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U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

Mobility Devices

Some people with disabilities use mobility devices to get around, such as walkers, wheelchairs, or other power-driven devices. People with disabilities may use a variety of mobility devices based on their needs.

In the ADA, these mobility devices fall into two main categories:

1. Wheelchairs (manual or power-driven) and manually powered devices
2. Other powered options, such as golf carts

Basic Requirements

State/local governments and businesses must allow a person with a disability who uses a *wheelchair or other manually powered mobility aid* into all areas where members of the public are allowed to go.

A person with a disability who uses a golf cart or other powered option must be allowed to enter businesses and government facilities unless it can be shown that a particular type of device cannot be safely used.

Wheelchairs and Manually Powered Devices

Wheelchairs are manually operated or power-driven devices designed primarily for people with disabilities to get around.

Manually powered devices also include:

- Walkers
- Canes
- Crutches
- Braces

Other Powered Options

Other options include any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines that may be used by people with disabilities to get around. These include:

- Golf carts
- Electronic personal assistance mobility devices such as Segways®
- Other devices designed to operate in areas without defined public routes, such as all-terrain vehicles (ATVs)



How the ADA regulations refer to golf carts, ATVs, and other powered options

In the ADA regulations, other powered options are referred to as *other power-driven mobility devices*, or *OPDMDs*.

Factors to Consider

Businesses and government facilities must consider the following factors when deciding whether another powered option can be used:

- Type, size, weight, dimensions and speed of the device
- Pedestrian traffic in the facility
- Design and operational characteristics of the facility, which can include:
 - Indoor or outdoor facility
 - Square footage
 - Furniture placement and density
 - Storage availability
- *Legitimate safety requirements* for operation
- Risk of serious harm to environmental, natural, or cultural resources
- Conflicts with federal land management requirements



More about *legitimate safety requirements*

Businesses and governments can impose legitimate safety requirements for operating the OPDMD within a facility.

For example, a cruise ship may decide that people with disabilities using Segways® can generally be accommodated, except in constricted areas, such as passageways to cabins that are very narrow and have low ceilings.

Safety requirements must be based on actual risks, not on speculation or stereotypes about a particular type of device or how it might be operated by people with disabilities using them.

Learn more in ADA Requirements: [Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices \(OPDMDs\)](#).

After considering these factors, an agency or business might establish a policy that:

- Requires users to operate devices at the speed of pedestrian traffic
- Identifies locations where devices cannot go
- Provides instructions for going through security screening (if necessary)
- Indicates if storage is available for the device

Asking Someone About Their Mobility Device

If a person with a disability enters a business or government facility using a cart or other powered option:

- ✔ You may ask that they provide “credible assurance” that the device is used because of a disability.

You must accept any of these types of credible assurance:

- A valid, state-issued disability parking placard
 - Other state-issued proof of disability
 - A statement from the person that the cart or other powered option is used because of a disability, unless the person is observed doing something that contradicts this statement
- ✘ You may not ask about the nature or extent of someone’s disability. This is also true if someone is using a wheelchair or other manual mobility aid.

Learn more about the ADA and Mobility Devices

[ADA Requirements: Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices \(OPDMDs\)](#)

[ADA Update: A Primer for Small Business](#)

[ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments](#)

Related Content

Guidance

[ADA Requirements: Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids, and Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices](#)