

Metlink Guidelines - Carriage of prams, strollers and buggies on Public Transport

Travelling with prams, strollers and buggies

Metlink welcomes passengers carrying children in prams, strollers and buggies. However, we know that travelling with youngsters has its challenges, so we've written these guidelines to help everyone travel safely.

Note that our buses and trains have varying capacities for carrying prams, strollers and buggies. This means that some aspects of these guidelines are specific to particular bus and train types.

In general though:

- Most buses and trains have good access for prams, strollers and buggies. It should be noted though, under certain circumstances, that they may have to be folded and the children seated with their carers.
- Pram, strollers and buggies must not be placed in the aisle or anywhere else that could prevent other passengers getting on and off safely.
- For safety and security reasons, bus drivers and train staff are not required to help passengers get on or off. Bus drivers will lower, or "kneel", their buses to assist passengers with a pram, stroller or buggy.
- The best time to travel with a pram, stroller or buggy is at off-peak times.

To make these guidelines as easy as possible to read, we use the word "pram" from now on to mean a pram, stroller or buggy.

How to travel safely with a pram

- Sometimes children can sit in their prams when they're on the bus or train, but at other times the prams will need to be folded and stowed securely, and the children seated with their carers. The situation will depend on the bus model and train type, the number of passengers already on board with prams or wheelchairs, and the total number of passengers on board.
- Prams on buses and trains that don't have wheelchair or designated priority areas must be folded and placed in the luggage rack (if there is one), and the children carried safely on seats or on carers' laps.
- Prams must not have shopping bags, luggage or any similar items hanging from the handles, as this can make them fall over. They should be removed and either stowed in the luggage rack or held on the passengers' laps.

Taking your pram on to a bus or train that is wheelchair-accessible

Wheelchair-accessible **buses** can be easily identified - they have the blue and white wheelchair sign on the front of the bus and on the wheelchair access doorway. The access doorway is usually the front door, but with some bus models the wheelchair access is through the back door.

Passenger **train services** are provided by a variety of train types. Each type of train carries prams differently due to a difference in internal layout and accessibility and, as a result, some conditions of carriage depend on the train type. Matangi trains are wheelchair accessible, having one low floor carriage per two-car set which is identified by having a green door with a blue and white wheelchair sign next to it. Older Ganz Mavag trains, which operate some peak hour services, and Wairarapa trains do not have a low floor area. Prams must be folded and placed in the luggage rack.

- Prams can be taken on board through the wheelchair-accessible doorway. If they can't fit, or there's no wheelchair-accessible doorway, the prams must be folded to go on the bus or train.
- If carers want children to sit in their prams while they're on the bus or train, the prams must be less than 70cm wide and 90cm long, and be able to go down the aisle and be stowed in the designated wheelchair or "priority seating" areas.
- On buses, the bus driver will inform passengers with prams who need to get on the bus through the rear door to access the designated wheelchair area. Passengers need to tell the driver how many people are travelling with them and pay the appropriate fare.
- Prams carrying children must be placed securely (with the brakes on) in the designated wheelchair or priority seating areas. The prams should face away from the direction of travel if possible.
- People in wheelchairs or with limited mobility take priority over prams in designated wheelchair spaces, as these are the only spaces where they can travel safely. If a pram is already using the space when a person in a wheelchair or with limited mobility needs it, the pram must be folded and stowed safely and the child carried safely on a seat or on the carer's lap (the carer and child are not expected to leave the bus or train).
- If other passengers are already sitting on the seats of a designated wheelchair or priority seating area, a passenger with a pram can ask them to move. If they don't want to move, the passenger must fold the pram and carry the child safely.



What to expect of the bus driver when taking a pram on a bus

- The bus driver's main task is to make sure that all passengers are taken safely and comfortably to their destinations and that the bus is secure at all times. Their role includes applying these guidelines and communicating them to passengers.

- The bus driver is entitled to take reasonable steps to require passengers to stow their prams safely. If a pram can't fit into a bus for some reason, the driver will explain why and advise the passenger how to find timetable information for the next available service.
- The bus driver can ask a passenger who's not prepared to follow the guidelines to leave the bus.
- If the bus has a "kneeling" feature, the driver will lower or "kneel" the bus to enable prams to get on and off.
- For safety and security reasons, the bus driver doesn't have to leave their driving seat to help a passenger get on or off the bus.
- The bus driver must make sure that passengers don't place prams (or other items) where they obstruct the aisle or could prevent other passengers getting on or off safely.
- The bus driver must make sure that the bus remains stopped until all prams are secured and carers are seated. This includes passengers who have to enter the bus through the rear door and stow prams in the designated wheelchair or priority seating area.



What to expect of train staff when taking a pram on a train

- The main task of on-board staff is to make sure that all passengers are taken safely and comfortably to their destinations and that the train is secure at all times. Their role includes applying these guidelines and communicating them to passengers.
- Train staff are entitled to take reasonable steps to require passengers to stow their prams safely. If a pram can't fit into a train for some reason, staff will explain why and advise the passenger how to find timetable information for the next available service.
- Train staff can ask a passenger who's not prepared to follow the guidelines to leave the train.
- For safety and security reasons, staff do not have to leave the train to help a passenger get on or off.
- Train staff must make sure that passengers don't place prams (or other items) where they obstruct the aisle or could prevent other passengers getting on or off safely.

Passengers' safety responsibilities

Metlink is committed to providing safe, comfortable and reliable transport services – and in return we expect passengers to accept some responsibility too.

Passengers must accept that buses and trains have limits to the number of passengers they can carry safely, and this applies to passengers intending to travel with prams. Bus drivers or train staff with a fully loaded bus or train can't pick up a passenger just because they're travelling with a pram.

All passengers must abide by these guidelines. Those who don't may be asked to leave the bus or train, or may not be allowed to get on.

Priority seating

Priority seating for seniors, young children, people with prams, and people with mobility problems, is available on Metlink trains and buses. It consists of four seats usually facing each other or facing the aisle, with a flat walkway that is close to the door. This seating is not reserved; it is first come, first served. It is not the bus driver or train staff's responsibility to move people in or out of these seats. If you are sitting in the priority seats we request that you offer your seat to any of the people described above.

Scooters

The need for a review of the current guidelines on the carriage of scooters was identified. Various types of feedback were collated. The new guidelines better reflect the current way scooters are being commonly used. The new guidelines also address scooters consistently with other objects being carried on buses, while also addressing the risks that they are perceived to pose. The new agreed guideline wording is:

Scooters that can be carried by hand are allowed on buses. If possible scooters should be folded before the bus arrives. Scooters must be secure at all times on buses, and must not block the aisle or any doorway. Kick-bikes that meet the criteria for Folding Cycles can also be taken on buses.