

Always speak respectfully:

Avoid using labels or describing someone by their disability, and never use language that could cause offence.

Be patient and understanding:

Some passengers may repeat information or take longer to respond. Stay calm and friendly.

Create a comfortable environment:

Keep the vehicle tidy and accessible.

Check if the passenger would like the radio on or off, or if they're comfortable with the temperature.

Be aware of physical comfort and safety:

Offer to adjust seating or restraints as needed, and provide shade or an umbrella in bad weather.

Use positive, professional body language:

Smile and show that you're listening. Stay calm, attentive, and approachable.

Note: Completing Disability Awareness Training helps drivers understand and support passengers with disabilities and builds confidence and preparedness when assisting passengers with different needs.

Providing Assistance

Drivers are required to provide reasonable assistance to passengers entering or leaving a WAV. Assistance must be provided safely and respectfully, maintaining the passenger's independence and dignity.

When assisting a passenger:

Ask before helping:

Always check how the passenger would like to be assisted — never assume.

Handle mobility aids with care:

Only move or adjust a wheelchair or mobility device with the passenger's permission.

Never touch a joystick or control without consent — it can cause sudden movement.

Use the hoist or ramp safely:

Ensure the passenger is ready and positioned correctly before operating the equipment.

Secure mobility aids properly:

Store them where they won't shift or block exits.

Assist with luggage or equipment:

When asked or when it's safe to do so.

Support assistance animals:

They must stay with their handler at all times.

Remember: Your role is to make the journey safe and comfortable — not to take over. Ask, listen, and work with the passenger to ensure a safe and respectful experience.

Supporting Diverse Communication Styles

Passengers communicate in many different ways -by speaking, writing, pointing, using gestures or through a device. Understanding and being understood is best achieved by respecting the passenger's preferred way of communicating.

Ask:

How the passenger prefers to communicate.

Involve support if needed:

Ask if it's okay to communicate with a caregiver, family member, or other support person.

Use simple, clear language:

Speak in plain words and short sentences.

Face the passenger and speak clearly:

Only when it is safe to do so.

Reduce background noise:

Turn off the radio, close windows, and limit distractions.

Listen and confirm understanding:

Repeat back instructions or requests to ensure you've understood. Summarise, for example, "So, you'd like to go to Main Street Hospital, right?"

Rephrase when needed:

Use different words to clarify instructions.

Be patient:

Give extra time for passengers to respond; some may repeat questions or take longer to communicate.

Use positive non-verbal communication:

Smile, nod, and maintain a relaxed posture.

Problem solving for destinations:

If you don't understand a location, politely ask:

- "Is there another way you can show me where you'd like to go? Can you write it down or point to it?"
- "Would you like to write it on paper, or show it in my GPS?"

Use communication aids if needed:

Talking Taxis Communication Boards or other tools from ST Vic can help passengers share information more easily.



Tip: Patience, asking about communication preferences, and using clear communication helps every passenger feel respected, included, and safe.

Responding to a Passenger Medical Emergency

If a passenger experiences a medical episode during a trip, follow these steps:

Ensure Safety and Assess the Situation

- Park the vehicle safely and turn on hazard lights.
- Observe the passenger for responsiveness and any visible distress. Do not attempt to physically touch, move or treat the passenger unless directed by emergency services.

Call Triple Zero (000) immediately

- Advise your location (be as specific as possible).
- Give a description of your vehicle (colour, registration).
- Explain what you are observing in your passenger.
- Follow any instructions from the emergency operator.
- Stay on the line until help arrives.

Be Prepared

- Consider doing a first aid training course. It can help you feel more confident and prepared in emergencies and may help save a life.

Transporting Assistance Animals

Under Regulation 26 of the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Regulations 2018 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth):

- Drivers must not refuse a passenger because they have an assistance animal.
- Assistance animals must be allowed to travel in the passenger area.
- Refusing a trip can result in penalties, including fines, loss or suspension of CPV accreditation, or prosecution.

What drivers need to do:

- Allow the assistance animal to travel with the passenger.
- Follow the passenger's instructions about their animal.

Tip: Ask questions if unsure — most passengers are happy to explain how their animal works.

- Ensure the vehicle is safe and accessible for both the passenger and the animal.
- Respect the passenger's choice of where to sit with their animal, while keeping safety in mind.

Examples of assistance animals:

- Guide or hearing dogs
- Mobility support animals
- Medical alert animals
- Psychiatric support animals

Remember: Assistance animals are working animals, not pets. They are trained to behave calmly and are kept clean and well-groomed. They help passengers with independence, safety, and wellbeing.

Treat both the passenger and their animal with respect and professionalism.

Passengers with assistance animals must always be accepted — it's the law



Incident Reporting Requirements

CPV drivers are required to report certain safety incidents to ST Vic (these are known as Notifiable Incidents). The requirement to report safety incidents applies to every trip, whether you are working through a Booking Service Provider (BSP) or driving independently.

Reporting incidents is an important part of your safety duties.

Reporting incidents:

- Assists ST Vic identify safety risk and emerging patterns across the industry.
- Supports improvements to safety guidance, training, and systems.
- Helps prevent similar incidents from happening again.
- Protects you, your passengers, and the wider CPV industry.

You must report any incident that occurs while providing a CPV service within 10 business days, if it involves:

- The death of any person
- The serious injury of any person (this includes, but is not limited to, incidents that require emergency medical assistance) *
- Attendance by police
- Attendance by a health professional (e.g. paramedic, doctor, or nurse)

*If you're unsure whether it's a serious injury, then it's best to report the incident.

How to Report

Step 1:

Visit the Notifiable Incidents Portal on Safe Transport Victoria's website (<https://incidents.safetransport.vic.gov.au/incidents>).

