

# Accident and Incident Reporting

## **Instructor Notes:**

- Display welcome slide as participants enter the room to reassure they are in the correct place.
- Be sure to welcome participants to class – introduce class members and all trainers present.
- Be sure to start on time.

## **Discussion Points:**

- Remember, enthusiasm and positive energy are critical.
- Class participants are embarking on a challenging journey which begins here.
- For some, this may be the first time in a classroom in a very long time, making them feel slightly intimidated. Be sure to make participants feel welcome.
- Review emergency exit locations and facility specific policies, including cell phones and smoking.

**Time Recommended: 1 hour**

# Emergencies

- What is the definition of emergency?
- What do you think are types of emergencies that could happen while operating a paratransit vehicle?
- What do you think your primary responsibility in an emergency situation should be?



## Instructor Notes:

- Engage participants in the series of questions on this slide as an intro to this topic.

## Discussion Points:

- **Ask participants:** *What do you think is the definition of the word “emergency”?*
  - **Answer:** Webster says: “ an unforeseen happening or state of affairs requiring prompt action.”
- **Ask participants:** *What types of emergencies could happen while operating a paratransit vehicle?*
  - **Answer:** types of emergencies include:
    - Downed power lines/wires
    - Collision
    - Passenger Injury/Illness
    - Fire
    - Robbery
    - Hijacking
    - Threat of violence
- **Ask participants:** *What do you think your primary responsibility in an emergency situation should be?*
  - **Answer:** to protect our passengers and yourself.

## Basic Emergency Management Steps

1. Remain calm
2. Assess situation
3. Protect
4. Obtain help
5. Reassure and assist
6. Secure scene
7. Gather information

### Instructor Notes:

- These are the 7 Basic Emergency Management Steps.

### Discussion Points:

#### Step 1

- Remain calm to be able to execute your duties and responsibilities
- It is natural during an emergency to experience the “fight or flight” reflex.
  - This is a normal reaction; however, many people do not know how to control the massive surge in energy caused by the sudden release of adrenaline into the bloodstream.
  - Here is what happens:
    - Adrenaline surges into the bloodstream;
    - Normal breathing stops;
    - Short, shallow breathing begins;
    - Feelings of panic, disorientation, and dizziness develop;
    - Hands, arms, and legs may begin to shake.
- Take a deep cleansing breath when confronted by an emergency. You will then be able to better control a surge of energy and think clearly. Then apply the emergency

procedures you have learned.

## **Step 2**

- It may seem counter-intuitive, but slowing down long enough to assess the situation is critical in determining an appropriate plan of action.
- Obtain a solid understanding of what just happened or is happening.
- Decide what to do first, second etc.
- Thinking quickly and acting quickly without really assessing the situation could result in making the situation worse.

## **Step 3**

- **Protect passengers from injury and/or further injury:**
  - You are the leader; your passengers are depending on you for direction and for their safety.
- **Provide for your own safety:**
  - You must also be concerned with your own safety so you can carry out the plan of action.
- **Protect property if safe to do so:**
  - Your passengers safety and your own safety are most important. Vehicle and items can be replaced; lives cannot. Once you have determined that everyone is out of danger, if you are able to further protect the vehicle, take the necessary steps to do so.

## **Step 4**

- Call Dispatch and request assistance.
- Call 911 if no Dispatch response (**Discuss local emergency communication requirements**).
- Have necessary information ready to request assistance needed (e. g., exact location and direction of travel, vehicle number, situation).
  - Giving your location to the dispatcher is most important so they know where to send emergency responders.
- Emergencies may require more help than you alone can provide.
- Do not try to manage the situation alone.

## **Step 5**

- Reassure your passengers:
  - As it is natural for the paratransit operator to experience the fight or flight reflex — so it is natural for the passenger to experience the same.

