



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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CONSUMER ADVISORY

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Final regulations and guidance to transit agencies concerning the accessibility of public transportation service to elderly and handicapped persons were announced today by Robert E. Patricelli, Administrator of the U. S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

The UMTA Administrator noted the new regulations are the result of a year-long UMTA study carefully planned to hear and consider the advice of elderly, handicapped and other interested persons.

"Hundreds of written responses and extensive public hearings conducted by UMTA in five cities across the nation were considered in preparing these regulations," Patricelli said.

"I believe the time was well spent, for these regulations will accomplish a great deal towards assuring the availability of mass transportation which elderly and handicapped persons can effectively use."

Among the key features of the new regulations are provisions which would mandate that:

- new fixed facilities, like subway stations, be fully accessible to elderly and handicapped persons, including wheelchair users;

- newly designed transit buses have front step risers that do not exceed 8 inches in height, to facilitate entry by elderly persons, and that they also offer a wheelchair lift or ramp as an option which can be ordered by transit authorities which so choose;
- a range of interior bus stanchions, grab rails, floor surfaces, doorway widths, lighting, and other features be provided to improve current bus safety and utility for the elderly and handicapped; and
- the local planning process develop plans to meet a significant fraction of the transportation needs of elderly and handicapped persons, and involve such persons in planning and programming decisions.

The new UMTA regulations and guidance on transit service for the elderly and handicapped are applicable but not limited to transportation planning, fixed facilities, buses, rapid rail vehicles, and light rail vehicles.

The full text of the regulations was published in the April 30, 1976 Federal Register.

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