Step 2:

Complete the incident report form with required details (see the portal for full information).

Support Available

If you work with a BSP:

Your BSP can report the incident on your behalf, but only if you notify them as soon as possible and provide the details they need.

If you are not connected to a BSP:

You must report directly to ST Vic through the Notifiable Incidents Portal or by contacting ST Vic for guidance. Support is available over the phone if you are unsure what to do.

If you are uncertain whether the incident needs to be reported:

Report it anyway or call ST Vic for advice. It is better to check than to miss a required notification.

Reminder: Failure to report a notifiable incident is an offence. Not reporting may result in:

- Compliance or enforcement action.
- Financial penalties.
- Suspension or loss of accreditation.

Understanding Different Mobility Devices

Transporting passengers with mobility devices in a WAV requires careful attention to safety. Understanding the capabilities and limitations of different devices protects passengers, drivers, and other road users.

Mobility devices vary in design, stability, and suitability for transport in a WAV. While WAVs are designed to carry mobility aids, **not all devices are safe for in-vehicle use.**

Passengers and those booking WAV services also play a role in ensuring safe travel. Where possible, the safest option is for the passenger to sit in a conventional vehicle seat and use the seatbelt provided.

If a passenger cannot use a standard seat, they should **travel in a wheelchair specifically designed for vehicle use.** Using a device that is not suitable for in-vehicle travel can be dangerous.

Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs designed for vehicle travel are built with strong structural frames and dedicated anchorage points. These allow the wheelchair to be securely restrained within a vehicle, enabling the passenger to remain safely seated while the vehicle is in motion. Their construction is designed to withstand the forces from sudden braking or collisions, providing stability and protection.

Note:

- Wheelchairs compliant with Australian Standard AS/NZS 3696:19 are designed and crash-tested to withstand vehicle impact forces, making them safe for a passenger to remain seated during travel.
- Look for a label confirming compliance and review manufacturer guidelines.

Mobility Scooters and High-Care Mobility Aids

Mobility scooters and high-care mobility aids (e.g., 'Princess', 'Duchess', 'Tub' chairs/beds) are **not designed for in-vehicle transport with a passenger seated.** Their design and construction make them unsafe for travel in a moving vehicle.

Because of these risks, passengers **must not** remain seated in these devices during travel. Passengers must transfer to a conventional vehicle seat.

Key safety concerns:

- No approved anchorage points for secure restraint.
- Weak frame structures that cannot withstand braking or collision forces.
- Swivel seats, tiller steering, and reclining designs reduce stability and increase tipping risk.
- Lightweight or three-wheeled designs may shift or fall during movement.
- Incorrect posture or seatbelt positioning can lead to sliding or injury in sudden stops.
- They do not meet Australian vehicle transport standards.

Mobility scooters and high-care mobility aids may be carried in a vehicle (when the passenger is sitting in a conventional vehicle seat) – but only if the device can be safely powered off, braked, and secured using approved restraints.

Driver responsibilities:

- Ask passengers to transfer to a conventional vehicle seat and wear a seatbelt.
- Power off devices, apply brakes, and restrain securely if transporting.
- Never allow passengers to remain seated during loading, unloading, or travel.
- Only load and transport the scooter or device if it can be safely lifted, carried, and restrained using approved equipment.
- If unsafe, contact your vehicle owner or BSP for alternative arrangements.

Consequences: Transporting a passenger in these devices creates serious safety risks and may compromise your accreditation and legal liability.

Walking Frames and Other Mobility Aids

Walking frames, rollators, and walking sticks are designed to assist walking to and from the vehicle only.

Passengers **must not** ride or stand on the hoist. Standing on the hoist is unsafe and can result in slips, falls, or tipping.

- Passengers should enter the vehicle through the conventional door.
- Passengers must sit in a conventional vehicle seat.
- The walking frames must be secured separately to prevent movement during the journey.

Key Takeaways

Wheelchairs:

Designed for vehicle travel. Passenger may remain seated if wheelchair is compliant with AS/NZS 3696.19 and properly restrained.

Mobility scooters & high-care aids:

Not designed for vehicle travel. Passenger must transfer to a conventional vehicle seat. Devices may only be carried if they can be safely secured; some may not be transportable at all.

Walking frames & other aids:

Assist walking only. Passengers **must not** ride or stand on the hoist and must board through the vehicle door. Passengers must sit in a conventional seat.



Making Safe Decisions

As the driver, you are responsible for deciding whether it is safe for a passenger to travel while seated on their mobility device and whether the device can be safely restrained within the WAV.


If it is not safe:

- Explain your concerns clearly and respectfully to the passenger.
- Ask the passenger to transfer to a conventional vehicle seat and use the seatbelt provided.
- If the situation cannot be made safe, contact your vehicle owner or Booking Service Provider (BSP) to arrange another suitable vehicle or alternative travel option.

If unsure:

- Pause and assess – do not load the passenger.
- Contact your BSP or vehicle owner for advice or clarification.
- Discuss alternative travel arrangements with the passenger in a calm, respectful, and supportive way.

Important: Safety decisions should never be rushed. Taking time to confirm that a mobility device can be properly secured helps ensure a safe, comfortable, and compliant journey for everyone.

Device Type	Can Passenger remain Seated?	Key Safety Notes
	 Yes	<p>Must be properly restrained. Check label & manufacturer instructions for Australian Standard AS/NZS 3696.19 compliance.</p> <p>Ensure headrest is positioned behind the head for added safety. Remove trays and other mounted equipment for travel and secure separately.</p>
<p>Mobility Scooters</p> 	 No	<p>Passenger must transfer to conventional vehicle seat. Only transport device if it can be safely lifted and secured</p>
<p>High-Care Aids</p> 	 No	<p>Passenger must transfer to conventional vehicle seat. Only transport device if it can be safely lifted and secured.</p>
<p>Walking Frames / Rollators / Sticks</p> 	 No	<p>Assist walking only. Passenger must enter through conventional door and sit in conventional vehicle seat. Driver must secure device in vehicle.</p>

Transporting Passengers Safely

Safety is the most important part of your role as a WAV driver.

