

Emergency Preparedness and Response

The following section outlines the emergency preparedness and response policies to help ensure the safety of our passengers for ActiVan Accessible Transit.

Bus maintenance and emergency equipment

All ActiVan vehicles are maintained to a high standard that meets or exceeds the Ministry of Transportation Guidelines. All vehicles are equipped with:

- Radio access to a transit coordinator at all times
- Fire extinguishers
- Emergency first aid kits
- Emergency reflectors to safely divert traffic in the event of breakdowns or accidents

ActiVan operators conduct a daily inspection on every bus before it is put in service for the day. The pre-trip identifies any operating defects and includes an inspection of the condition of passenger seats, floors, handrails, the audio announcement system, and a confirmation that accessible equipment (e.g. straps, harnesses) are present and functioning.

Emergency situations

ActiVan is committed to providing safe conditions for our passengers. An emergency can happen at any time. While no one can control weather conditions, unexpected vehicle breakdowns, accidents or passenger illnesses, ActiVan operators are trained and prepared for these possibilities. Operators will make first aid kits available for use; however, they are not required or expected to administer first aid. The following situations have been identified as risks based on the most probable emergency situations that may be encountered.

Vehicle breakdowns and unavoidable stops:

In the event of a mechanical malfunction or vehicle breakdown, if possible, the vehicle will be safely guided onto the right shoulder or into a parking area. The ActiVan Coordinator/dispatch will be notified immediately by the operator. If the vehicle is unable to continue, another vehicle will be sent to the designated location. In the interim, the operator will advise passengers to remain on the bus unless it is unsafe to do so. The ActiVan operator will work to ensure passenger safety at all times.

Vehicle accidents and personal injury:

The best time to think about an emergency procedure is before an emergency occurs. While each emergency is unique, it is important to know beforehand what to do to avoid panic or poor judgment.

The safety of passengers and the public is an operator's first consideration. Operators are trained to exercise constant vigilance to prevent injury and to practice defensive driving at all times. In no case will the operator leave an injured person unattended.

If involved in an accident, the bus operator will:

- Stop immediately in as safe location as possible
- Put on hazard lights and set parking brake
- Determine status of passengers and the vehicle. If the passengers and the vehicle are in stable condition, passengers are required to remain in the vehicle
- Call 911 if personal injury occurs or if evacuation assistance if required
- Advise 911 operator if disabled passengers are on board who require special assistance
- Notify dispatch or supervisor
- Provide access to the first aid kit if applicable
- Put out reflective triangles and/or pylons about 30 meters from the front and rear of the vehicle
- Remain at the scene and wait for emergency personnel to arrive

Collisions involving a pedestrian:

If involved in a collision with a pedestrian the operator will:

- Remain at scene of the collision and provide assistance
- Contact emergency contacts
- Provide aid to those involved in the incident and to anyone sustaining an injury or loss
- Provide any needed information upon request from a police officer

Vehicle fire:

At the first indication of fire on the vehicle, the operator will proceed as follows:

- Pull over to a safe location, stop the vehicle immediately, open all doors, shut off the engine and contact dispatch to request emergency services assistance
- Advise passengers that emergency services have been notified and instruct passengers who do not require assistance to deboard in an orderly manner
- Assist passengers with disabilities to deboard; if necessary, solicit help from other passengers
- Evacuation of vehicle is not necessary unless there is a fire or danger of fire or if the vehicle is in an unsafe position
- If possible, use the fire extinguisher located on the vehicle to extinguish the fire
- If fire cannot be controlled by the fire extinguisher, advise passengers not to reenter the vehicle
- Await emergency services assistance

Defensive driving:

Defensive driving, like customer service, starts with attitude. A good driving attitude is absolutely essential for a professional driver. ActiVan operators use the three C's: Courtesy, Consideration and Caution at all times. A fourth C is Common Sense. Operators must remain alert, well rested, and do not expect a lot from other drivers.

As drivers of accessible transportation, the driver must make an extra effort to plan ahead, know their route and which lane they should be in to make the ride as smooth as possible. It is also the passenger's responsibility to not distract the driver while the vehicle is moving.

In addition to the suggestions above followed by the operator it is also the operator's responsibility as a driver of seniors and persons of disabilities to notify his employer/contract employer and obtain specific requirements when involved in a collision or incident for insurance purposes. A collision report is filled out with both the operator's employer and the Town of Halton Hills.