

Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

ADA Policy

General Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. The ADA is civil rights legislation which requires that persons with disabilities receive services equal to those available to all Americans.

It is the policy of Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) that, when viewed in their entirety, services, programs, facilities, and communications provided by WCOG, directly or by a contracted service provider, are readily accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities to the maximum extent possible. 49. CFR 37.105

1. Approved Equipment

Whatcom Council of Governments' facilities will accommodate the use of personable mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers.

- *Wheelchair* means a mobility aid belonging to any class of three- or more-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed or modified for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered.
- Equipment must be in good working order, with batteries charged, tires inflated, footrests attached, and all parts secure. (49 CFR 37.3)

2. Mobility Device Brakes

When occupying an elevator, it is recommended that passengers apply the brakes on their mobility devices; however, they are not required to do so. With power chairs or scooters, it is recommended that the power switch be turned to the "off" position. Again, this is not mandatory.

3. Portable Oxygen Use

Individuals with disabilities who use portable oxygen devices are allowed to travel with respirators and properly secured portable oxygen supplies. Oxygen supplies must not obstruct the aisle. (49 CFR 37.167(h))

4. Personal Care Attendants

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) may accompany clients with disabilities into WCOG facilities. A PCA is someone who travels with, and helps, a rider who is not able to travel alone. You must provide your own PCA if you need one.

5. Service Animals

A service animal is any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. In order to utilize WCOG facilities:

- The animal must be on a leash or in a container, remain under control of the owner, and behave appropriately.
- Birds, reptiles, amphibians, rodents, and cats must be kept in an enclosed carrier/container.
- The animal must remain at your feet or on your lap.
- The animal must not be aggressive toward people or other animals. (49 CFR 37.167 (d))

6. Suspension of Access to Facilities

A client's privileges may be suspended for any of the following infractions in any WCOG facility:

- Smoking or carrying a lit pipe, cigar, or cigarette (unless in a designated smoking area).
- Discarding or dumping litter in places other than the recognized receptacles.
- Consuming alcoholic beverages or in possession of alcoholic beverages.
- Loud, raucous, unruly, harmful, or harassing behavior.
- Engaging in other conduct that is inconsistent with the intended purpose of the facility. (RCW 9.91.025)

7. Reasonable Accommodation and Employment

WCOG will not deny employment opportunities to an otherwise qualified individual with a disability because that individual requires reasonable accommodations to facilitate or continue employment, unless the accommodations would impose an undue hardship on the department.

8. Notification of Policy

WCOG will notify the public of the ADA policy on the website.

9. Complaint Process

WCOG is committed to providing safe and accessible services for the community. WCOG has established a Customer Service and Grievance Policy and customers wishing to file a complaint and/or obtain a copy of the policy may contact WCOG at (360) 676-6974, or in person at WCOG's administration office located at 314 E. Champion Street, Bellingham WA. (RCW 46.07b)