Following safe practices protects you, your passengers, and other road users.

Most incidents happen when:

- Loading and unloading passengers.
- Using equipment such as hoists or ramps.
- Restraints or seatbelts are not used correctly.

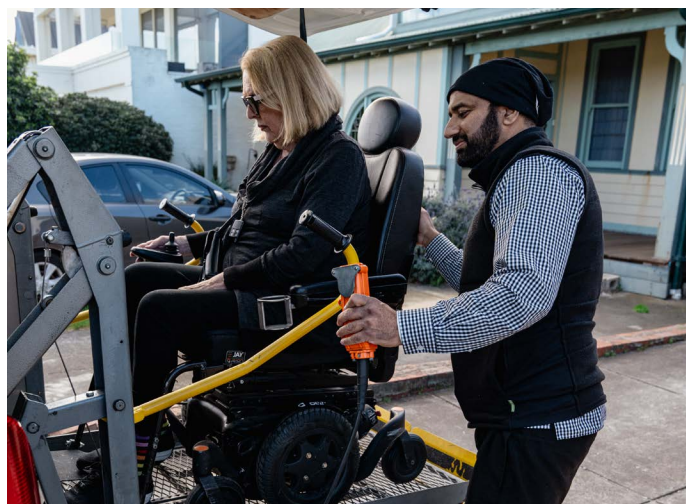
Taking a few extra seconds to follow correct procedures can prevent injuries and keep journeys safe for everyone.

Loading, Securing and Unloading Passengers in Wheelchairs Procedure

The following checklist outlines the safe procedure for loading, securing and unloading passengers in wheelchairs.

Drivers should follow this procedure carefully to ensure a safe, professional, and compliant service for all passengers.

Important: Only a W-endorsed CPV driver is permitted to operate the hoist or lifting platform and wheelchair restraint system.



Loading a Passenger

Getting Ready

1. Ensure the vehicle is parked legally, in a safe place and on level ground. Turn on the hazard lights if required to be more visible to others.
Safety Tip: If the vehicle must be parked on a sloping surface, double-check the handbrake is engaged with the transmission in 'PARK' and ensure the front of the vehicle is facing downhill.
2. Before opening the rear tailgate door, ensure there is enough space between the wheelchair and the rear of the vehicle to allow the door to open safely.
3. Check that the wheelchair brakes are applied / power is off.

Using the Hoist

4. Safely open the rear tailgate door and lower the hoist fully to the ground.
5. Ask the passenger if they would like assistance to move the wheelchair onto the hoist. Always get agreement first on who will position the wheelchair.
Safety Tip: Always check the hoist weight-limit. Never exceed its rated capacity or stand on the hoist while it is lifting.
6. Position the wheelchair onto the hoist platform, facing forward (towards the vehicle, away from you). If the passenger is operating the wheelchair themselves, keep one hand on the wheelchair handle and guide them if needed.
7. Ensure the wheelchair is stable and the brakes are applied / power off.
Safety Tip: If fitted, secure the hoist safety strap around the back of the wheelchair.
8. Check that the passenger's legs and feet are clear of the gap between the platform and the vehicle.
9. Check the passenger is ready and advise the passenger they can hold on to the hoist handle.

10. Advise the passenger that lifting will commence.
11. Stand next to the lift and raise the platform smoothly, keeping one hand on the wheelchair and the other on the controller.
Safety Tip: Always stay alert, close, and ready to assist if the wheelchair moves unexpectedly.

Moving a Passenger into the Vehicle

12. Ensure the hoist platform is level with the vehicle floor.
13. From the ground, stand next to the lift, keep one hand on the wheelchair, release the brakes, and carefully move the wheelchair as far forward into the vehicle as possible.
14. Apply the wheelchair brakes / power off.
15. Carefully step onto the hoist platform while keeping hold of the hoist handle or vehicle handle. Release the brakes and carefully push the wheelchair into position inside the vehicle.
16. If the driver is unable to step onto the hoist platform, a portable step stool may be used.
Safety Tip: Only use a properly rated portable step stool that meets Australian Standards or is clearly marked by the manufacturer with a safe working load. The step must be stable, non-slip, and suitable for the task. Ensure it is safely stowed during transit to prevent movement or injury.
17. Apply the brakes / power off once the wheelchair is correctly positioned inside the vehicle.

Securing the Wheelchair and Passenger

18. Attach all four wheelchair restraints to the wheelchair's designated securement points and the vehicle floor anchors. Do not attach to the wheels, footrests, or any removable parts.



- If the vehicle is on level ground, attach and secure the four wheelchair restraints in an order that is simplest to manoeuvre from your position (whether you are positioned from the front or the back of the wheelchair).

Safety Tip: If the vehicle is on a decline, always attach the rear restraints first to prevent the wheelchair rolling forward. If the vehicle is on an incline, always attach the front restraints first to prevent roll back (see image).



- Ensure the front wheelchair restraints are positioned in a "V" shape from the wheelchair to the floor anchors. Position the rear wheelchair restraints straight from the back of the wheelchair to the floor anchors (see image).
- Lock all wheelchair restraints into place and tighten using the ratchet.

