



Driver Training Policy

Board Approved , April 2026

DRIVER TRAINING POLICY
Illinois Center for Autism

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

Illinois Center for Autism's primary goal is to provide safe, reliable, and courteous service to its clients. To safely provide such service, it is essential that all drivers of paratransit vehicles be properly trained in defensive driving skills and techniques, passenger assistance, and emergency procedures. This policy is applicable to any and all staff who may drive vehicles received by Illinois Center for Autism (hereinafter referred to as "ICA") through the Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP) Program.

PROVISION OF TRAINING:

ICA will employ, supervise and provide training for all drivers in accordance with current rules and regulations of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Illinois Department of Transportation, Office of Intermodal Project Implementation (IDOT-OIPI). No driver, whether full-time or part-time, will be exempt from such training.

DRIVER TRAINING RECORDS:

ICA will maintain proper records of training conducted for all drivers in the system. Driver training records will consist of a separate file for each driver and contain the following, at minimum:

- a copy of the driver's current Driver's License.
- copies of certificates or other documentation verifying type, date, and level of training received.
- all other relevant and pertinent information related to driver training, including applicable policies and procedures of the FTA and IDOT-OIPI.

AREAS OF TRAINING:

Drivers, both new and existing, will receive training in the following areas:

- Passenger assistance, including information on transporting passengers with special needs.
- Emergency procedures, including the use of emergency equipment located in each vehicle.
- Defensive driving, including techniques and procedures.
- Vehicle Inspection (pre-trip & post-trip)

Each driver will be required to demonstrate competency in each of the procedures in which he/she has received training. This may consist of written tests in the classroom and actual vehicle operation.

Formal training in the aforementioned areas will be provided by a qualified trainer selected by ICA. Formal driver training is required for each driver according to the following schedule:

- Existing Drivers: Each existing driver will be required to receive formal classroom training in each area at least once in every five-year period. Drivers will be required to attend shorter refresher training classes at least once in every two-year period, but training may be required more often if deemed necessary by the driver's supervisor.
- New Drivers: Each new driver will be required to receive formal classroom training in each area as soon as possible, but no later than 60 days of the date of employment. Existing drivers are considered the same as new drivers if they have not had driver training in each of the aforementioned areas.
- Any driver having a preventable accident while driving will be required to undergo formal training in the applicable area as soon as possible, but not longer than 10 days after the accident was determined preventable.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING FOR NEW DRIVERS:

Each new employee will spend a minimum of three (3) days with senior drivers designated by the transportation service provider learning the following procedures and the safe and proper use of equipment:

- Accessibility features, including wheelchair lifts/ramps and securement systems.
- Communications equipment.
- Emergency equipment located in each vehicle.
- Assisting passengers, including those with special needs.
- Pre and post trip vehicle inspections.
- Passenger courtesy and passenger relations.
- Daily routine.

In addition, prior to driving any ICA vehicle, all new drivers will be required to view videos and read handouts provided by the transportation service provider covering the following areas: defensive driving skills, passenger assistance and emergency procedures. Transportation service provider staff must be available to provide instruction and answer questions concerning the videos and handouts.

DRIVER'S LICENSE:

All drivers, whether part-time or full-time, must have a valid driver's license with the appropriate license classification required by the Illinois Secretary of State prior to operating any ICA paratransit vehicle. Persons driving an ICA paratransit vehicle requiring a CDL license shall obtain such a license with the appropriate endorsements

prior to driving such a vehicle. Any person with a suspended or revoked license will not be allowed to drive an ICA paratransit vehicle.

SPECIAL TRAINING:

At times drivers may need special training in the aforementioned areas or other areas related to the safe operation of ICA vehicles. Determination of the need for such training will be the responsibility of the supervisor and will be made on an individual basis depending on special circumstances that may arise. Drivers will be required to attend such training, either during or outside of regular business hours. Record of any special training needs shall be placed in the driver's file.

TRAINING RESOURCES USED:

The Illinois Center for Autism will utilize commercially available driver training options to include RTAC, RTAP, and TAPTCO. ICA vehicles obtained through the Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP) Program may only be operated by drivers who have completed initial driver training and periodic retraining as required by this policy.