

**TransLink**

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South Coast British Columbia
Transportation Authority

June 17, 2015

Kendra Milne, Director of Law Reform
West Coast Legal Education and Action Fund
555-409 Granville Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 1T2

Dear Kendra Milne,

RE: Translink Priority Seating Policies

Thank you for your April 13, 2015 letter requesting clarification about TransLink's policy regarding courtesy seating on vehicles.

TransLink allocates priority seating for seniors and persons with disabilities. This seating is located near the front door of buses and either side of doors on SkyTrain and Canada Line. The seating is indicated by a decal that features two images, a person with a wheelchair and a person with a mobility cane. These images pictorially represent, using universally recognized symbols, the two categories of seniors and persons with disability, and do not limit the seating to those people who use walking canes or manual wheelchairs as the only customers who have need of a seat or the accessible space. These symbols are universally recognized as only some of the obvious examples of passengers who may require the space or a seat in the accessible area as they are unable to use traditional seating or to stand.

TransLink's accessibility policy gives priority to customers who are unable to use traditional seating or are unable to safely stand, but does not reserve the seating. As a public transportation agency with responsibility to serve all customers, we do not prohibit customers from sitting in otherwise unoccupied priority seating. To do so, would mean refusing to pick up customers when we have reached capacity on a transit vehicle, while seats remain empty.

In the event that all of the priority seats are occupied, any request for a seat from a customer is valid if the individual feels that their abilities do not permit them to stand safely, as indicated in the Buzzer Blog article you reference. It is up to the individual to self-identify as having this need, as many times disability, in particular, is not visibly apparent.

As the priority seating is a shared space for people with a variety of abilities, both visible and non-visible, passengers may not always be able to acquire a seat. TransLink shares your concerns about the

availability of courtesy seating, and we are in the process of completing an increase in the designation of priority seating on both SkyTrain vehicles and SeaBus vessels.

In answer to your specific questions, since the courtesy area on a vehicle is for any passenger who requires a seat because they have a condition that means that they cannot safely stand, the Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee has not had discussion specific to identifying pregnant women on signage.

Again, thank you for taking the time to bring your concerns to our attention.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Chung', is written above the typed name.

Sarah Chung
Access Transit Coordinator, TransLink