- Before attaching the vehicle passenger seatbelt, explain what you are about to do and ask for the passenger's permission.** Attach and fit the vehicle passenger seatbelt correctly across the shoulder and waist. The vehicle passenger seatbelt is designed to secure the passenger – not the wheelchair. So, ensure the seatbelt snugly secures the passenger.
Safety Tip: Even if the wheelchair has its own in-built belt or harness, it is not designed to protect a passenger in the event of a crash. You must always use the vehicle seatbelt to secure the passenger.
- Re-check all four wheelchair restraints and the passenger seatbelt to ensure all are fitted correctly, tight and secure.
- Exit the vehicle and secure the hoist in its stowed position. Close the rear tailgate door.
- Before starting the trip, ask if the passenger requires any further assistance and if they are comfortable.

Unloading a Passenger

When unloading a passenger, the hoist equipment and restraint system must only be operated by a W-endorsed CPV driver.

Getting Ready

- Ensure the vehicle is parked legally, on level ground (where possible) and in a location with enough room to safely unload the passenger and lower the hoist. Turn on the hazard lights if required to be more visible to others.
- Advise the passenger you have arrived at their destination.
- Agree with the passenger, on who will operate and position the wheelchair and apply the brakes.

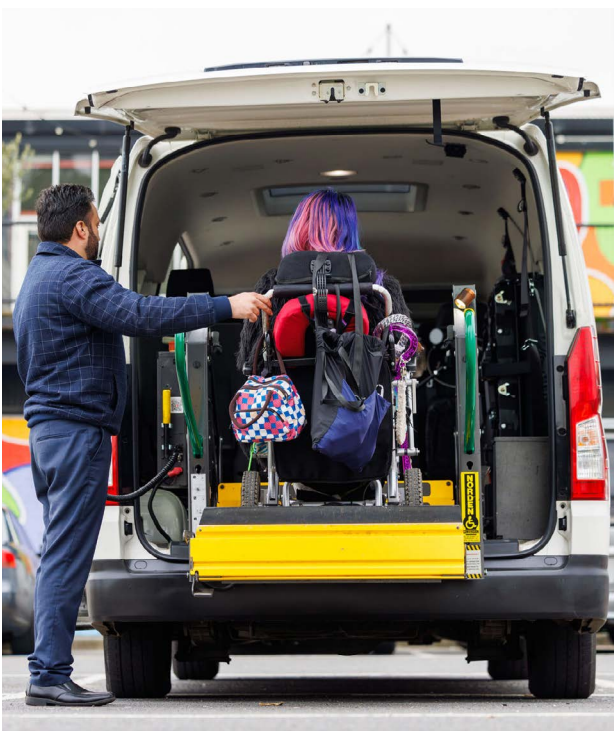
Releasing the Restraints

- Open the rear tailgate door of the WAV and safely unpack the hoist from its stowed position, then raise the hoist to the level of the vehicle floor.
- Ensure the wheelchair brakes are still applied / power off.

6. Advise the passenger you will remove their seatbelt and then carefully do so.
7. Release each of the four wheelchair restraints.
Safety Tip: If the vehicle is on an incline, always release the rear restraints first to prevent roll back. If the vehicle is on a decline, always release the front restraints first to prevent the wheelchair rolling forward.
8. Confirm all four wheelchair restraints and the passenger seatbelt have been fully removed and will not interfere with the operation of the wheelchair when reversing.

Moving a Passenger out of the Vehicle

9. Make sure the hoist platform is level with the vehicle floor.
10. Ask the passenger if they are ready to reverse and confirm whether they would like your assistance.
11. Release the wheelchair brakes or turn the power on.
12. Stand behind the wheelchair and carefully roll it straight back as far as possible onto the hoist platform. If the passenger positions the wheelchair themselves, keep one hand on the wheelchair handle and guide them if needed.
Safety Tip: Take it slow and be careful not to trip over walking backwards.



13. Apply the wheelchair brakes / turn power off and step off the hoist platform. A portable step stool may be used.
14. If the wheelchair needs further positioning to be fully on the hoist, release the brakes / power on whilst keeping one hand on the wheelchair, and carefully position the wheelchair to the end of the hoist.
15. Apply the brakes / power off.

Using the Hoist

16. Check the passenger is ready with their legs and feet clear of the gap between the hoist and the vehicle. Advise the passenger they can hold onto the hoist handle.
Safety Tip: If fitted, secure the hoist safety strap around the back of the wheelchair.
17. Stand next to the lift and lower the platform smoothly, keeping one hand on the wheelchair and the other on the controller.
Safety Tip: Always stay alert, close, and ready to assist if the wheelchair moves unexpectedly.
18. Once lowered to the ground, release the wheelchair brakes / power on and inform the passenger when it is safe to reverse off the hoist platform (or move the wheelchair safely off the hoist platform).
19. Assist the passenger to move to a safe location away from the vehicle and other potential hazards.
20. Return the hoist to its secured position and close the rear tailgate door of the vehicle. Secure any loose floor restraint anchor devices.

Ramps

Some WAVs have rear or side ramps for passengers to enter / exit. The driver should consider this guidance along with any ramp specific instructions, to determine how to safely load, secure and exit a wheelchair passenger.

Key Hazards and How to Stay Safe

Vehicle and Equipment

Why it matters:

A safe trip starts before you turn the key. As a WAV driver, you play a key role in keeping your vehicle safe by checking for faults and reporting issues promptly.

While the vehicle owner is responsible for maintaining the vehicle and equipment, the driver is responsible for ensuring it is safe to operate before each trip.

Identifying and reporting problems early helps prevent breakdowns, protects passengers, and supports compliance with your safety duties.

