



Office Hours – Riders with Vision Loss: New Tools from NADTC and American Foundation for the Blind

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NADTC Overview

- *Virginia Dize, Director of Transportation, USAging and Co-Director, NADTC*

Today's Presenters

- *Priscilla Rogers, Special Advisor on Aging and Vision Loss, American Foundation for the Blind*
- *Neva Fairchild, National Aging and Vision Loss Specialist, American Foundation for the Blind*

Group Discussion

MISSION: To promote the availability of accessible transportation options that serve the needs of **Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Caregivers and Communities.**

MAJOR OBJECTIVES:

- Person-centered technical assistance and information
- Training
- Communication and Outreach
- Coordination and partnership
- Investment in community solutions

USAging



Photo Credit: ButterFLi, Los Angeles, CA

National Aging & Disability Transportation Center

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AFB American Foundation®
for the Blind
Expanding possibilities for people with vision loss



Riders with Vision Loss: New Tools from NADTC & the American Foundation for the Blind

Setting the Stage

- “The most difficult part of my disability is not being able to drive.”

Two New Guidance Toolkits

- Meeting the Needs of Older Passengers with Vision Loss: Guidance for Transportation Providers | NADTC
- Drivers Make the Difference For Older Passengers with Vision Loss | NADTC

Understanding types of vision loss and Their Effect on Getting Around

Common Eye Conditions that Cause Low Vision



Scattered Scotomas



Central Blind Spot (Scotoma)

Peripheral Field Loss



National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health (NEI/NIH)

Signs of Vision Loss

- shuffling or stumbling
- looking down at feet
- holding fare card close to eyes to read
- inability to find an open seat
- difficulty negotiating steps and curbs and the height of them

Unique Transportation Challenges of Older Passengers with Vision Loss

- Lack of sidewalks or bus shelters
- Problems accessing vehicle
- Uncertainty if ride has arrived
- Inability to find bus stop
- Bus route changes
- Inability to use technology including to find bus schedule change, pay fares, et al

How to Communicate Effectively

- Many people are unsure how to talk to people with vision loss and don't want to say the wrong thing.
- It is important to find out what person can/can't do and accommodate accordingly, e.g. provide assistance with filling in forms.
- Be aware a rider who is visually impaired may not realize you are there to help.

Problems Passengers with Vision Loss Encounter

- **Problem:** Passengers are unable to find the paratransit vehicle. This situation may occur if other vehicles are nearby or the vehicle is in a parking place, thereby blending in with all the other parked cars.
- **Problem: Passengers with visual impairments are at a higher risk of falls.**
- **Problem: Passengers are unable to find their way to the entrance to the *building* when they are dropped off.**

Driver Training Is Critical

- Use to guide your training: [Drivers Make the Difference For Older Passengers with Vision Loss | NADTC](#)
- Show [Human Guide Video](#)
- Provide practice in appropriate techniques for helping. Check the resource section on how to find local agencies to help with training.

What Passengers Say...

- “I often ride paratransit and have noticed how often drivers fail to identify themselves when picking me up which is critical since I can’t see the driver’s uniform... if they say nothing, I have no idea they are there. This has resulted in me being startled and even frightened.”

Connecting People with Vision Loss to Appropriate Help

- It is important for transportation providers to make connections to services for people with vision loss in the community
- Many passengers new to vision loss do not identify as being blind or low vision and may not have had any services to help them.

Resources

- The APHConnect Center at 1-800-232-5462 or connectcenter@aph.org.

This resource can help you find local, community, and state resources.

- [Time to Be Bold](#)—a directory of state service providers

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