



**LAW, DISABILITY
AND
SOCIAL CHANGE**

Accessible Transportation in Windsor, Ontario (Canada) – Research Report

Submitted to the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee

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CANADA

THE LAW, DISABILITY & SOCIAL CHANGE PROJECT

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The Law, Disability & Social Change (LDSC) Project team conducts research into current legal and policy issues to help empower people with disabilities to fully achieve their rights and, more generally, to foster and develop inclusive communities. The Project aims to further the motto “nothing about us without us”. The LDSC Project team undertakes a variety of projects that feed grounded research and theory into policy development and legal decision-making. Current projects include research on accessibility legislation, consent and capacity, transportation inequality, legal aid, general disability discrimination and more.

Additional information about the LDSC Project may be found at: <https://lawdisabilitysocialchange.com/about/>

***Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee—Accessible Transportation
Windsor***

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Executive Summary

This report examines traditional and non-traditional accessible transportation services in Windsor, Ontario.

Traditional accessible transportation services that were contacted include Taxi companies and accessible rideshare services. These companies offer accessible transportation services to the residents of the City of Windsor and its surrounding county's.

Non-traditional accessible transportation services offer accessible transportation similar to taxis but are specialized for individuals with disabilities. A total of 5 transportation companies were contacted in the City of Windsor, where services ranged from full-service (including curb-to-curb) to accessible emergency services, as well as transportation services for leisure activities. The responses were based on questions regarding types of services offered, hours of operation, prices for services, and vehicle maintenance.

TRADITIONAL TAXI SERVICES¹

Canadian Checker Cab²

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?

- “Accessible Van” provides transportation for customers with disabilities. Fleet includes “Side Ramp Taxis” for people with wheelchairs. [Online reviews mention that there are 5 accessible vans during the day and 2 at night]³

2. Is the service only provided for in Windsor, or does it also go to other cities?

- Windsor and beyond including airport travel

3. How much is the service?

- Depends on destination/distance
- Fare as per Meter, same rate as the regular taxis

4. How much time in advance is needed to book a ride?

- On-call – online reviews indicate that the accessible taxi should be booked 20 minutes in advance

5. Is the service available 24hrs?

- Yes

6. what is the licensing process required for these different categories of service provider?

- According to By-law 137-2007 amended by By-law 150-2018, an accessible taxi cab must have the appropriate accessible plate affixed to the vehicle. Part IV of the By-law lays out the Obligations and Responsibility for Accessible Taxi-Cabs in Windsor. The modifications on the accessible van are a ramp that comes out of the vehicle. The drivers are not specially trained, but the driver will help the rider if needed

7. Are any subsidies provided to offset the price to the customer (either from the service provider or from other sources like ODSP, the MS society, etc.)?

- Clients are able to bill ODSP directly⁴

¹In accordance with the AODA Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 Ontario Reg 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards, the term “taxicab” means a motor vehicle as defined in the Highway Traffic Act, other than a car pool vehicle, having a seating capacity of not more than six persons, exclusive of the driver, hired for one specific trip for the transportation exclusively of one person or group of persons, one fare or charge only being collected or made for the trip and that is licensed as a taxicab by a municipality; (“taxi”).

² Note: There are several reviews online concerning consumers complete disappointment with the arrival and unreliability of this company’s accessible taxis. People complain that an accessible van has taken up to 1.5 hours to arrive and rude/unprofessional staff. Most negative online complaints are concerning accessible vans and also people have noted that this is the only company in Windsor offering accessible taxi cabs. The largest cab company in Windsor “Vets” does not advertise for accessible taxi cabs.

³ As indicated on business webpage: <http://www.checkercabco.biz/services.html>.

⁴ This is not necessarily a subsidy as it is the same rate as regular services. The company getting the invoice would have to set up the account with them and then the customer would need to know the account number.

ACCESSIBLE RIDESHARE SERVICES

UBER⁵

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?

- UberWAV provides affordable in wheelchair-accessible vehicles, where available. Riders who use motorized wheelchairs or scooters can in certain cities request a ride in a wheelchair-accessible vehicle (WAV).

2. Is the service only provided for in Windsor, or does it also go to other cities?

- used just as other Uber fleet services, book through the app and wait for the driver to agree to the destination.