Common risks:

- Hoist or ramp failure due to poor maintenance or missed checks.
- Hoist roll stops that fail to deploy or lock properly, increasing the risk of a wheelchair rolling off the hoist platform during loading or unloading.
- Frayed restraints or belts that could fail in a sudden stop or crash.
- Retractable restraints that do not retract fully, leaving excess slack that can allow the wheelchair to shift during travel.
- Loose or damaged anchor points that allow wheelchairs to move during travel.
- Leaking fluids, unsecured batteries, or damaged wiring that could cause a fire or breakdown.
- Worn tyres or faulty brakes affecting control or stopping distance.

Driver Pre-Start Check:

Before your first trip each day, take a few minutes to confirm the vehicle and all accessible equipment are safe to use.

Check the following:

- Exterior: Tyres, lights, mirrors, windscreen, wipers.
- Vehicle systems: Brakes, horn, seatbelts, warning lights, cameras.
- Hoist and ramp: Operate through a full cycle to check for smooth operation and unusual noises.
- Restraints and seatbelts: Look for fraying, twisting, or corrosion on fittings.
- Anchor points and flooring: Confirm they're secure and not loose or rusted.
- Electricals: Ensure hoist and lighting cables are secure and undamaged.
- Cleanliness: Keep the passenger area dry and free from clutter.
- Paperwork: Confirm your driver accreditation, registration, and W-endorsement are current.
- Fire extinguisher: Ensure a securely mounted, fully maintained fire extinguisher (minimum 20B rating) is present and easily accessible.

If you find a fault or something doesn't feel right:

- Do not operate the vehicle if it is unsafe.
- Report the issue immediately to the vehicle owner or your Booking Service Provider (BSP).
- Record the fault in the vehicle log or reporting system.



Owner Responsibilities:

Vehicle owners are responsible for ensuring regular servicing, maintenance, and repairs are carried out according to manufacturer and legal requirements.

Drivers support this by completing and reporting daily checks so faults can be fixed promptly.

Safety tip: Taking five minutes for a pre-start check protects your safety, your passengers' safety, and your accreditation. Never assume a vehicle that was safe yesterday is safe today.

Hoist operation

Why it Matters

Hoists are one of the most common sources of injury in WAV passenger transport. Both passengers and drivers can be seriously injured if the hoist fails, is overloaded, or is used incorrectly.

A WAV hoist allows passengers using wheelchairs or mobility aids to be raised safely from the ground into the vehicle.

Only trained W-endorsed drivers are permitted to use a WAV hoist or lift. Following safe procedures protects:

- The passenger's safety, comfort, and dignity.
- The driver's own health and safety.
- The reliability and compliance of your WAV service.

Common Risks

- Hoist failure or collapse due to mechanical fault, poor maintenance, or overload.
- Passenger or driver falls from incorrect positioning or uneven platforms.
- Entrapment or crushing injuries from moving parts or unstable wheelchairs.
- Overloading beyond the hoist's rated capacity (combined passenger + mobility aid weight).

- Passenger anxiety or confusion leading to sudden movements or unsafe actions.
- Driver error from rushing, distraction, or inadequate communication.
- Electrical or hydraulic faults causing jerky or unsafe motion.

Ways to Stay Safe

- Check the hoist before use – look for leaks, damage, or jerky motion.
- Know the weight limit (passenger + wheelchair). Don't use it if you think it's overloaded.
- Follow safe procedures, every time (loading, securing and unloading passengers in wheelchairs procedure).
- Level the platform fully with the vehicle floor before moving the passenger.
- Stay with the passenger at all times — never leave them unattended on the hoist.
- Keep one hand on the wheelchair while loading or unloading.
- Apply brakes whenever the wheelchair isn't moving, and switch off powered chairs.
- Never stand on a moving hoist.
- Communicate clearly — explain each step and check the passenger's comfort.
- Stop immediately if anything feels unsafe or the hoist doesn't move smoothly.
- Report faults immediately and don't use unsafe equipment.
- Environmental factors such as wet or slippery surfaces on the hoist platform can reduce grip or stability.

Note: Most passengers will need to reverse their mobility device onto the hoist to exit the vehicle, which can be challenging as they may not see behind them. Treat this step with the same caution as lifting the passenger — it's highly risky and requires full attention.

Safety Tip: Take your time, follow every step, and stay alert. Your calm, careful actions keep passengers safe.

Restraints and Seatbelts

Correct use of restraints and seatbelts is essential for passenger and driver safety. Sudden braking, turning, or swerving can occur on any journey. Improperly secured wheelchairs or passengers can shift or tip, causing serious injury or death, even at low speeds.

Only the driver is responsible for correctly fitting all restraints and seatbelts. Passengers or carers, while well-intentioned, should not adjust any equipment.



Proper securement:

- Keeps the passenger safe and comfortable.
- Protects the driver and others in the vehicle.

Common Risks

- Wheelchair movement: shifting, tipping, or sliding during sudden manoeuvres, often caused by incorrect restraint configuration, improper anchor points, or unsecured floor restraints.
- Passenger injury or ejection: from poorly fitted seatbelts or harnesses, or passengers moving or unfastening restraints during the journey.
- Entrapment or discomfort: loose, twisted, or incorrectly positioned restraints can pinch or restrict passengers.
- Equipment failure: worn, frayed, torn, or damaged straps, clips, buckles, or floor restraints can fail unexpectedly.
- Environmental factors: wet, slippery, or contaminated restraint straps can reduce grip or stability.

Ways to Stay Safe

Check equipment condition before every journey:

inspect straps, buckles, clips, and floor restraints for frays, tears, damage, or malfunction.

Note: Report any faults immediately, do not use equipment that is worn or damaged.

Use all restraint points correctly:

secure all four wheelchair floor restraints (two front, two rear) and ensure correct configuration (front splayed outward, rear parallel) and apply appropriate tension so the wheelchair is firmly anchored.

