



Statewide Advocates Influencing Leadership (SAIL) is a community-driven coalition and training project focused on fostering leadership and advocacy among people with disabilities across Pennsylvania. Our group is designed by and for individuals with disabilities, ensuring that the support we provide is both relevant and impactful.

Created in partnership with PA REV UP



Barriers to Transportation for Pennsylvanians with Disabilities

Transportation is a pivotal part of everyday life – necessary for getting to and from work, going to appointments, getting groceries, and spending time with friends and family. For Pennsylvanians with disabilities, inadequate and inferior access to transportation can mean less and lower paying employment opportunities, logistical challenges, and increased isolation.

Public Transportation

- 7.4% of Pennsylvanians with disabilities commute via public transportation. As public transportation budgets are decreased and stops are eliminated, people with disabilities are forced to navigate further distances between stops, which can be physically challenging and dangerous.
- Bumped out bus stops, which allow for easier boarding and disembarking of wheelchair users, are infrequent, and passengers are instead often let out on the street, leading to unsafe situations.

Accessible Taxis and Ride Shares

- Taxis and ride sharing services like Uber and Lyft allow Pennsylvanians greater flexibility and autonomy with transportation.
- Accessible taxis and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) through Uber are available in some urban centers, but not widespread throughout the suburbs, much less rural areas, restricting Pennsylvanians with disabilities who do not live in a major city.

Struggles with Paratransit

- Paratransit is the shared ride service available to Pennsylvanians with disabilities that requires one day notice for scheduling.
- Drivers can be 10 minutes early or 20 minutes late; riders may be no more than 5 minutes late.
- Inflexible and challenging to use for riders whose lives are not strictly scheduled in advance.



Barriers to Transportation for Pennsylvanians with Disabilities Recommendations

Incentivize Uber, taxis, rideshares, and other transportation programs to offer expanded accessible transit

- The general population has greatly benefited from private transportation companies including taxis and Uber. However, the majority of the services are not disability friendly or accessible.
- Create low cost loans for buying or modifying vehicles that will be used in transportation programs.
- Increase mileage reimbursement rates for ride share

Expand free transit program for citizens to include accessible transit

- There is a free transit program for senior citizens in Pennsylvania which has greatly increased the availability and utilization of public transportation used by individuals over the age of 65. This program should be expanded to include individuals with disabilities.

Introduce rating programs to improve access and accountability to paratransit

- Accessible transportation is often not held accountable for unreliable, unsafe, or overall inadequate transportation.
- A feedback loop should be developed that is available to the public and officials where individuals can easily rate their services and report issues.

Support development of competition

- If there is an accessible transportation entity in a region, it is often the only accessible transportation available. This allows many of these businesses to provide low quality services with the lack of availability or flexibility in fares.
- Encourage local county and city governments to create a policy where accessible vehicles are allowed to be closer to an entrance than other public transportation options. This will increase the number of businesses who are interested in purchasing accessible vehicles. Chicago allows accessible vehicles to take the first set of parking spots at the airport, in turn causing companies to increase capacity for accessible vehicles

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