- In paratransit service we need to recognize reasons why a passenger could panic:
  - They may have mobility impairments, which limit their ability to get off the vehicle by themselves.
  - They may be secured by a seatbelt that they cannot release.
  - Their wheelchair is secured to the floor.
  - They need an operating lift to easily exit the vehicle.
  - They may not understand what is going on.
- Assist your passengers to calmly follow your directions; they may not know how to be able to help themselves.
- Maintain control of the situation so your passengers feel safe and remain calm.

### **Step 6**

- Take the necessary steps to secure the scene in order to prevent further damage or injury.
  - Make sure that your vehicle is properly secured per company policy
  - Encourage others not to leave the scene and make sure that unauthorized people do not enter your vehicle
  - Determine if evacuation is necessary
  - Use your fire extinguisher, if safe to do so
  - Position reflectors if there is danger of other vehicles colliding with your vehicle
    - *Placing reflectors out is particularly urgent if:*
      - A fire has caused the electrical system to malfunction, leaving your vehicle unlighted at night
      - You had to stop on the side of the highway
      - You had to stop immediately beyond a curve or just past the crest of a hill.

### **Step 7**

- Gathering information is necessary to complete appropriate reports.
  - Facts can be distorted or forgotten and evidence can be overlooked or destroyed.
- Note the following:
  - Date/time
  - Names of passengers and where they were seated
  - License plate, make/model/color of other vehicle (if collision)
  - Witness name and contact information:
    - Use courtesy/witness card if available

- Emergency responder information:
  - Names of emergency personnel
  - Badge numbers
  - Department, precinct, or district
  - Time the different agencies arrived on the scene
  - Incident or report numbers

## Responsibilities Continued

- When is it acceptable to leave scene of an emergency?
- Written reports

A detailed accident report form, likely from a police or insurance agency. It contains numerous fields for recording incident details, including vehicle information, witness statements, and a diagram of the scene. The form is filled out with handwritten text and includes a signature at the bottom.

### Instructor Notes:

- Engage participants by asking them when they think it is acceptable to leave the scene of an accident.
- Once you have allowed them to have a short exchange amongst themselves, use the discussion points to discuss required behavior at the scene.

### Discussion Points:

- Leaving the scene:
  - The passengers remain your responsibility until they either re-board your vehicle or another vehicle can pick them up and take them to their destination, or if they are transported by emergency responders.
  - Continue to work with Dispatch, supervisors, and the authorities to completely fulfill your responsibilities.
  - Do not leave the scene until you have been cleared to do so by company representative and police (if on scene).
- Written reports:
  - Emergency events must be documented with the company (**Discuss local procedures related to completing required documentation following an emergency event**).
  - Complete report as soon as possible while the facts are fresh in your memory.
  - If you gather good information during Step 7, it will be easier for you to complete an accurate and detailed report.

## Possible Emergency Situations

- Medical emergencies
- Mechanical Breakdown
- Vehicle Collision
- Downed Power Lines



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### Instructor Notes:

- The list above represents common emergency situations an operator may face in the field.
- Briefly review the list of possible emergency situations with the operators.
- The following slides will cover each in more detail.

### Discussion Points:

- None

## Medical Emergency

- Response time is critical
- Pull over in a safe place
- Secure vehicle and notify Dispatch
- Identify passenger's condition
- Update Dispatch or 911 if no Dispatch response
- Do not drive to get help or to any other destination
- Do not try to manage situation on your own



### Instructor Notes:

- Emphasize that medical emergencies must not be taken lightly
- In a medical emergency, the amount of time it takes to respond can make the difference between a minor incident and a tragic outcome
- Quick action may save a life. Knowing what to do allows the most efficient use of time
- Medical emergencies on a paratransit vehicle may range from a bee sting to a grand mal seizure, however the operator's response should be the same.
- ***Discuss local policies and procedures related to this topic/information.***

### Discussion Points:

- Pull over and secure the vehicle in a safe location as quickly as possible
- Assessing the situation immediately is critical to getting help quickly
- If Dispatch is unable to immediately respond (places you on hold, has you stand by on the radio), dial 911 directly
- Do not drive:
  - To the passenger's home or other destination (even if it just around the corner)
  - To a hospital or other help center
  - Never attempt to manage situation on your own – always contact Dispatch immediately.