Fit seatbelts properly:

- Lap belt low across the passenger's waist.
- Shoulder strap between neck and shoulder (never under the armpit).
- Remove slack and tighten all straps once secured.

Important: A wheelchair's own seatbelt is not designed to restrain passengers in a crash. Always secure the passenger with the vehicle's seatbelt, in addition to restraining the wheelchair.

Note: Consider using a suitable 4 point harness that meets Australian Design Rule Standards if a standard seatbelt does not fit the passenger safely or comfortably.

Passenger-specific adjustments:

Consider passenger size, mobility device type, and comfort while securing belts, always asking for consent before assisting.

Support passenger safety and autonomy:

Encourage passengers to remain safely restrained during the journey. Offer clear instructions and respect their choices while ensuring safety.

Monitor environmental factors:

Keep straps dry and clean and ensure the wheelchair base is stable and free of debris.

Stop and reassess if anything feels unsafe:

Never rush the securement process.

Communicate respectfully with passengers:

Explain each step and reassure them to maintain comfort and confidence.

Unsafe Driving Practices and Driver Alertness

Maintaining full attention while driving is essential to ensure the safety and comfort of WAV passengers. Passengers—especially those in wheelchairs—can be injured or unsettled if the driver accelerates, brakes, or turns abruptly, or becomes distracted. Even brief distractions, such as checking a device or multitasking with navigation or passenger care, can have serious consequences. At 50 km/h, looking away for just two seconds means travelling the length of a cricket pitch without watching the road – and doubles the chance of a crash.

Common Risks

Passenger discomfort or injury:

Sudden acceleration, braking, or sharp cornering can cause passengers to shift, tip, or slide, particularly those in wheelchairs.

Loss of vehicle control and distraction-related incidents:

Distractions such as mobile phones, eating, adjusting controls, or multitasking with navigation, communicating with passengers or providing passenger assistance can slow reaction times, make it difficult to maintain lane position or a safe speed, and significantly increase the likelihood of a collision.

Reduced passenger confidence:

Erratic, aggressive or unpredictable driving may make passengers feel unsafe or anxious.

Fatigue or mental overload:

Long shifts or multitasking with navigation, communicating with passengers or passenger care can reduce alertness and reaction time.

Unsafe pick-up or drop-off:

Parking in unsuitable locations, on steep or uneven terrain, or in poor visibility can create hazards for passengers entering or exiting the vehicle.

Ways to Stay Safe

These practices should be followed alongside all applicable Road Rules to ensure safe and compliant driving. For more information on Victorian road rules visit <https://transport.vic.gov.au/road-and-active-transport/road-rules-and-safety>

Prepare before you drive:

Set navigation, mirrors, seat position, climate and music controls, and secure loose items before moving off so adjustments aren't needed while driving.

Stay fully focused on driving:

Keep your eyes and attention on the road at all times. Do not hold or operate a mobile phone or portable device while driving.

Note: If a call or message is required, pull over safely and park before making or receiving it.

Use hands-free or mounted devices only if legally permitted:

Ensure use does not require interaction while moving and does not compromise safe driving.

Drive smoothly and predictably:

- Accelerate and brake gradually
- Slow down before corners, intersections, and roundabouts
- Take turns gently to minimise passenger movement
- Maintain a safe following distance

Drive to the conditions to ensure passenger comfort:

Reduce speed over bumps, raised crossings, uneven or wet surfaces, and train or tram tracks.

Avoid aggressive or impatient driving:

Do not tailgate (maintain a safe following distance), swerve, or make sudden lane changes.

Manage fatigue and mental load:

Take regular breaks on long shifts, avoid driving continuously for more than 2 hours at a time, and avoid multitasking whilst driving.

Park safely when picking up or dropping off passengers:

Ensure the vehicle is legally parked in a safe location (including designated disability parking, clearways, or loading zones where permitted), on as level a surface as possible, positioned to allow ramps or hoists to operate safely, and is visible to other road users.

Ensure safe access to and from the vehicle:

Park in locations that allow passengers to board and disembark safely, avoiding situations where they need to cross traffic or navigate hazardous surfaces.

Position passengers thoughtfully:

Where possible, secure passengers between the vehicle's axles to reduce movement and vibration and ask if they have a preferred seating location.

Check in with passengers:

Ask if they are comfortable and adjust driving if needed, but keep conversations brief and never divert attention from the road with non-urgent needs while moving. If a passenger requires help, pull over first.

Stop and reassess if unsafe conditions arise:

Do not continue driving if a distraction or hazard prevents safe driving.

Communicate calmly and clearly:

Keep conversations brief and reassuring to maintain focus and passenger confidence.

Safety Tip: Every moment of focus counts — drive attentively, smoothly, and with care to keep passengers safe and comfortable.



Protecting your own safety

As a WAV driver, your safety is just as important as your passenger's. Many injuries occur when loading or unloading wheelchairs, using ramps or hoists, or handling equipment. Following safe manual handling practices and staying alert to your surroundings helps prevent strains, slips, and falls.

Manual handling safety:

- Avoid lifting heavy equipment or wheelchairs by yourself — use the hoist or ask for assistance when needed.
- Keep your back straight and bend at the knees when securing restraints or adjusting equipment.
- Position yourself close to the task to reduce reaching or twisting.

Preventing slips, trips and falls:

- Wear enclosed, non-slip footwear.
- Use a rated portable step stool to step onto the hoist. Always keep three points of contact (two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand). Never jump or climb unsafely.
- Keep the vehicle area, ramp, and hoist, free from clutter, water, or oil.
- Be cautious on uneven ground or sloped surfaces when operating the hoist or moving a wheelchair.
- Always apply the handbrake and ensure the hoist is fully lowered before loading or unloading.