3. How much is the service?

- Depends on destination/distance
- Same as the UberX, the regular economy class of Uber

4. How much time in advance is needed to book a ride?

- Rides can be booked through the app at any time

5. Is the service available 24hrs?

- Yes

6. what is the licensing process required for these different categories of service provider?

- Uber is legal in the City of Windsor. This is confirmed under Schedule 6 to bylaw 137-2007. Under this bylaw, Uber would fall under the category of Transportation Network Company.⁶
-

Lyft

This ridesharing service is not yet available in Windsor.

⁵ Note: While this service is available through the App the option for UberWAV is does not prompt when you attempt to order an accessible ride. This is because there are no drivers in the area with an available UberWAV vehicle. I am not 100% sure if this service is available in any city in Canada.

⁶ According to bylaw 137-2007 “Transportation Network Company” or “TNC” means any person who offers, operates, or facilitates prearranged transportation services using a Transportation Network Company Platform to connect passengers with Transportation Network Company Drivers.

NON-TRADITIONAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES:

Can-Am Indian Friendship Center of Windsor

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?⁷

- partnership with wheelchair accessible rideshare programs
-

CROWN Patient Transfer

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?

- Wheelchair accessible, stretcher or walk-ons for a wide variety of options for destinations including medical appointments, family visits, work-related trips, etc.

2. Is the service only provided for in Windsor, or does it also go to other cities?

- All over Windsor and Ontario and parts of Quebec

3. How much is the service?

- Varies (E.g. within Windsor, Wheelchair accessible van= \$50. 85 (tax included) each way)
- Take various forms of payment including cash, credit, or cheque (including on the day of transfer)

4. How many accessible vehicles are available?

- Approx. 15

5. When were the vehicles last inspected/how old are they?

- Last inspected in August 2018
- Keep a log to monitor the condition of the vehicles
- Inspected every 5000km or unless circumstances require an earlier inspection

6. How much time in advance is needed to book a ride?

- One day notice is preferred, but it is possible to make accommodations for same day service

7. Is the service available 24hrs?

- Yes

8. Are any subsidies provided to offset the price to the customer (either from the service provider or from other sources like ODSP, the MS society, etc.)?

- OSDP
-

Essex Community Services

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?

- accessible vehicles

⁷ Services are run through the Life-long Care program; No other information was available

- transportation for various activities including leisure activities, special events, etc. however, medical appts take priority

2. Is the service only provided for in Windsor, or does it also go to other cities?

- Service is based out in the County and transfers individuals to Windsor

3. How much is the service?

- 10-25\$ (round trip; subsidized by gov)

4. How many accessible vehicles are available?

- 3

5. When were the vehicles last inspected/how old are they?

- Inspected every 6 months

6. How much time in advance is needed to book a ride?

- at least 24 hrs

7. Is the service available 24hrs?

- Mon-Fri (9:00a.m-5:00p.m)

8. Are any subsidies provided to offset the price to the customer (either from the service provider or from other sources like ODSP, the MS society, etc.)?

- Already subsidized and individuals who are on ODSP, OW may have them fully covered

9. what is the licensing process required for these different categories of service provider?

- Bus license
-

Handi-Transit

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?

- Strictly “parallel transit service”⁸
- Provides transportation anywhere, doesn’t matter for what purpose (as long as individuals are eligible and registered)

2. Is the service only provided for in Windsor, or does it also go to other cities?

- Windsor
- Has a contract with LaSalle⁹

3. How much is the service?

- Fair is \$3

4. How many accessible vehicles are available?

- 13 accessible buses

5. When were the vehicles last inspected/how old are they?

⁸ Don’t go into client’s home (curb to curb services)

⁹ (Individuals must be LaSalle tax payers, verified with the city and must pay \$525.00 and the rest is covered by the town of LaSalle)

- Inspected twice a year

6. How much time in advance is needed to book a ride?

- Can call same day but if individuals call to book an appointment with short notice, they can only book rides on days that are not already pre-booked
- One month of rides are available¹⁰

7. Is the service available 24hrs?

- Monday-Friday (6:30am-12:30 am) Sat (8:00am-12:30am) Sunday (8:00am-10pm) ¹¹

8. Are any subsidies provided to offset the price to the customer (either from the service provider or from other sources like ODSP, the MS society, etc.)?