# Passenger Fall

## If a passenger falls:

- Do not move passenger
- Contact Dispatch/911 immediately



## Instructor Notes:

- Discuss steps to take if a passenger falls.

## Discussion:

- When someone falls, our first instinct is to help the person get up or pick the person up. Moving someone after a fall could cause further harm or injury.
- In the event a passenger falls (on the bus steps, inside the bus, on the ramp/lift, etc.):
  - **Do not move the passenger**
    - Reassure the passenger that you are calling for help
  - **Contact Dispatch/911 immediately**
    - If possible, try to make the passenger as comfortable as possible without moving him/her (for example: if it is cold, cover with a blanket, jacket, etc.)

## Mechanical Breakdown

- Pull over immediately in a safe place
- Secure vehicle
- Notify Dispatch
- Do not try to manage situation on your own



### Instructor Notes:

- Emphasize that mechanical emergencies must not be taken lightly.
- What appears to be a minor mechanical issue can escalate with very little warning.

### Discussion Points:

- Pull over and secure the vehicle in a safe location as quickly as possible (gas/fuel stations are not a safe place if you suspect fire or if there is the possibility of a fire).
- Assessing the situation immediately is critical to getting help quickly.
- Never attempt to manage situation on your own – always contact Dispatch immediately.
- If passengers need to be transferred to another vehicle:
  - Scan the area to determine the safest place to direct the rescue vehicle. The goal is to determine the safest, shortest path the passengers would have to walk from vehicle to vehicle.
  - Check the walking surface outside of the vehicle for a drop off, guard rail, drainage ditches, traffic environment relative to abilities of the passengers (wheelchair, runners, etc.).
  - When the disabled vehicle is in a safe parking lot and there is space, using the door-to-door position may be best.
  - On a roadway or street, whenever safe to do so, the replacement vehicle should be positioned in the same lane and facing in the same direction as the disabled vehicle.
  - Conduct a search of your vehicle before leaving scene to make sure all passengers have been transferred.

## Vehicle Collision

- Most collisions are minor and occur without injury
- Follow Basic Emergency Management Steps
- Practice courtesy and patience
- Dealing with
  - Other motorists
  - Emergency personnel
  - Media representatives



### Instructor Notes:

- Most collisions are minor and occur without injury.
- In every emergency situation, follow the 7 Basic Emergency Management Steps.

### Discussion Points:

Following a collision, you may have to interact with other motorists, emergency services, and/or media.

- Practice courtesy and patience.
- Avoid placing blame or admitting fault. You do not want to say something that can later be held against you or the company.

### Dealing with other motorists:

- If the other motorist becomes irate, remain in your vehicle and wait for emergency services/company representative.
- Step 7 – Gather Information including the vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
- **(Discuss local policies and procedures relating to dealing with other motorists and gathering information for the report).**

### Dealing with Emergency Management Personnel (EMS):

- Step 7 – Gather Emergency Responder information, including department name and badge number.

### Dealing with the Media

- If the media (e.g.: newspaper, radio, or television representatives) have arrived at the scene:
  - Explain tactfully that company rules do not allow you to discuss the collision at this time.
  - Refer them to the appropriate company representatives **(Discuss local policies and procedures relating to the appropriate company representative).**

*Remember these hints when dealing with the media:*

- Media personnel can be very creative when trying to obtain their own information.

- Avoid saying anything 'off the record' or giving responses to hypothetical questions.
- You should feel comfortable walking away from a media representative once you have given the company representative information.



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**Instructor Notes:**

- Use this opportunity to evaluate the learning based on what questions are asked from the participants
- If there seems to be an area that lacked general understanding – take the time to clarify the main points
- It is important to be sure everyone is comfortable with moving on to the next section of this training

**Discussion Points:**

- None

**Thank You**

**This Section of training  
is now complete**

**Instructor's Notes:**

- None

**Discussion Points:**

- None