General tips:

- Take your time — rushing increases risk.
- Report faulty equipment immediately.
- If a situation feels unsafe, stop and reassess before continuing.



Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP)

The Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) helps eligible Victorians with disability and accessibility needs maintain their independence by providing a 50% subsidy on CPV fares, up to \$60 per trip. WAV drivers play a vital role in supporting MPTP passengers to stay connected to their community and engage in daily activities with confidence and dignity.

To provide this service, WAV drivers must be logged into an MPTP-compatible dispatch or payment system at all times while operating.

Staying logged in means:

- The subsidy can be applied correctly at the end of each trip.
- The trip can be verified for fraud prevention and program integrity.
- Passengers are not overcharged or denied a subsidy they are entitled to.
- Drivers are protected from fare disputes.
- The journey is recorded accurately in case of audit or follow-up.

Being logged in is not just a legal requirement, it supports your passengers access to the financial support they rely on, and it ensures you are paid correctly for the work you perform.

Wheelchair / Scooter Lifting Fee – What Drivers Need to Know

The MPTP provides a lifting fee to drivers for passengers who remain seated in their wheelchair or mobility scooter while travelling in a WAV. This fee recognises the extra time needed for the driver to safely operate the hoist and secure the passenger.

You can identify if the lifting fee applies by checking the passenger's MPTP card. It will have "Wheelchair/ Scooter" embossed on the card.

Important:

- The passenger must never be asked to pay the lifting fee. The lifting fee is fully covered by the MPTP when the passenger has a valid Wheelchair/Scooter MPTP card.
- Do not turn on the Fare Calculation Device (meter) while loading or unloading a passenger who holds this card.

If the passenger does not have a Wheelchair/Scooter MPTP card, the lifting fee is not subsidised. In these situations, drivers are permitted to turn on the fare meter while loading and unloading. This also applies to passengers from interstate or overseas who do not hold a Victorian MPTP Wheelchair/Scooter card.

Understanding Fares When Transporting MPTP Passengers

This information is provided to help you feel confident in applying the correct fare when a passenger is travelling under the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP).

Your role is to provide a fair and consistent service to every passenger. The MPTP subsidy helps reduce travel costs for MPTP members, but it does not change the standard fare structure that would normally apply.

The MPTP subsidy is simply applied after you calculate the fare, just like any other trip. This means you continue to charge your usual fare and any permitted extras, and then the subsidy is applied to reduce what the passenger pays.



What Costs Can Be Included in the Fare

The total fare can include the following (only if they apply to the trip):

- Flag fall
- Booking fee
- Distance/time fare
- Levy recovery charge
- Late-night / public holiday surcharge
- Tolls
- Airport charges.

These are all permitted and can be included before applying the subsidy.

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Fee

You may only charge the HOV fee when carrying five (5) or more passengers in the vehicle (excluding the driver). This count includes any passenger who uses a wheelchair or mobility device.

Important:

You cannot charge the HOV fee just because the passenger uses a wheelchair, has luggage or requested a WAV. The fee is based on the number of people, not the type of vehicle.

Processing MPTP Fares

When transporting an MPTP passenger it is essential to follow the steps below. Doing so ensures the subsidy is processed correctly, protects the integrity of the MPTP program, and supports a respectful, safe service for your passenger:

At the end of the trip, process the fare

- Swipe or insert the passenger's MPTP card at the end of the trip to apply the subsidy.
- Wait for the terminal to confirm the card has been accepted.
- Process the remaining outstanding balance using the passenger's chosen payment method.
- Provide the passenger with a payment receipt.

Return the MPTP card immediately

It is an offence for drivers to be in possession of a passenger's MPTP card if the MPTP member is not present in the vehicle.

- Always return the card to the passenger (or their carer) straight away.
- Do not keep the card, even if the passenger is a regular customer and asks you to hold onto it.

Drivers found in possession of a member's card may face compliance action, financial penalties or possible accreditation consequences.

Helping the Passenger When the MPTP Card Can't Be Used

On occasion an MPTP card may not be available or may not process correctly. This can happen if the passenger has misplaced their card, or if the card is damaged. When this occurs, the subsidy cannot be applied at the time of travel.

This can be distressing for a passenger to hear so it is important to clearly explain why you are unable to process the subsidy and that you are required to charge the full fare.

Passengers may be eligible for reimbursement when:

- The MPTP card is damaged,
- The MPTP card has been lost or stolen

If the payment terminal is not working or out of data coverage, drivers are permitted to process the fare using an MPTP emergency voucher. See section Using Cabcharge Emergency Paper Vouchers in this guide for more information.

Reassure your passenger in a respectful and supportive way by saying:

"I'm unable to process your MPTP card right now, so I'll need to charge the full fare today. I'll give you a receipt so you can follow up with Safe Transport Victoria to see if reimbursement is available. They may be able to assist."

