



## **Policy Statement Revised in August 2002 by Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities**

### **Transportation**

#### **Summary of the Issue:**

The lack of accessible, available, affordable transportation frequently is identified as one of the major barriers to employment and inclusive community living for individuals with developmental disabilities. Lack of transportation restricts independence, self-sufficiency, participation, and freedom of choice.

#### **Council Position:**

The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities recognizes that individuals with developmental disabilities often must depend on public transportation to get to work, maintain social relationships, and participate in other aspects of normal community living. Lack of access to transportation when it is needed is a major barrier to independence, inclusion, and self-sufficiency.

The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities supports the expansion of an affordable, available, accessible transportation system that recognizes and provides for the different accommodations that are needed by a wide range of persons, including those with developmental disabilities, in all areas of the state.

#### **Background:**

The lack of adequate public transportation is an issue in all areas of Oregon among all populations. Lack of accessible, available, and affordable transportation has been identified numerous times by self-advocates as one of their greatest challenges and most significant barriers to participation in community activities.

Transportation resources specifically targeted to individuals in residential and vocational programs are not flexible, coordinated, or adequate to support individualization, self determination, or community inclusion. Many areas of the state do not have public transportation. Existing systems often do not link and individuals are not able to travel from one county to another county.

Surveys conducted to measure extent of the unmet need and type of transportation needed reveal that "service levels of dial-a-ride transit services and other services geared to the needs of seniors and people with mobility impairments would have to more than double in order to meet the needs identified in this survey. 77% of people with mobility impairments would have significant difficulty using fixed route transit. When those who needed non-fixed route services were asked about the availability of service, 49% did not have access to these services. Of those who did have service available, 41% felt that the service was inadequate."<sup>1</sup> Council forums conducted in several areas of the state substantiated these concerns.

**Possible Future Activity:**

- Assist in developing a network of people who are interested in transportation issues.
- Collaborate with other disability groups and seniors to support a legislative agenda to address the rural and urban transportation issues in Oregon.
- Advocate for effective use of transportation dollars to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Continue to work with Oregon Department of Transportation, Services to Seniors and People with Disabilities and others to develop policies and programs to address the transportation needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- Advocate for more effective linkage and efficient use of existing transportation options and systems.

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation Mobility Needs Study, 1995