- Funding options are available through ODSP, churches, or other organizations that might purchase tickets for individuals

9. What is the licensing process required for these different categories of service provider?

- Bus license prior to getting hired
 - Training process conducted through Handi-Transit as well as Health and Safety training
-

Comfort-keepers

1. What services do you provide for people with disabilities?

- Stretcher vehicles (non-urgent patient transfer) ¹²
- Wheelchair accessible vehicles (with accessible ramp)
- Can offer rides to the hospital, appointments, nursing home, etc.
- Bed service/room to room
- Provides wheelchairs

2. Is the service only provided for in Windsor, or does it also go to other cities?

- Offers services across the province of Ontario

3. How much is the service?

- Depends on which vehicle is used (stretcher, wheelchair accessible)
- Base rate plus kilometers

4. How many accessible vehicles are available?

- 180 across the province
- Windsor: 8

5. When were the vehicles last inspected/how old are they?

- On month-to-month basis or when needed
- Nothing older than 10 years

6. How much time in advance is needed to book a ride?

- Can book on same day

¹⁰ Not a demand service

¹¹ Do make exceptions if someone is in wheelchair and needs hospital on as-needed basis

¹² “Just like ambulances, “but don’t respond to emergencies”

7. Is the service available 24hrs?

- Yes

8. Are any subsidies provided to offset the price to the customer (either from the service provider or from other sources like ODSP, the MS society, etc.)?

- N/A

9. What is the licensing process required for these different categories of service provider?

- EFR trained (minimum requirement)
 - paramedic graduates
 - Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi)
 - AODA Training
-

OTHER COMPANIES CONTACTED

Out of Service	Other
Van-go	Care Link Health Transit: no answer/ no VM
Patient transfer service	Voyageurs medical: no answer/no VM

Conclusion

Traditional Taxi Services

When investigating accessibility amongst traditional taxi services in Windsor, Ontario, it became evident to the researcher that only one traditional taxi provider services the city and its surrounding areas. This service provider is Canadian Checker Cab¹³. This company is the only company in the city of Windsor and its surrounding areas that currently have accessible taxi vans amongst its fleet. These accessible vans are modified with affixed ramps to allow for wheelchair access in and out of the vehicle. The company is regulated under the municipal taxi regulations and have specialized designations strictly for their accessible taxis. As of March 18, 2019, this service provider had 2-3 accessible vans available 24/7, however, since this time period, there is an indication that more accessible vans have been purchased and are awaiting approval from the municipality. This information should be confirmed and updated in the future.

Canadian Checker Cab does not offer any subsidies, however, does allow for customers to directly bill ODSP once approved by the Ministry and given a valid billing account number. In sum, there are significant concerns regarding accessible traditional taxi services available in Windsor. With only 2-3 accessible taxis available in such a large service area, many online customer complaints concern the poor customer service and unreliability of accessible taxis specifically. It is the goal of this research to prompt improvements in facilitating more accessible transportation for people with disabilities living in Windsor, Ontario.

Non-Traditional Transportation Services

When investigating accessible transportation services that were non-traditional (such as taxis), only five companies were available and in service. Some of the basic information in the report was found on the internet (company websites, yellow pages, etc.) including types of services offered, price range, and which cities the services are offered in. The rest of the information was collected over the phone with company employees. Half of the companies offer 24-hour services, while the rest operate Monday-Friday during regular business hours. Most companies require clients to be registered or have eligibility requirements in order to qualify for services. Similarly, the government provides subsidies for many of the services provided through the companies. Prices for services range and depend on the distance traveled, the type of accessible vehicle used, the types of services required (i.e. curb-to-curb, emergency, leisure, etc.), and the amount of notice given for services (the prices range anywhere from \$3-\$50+). Finally, in terms of vehicle maintenance, inspections occur anywhere from every month to annually across all companies contacted.

¹³ Private independently owned taxi companies are not bound by the Convectional Transportation responsibilities under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11. See <https://aoda.ca/what-is-the-transportation-standard/>