More information is available at:

<https://safetransport.vic.gov.au/on-the-road/multi-purpose-taxi-program/>



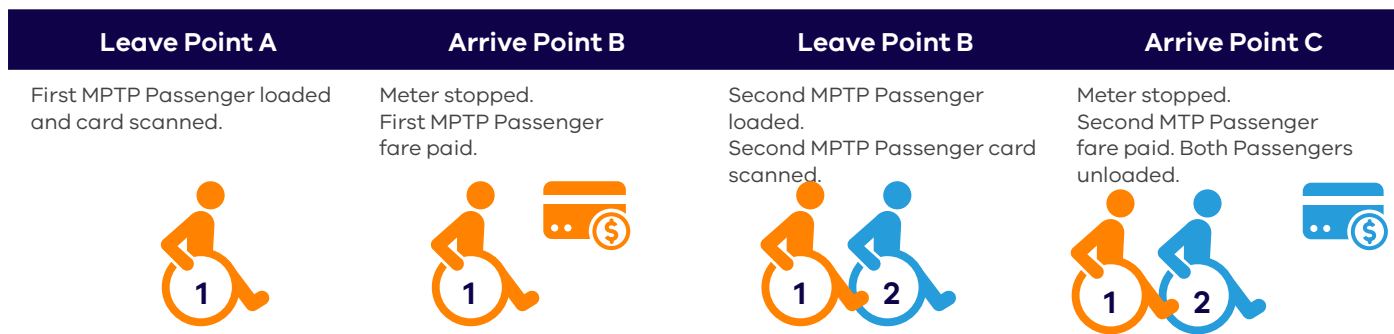
Transporting Multiple MPTP Passengers

Sometimes you may be required to transport two passengers on the same trip, but each person travels a different portion of the journey. For example, one passenger may be collected first and dropped off last, while another may join or leave partway through the journey.

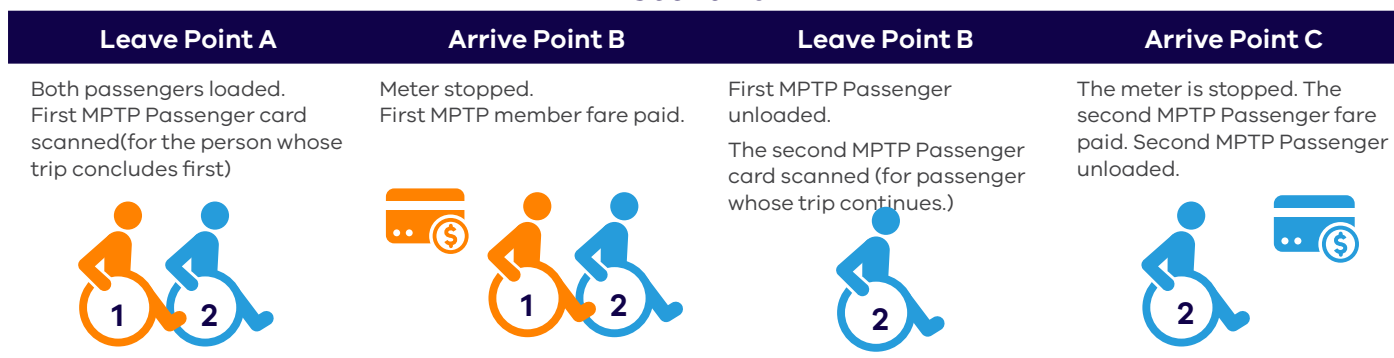
In these situations, it is important to process each passenger's fare separately, so that each MPTP member receives the correct subsidy for the part of the trip they travelled.

The guidance below outlines the required steps to correctly calculate and apply the subsidy when multiple MPTP passengers travel on the same trip.

Scenario 1



Scenario 2



Interstate Vouchers and Subsidies

Passengers who are members of a taxi subsidy program in another Australian State or Territory may still be eligible to receive a subsidy when travelling in Victoria. Likewise, Victorian MPTP members can use their Victorian subsidy when travelling interstate, in the States and Territories that participate in reciprocal arrangements.

What This Means for Drivers

If an interstate passenger is travelling in your vehicle and presents a valid interstate taxi subsidy card or voucher, you must:

- Accept the card or voucher.
- Process it according to your terminal or voucher instructions.
- Return the card to the passenger immediately after use.
- If the card or voucher cannot be processed, charge the full fare and provide a receipt for the passenger to follow up with their state subsidy program.

This ensures passengers with accessibility needs can continue to travel safely and affordably in other Australian states.

More information on the Multi Purpose Taxi Program is provided on the ST Vic website:

<https://safetransport.vic.gov.au/on-the-road/multi-purpose-taxi-program/>

Using Cabcharge Emergency Paper Vouchers

Drivers who use a Cabcharge EFTPOS terminal may only use an emergency paper voucher in limited situations. This is a last resort option and should only be used when the subsidy cannot be processed electronically.

You may use an emergency voucher only when:

- The approved MPTP payment terminal is not working (e.g., device failure or no network connection), OR
- The passenger's MPTP card is lawfully held by their carer due to the passenger's disability, and the carer is at the pick-up location but not travelling with the passenger to the drop-off location.



If you need to use an emergency voucher:

1. Write down all trip details clearly, including pick-up location, drop-off location, fare, and date.
2. Enter the full fare amount on the voucher.
3. Ask the MPTP passenger (or their carer, if appropriate) to sign the voucher.
4. Do not complete the trip without a signature.

Remember

- Emergency vouchers must not be used for convenience.
- You must always attempt to process the subsidy electronically first.
- Incorrect use of vouchers may lead to recovery of payments or compliance action.

More information on Emergency vouchers can be found on Safe Transport Victoria's website at: <https://safetransport.vic.gov.au/on-the-road/multi-purpose-taxi-program/mptp-forms/m40-emergency-voucher-booklets/>

For information on using a Fare Calculation Device (FCD) for MPTP fares please visit: <https://safetransport.vic.gov.au/on-the-road/multi-purpose-taxi-program/mptp-providers/>

Program Integrity and Fraud Prevention

Fraudulent use of the MPTP is taken very seriously.

All MPTP trips are routinely monitored and audited to ensure compliance with program rules.

Drivers who knowingly misuse an MPTP card or subsidy may face legal consequences, which may include financial penalties, loss of MPTP access, suspension or cancellation of driver accreditation, and potential prosecution.

These outcomes may result in the loss of a driver's income. Doing the right thing protects you, your livelihood, and the members who rely on this program to stay connected to their community



