

## **LIFT OPERATING PROCEDURES**

An accessibility lift makes it possible to load wheelchairs of various sizes and weights in an efficient and safe manner. However, a lift is potentially hazardous equipment. They must be maintained and operated properly. Considerable caution and awareness is needed when operating a lift.

Remember, a lift may differ slightly in structure and operation and only the vehicle operator should operate the lift. It is important that each vehicle operator be familiar with any lift likely to be used.

The information provided here gives general procedures that will apply to all lifts. Your agency may have specific policies pertaining to vehicle lift operations. It is recommended that you check with your supervisor concerning those policies.

Upon arriving at your destinations, stop on level ground, put the vehicle transmission in “park” and secure the emergency brake. Make certain there is room for the lift platform to open without hitting obstacles. You should also have enough room for the passenger to get on the lift. Make certain that your vehicle is visible by activating the hazard (four way) lights.

It is the responsibility of the vehicle operator to properly open, secure and close the lift doors, to load and unload the passenger on and off the lift platform and to properly use all lift functions.

Understand that these procedures are in place for safety reasons. They have NOT been developed to create a hassle for driver or passenger. As always, basic customer service must be foremost – Treat all passengers with respect, patience and courtesy.

- Open the lift doors from outside the vehicle and secure them in the open position.
- Greet your passenger. Talk **TO** them, not around them. Ask your passenger how you may assist them getting on the lift.
- The passenger may ride the lift either facing toward or away from the vehicle. Explain the hazards involved in facing in and that the manufacturer recommends an outward facing position. (The ADA always gives the choice to the passenger.)
- Set the wheel locks on a manual chair. If a motorized chair is used, ask the passenger to turn the power off once they are on the lift.
- If he or she is capable, as the passenger to hold the handrails of the lift or to place their hands in their lap.
- If they are present, always use the lift belts.

***The lift must always be operated from the ground. Do not remain in the vehicle while raising or lowering the lift platform and, do not ride on the lift with passengers who are using a common wheelchair.***

***Stand on the ground with one hand on the wheelchair and one hand operating the controls; raise the platform only a couple of inches. Check the front safety barrier to be certain it is locked. Only after you are certain the barrier is locked, continue raising the lift platform to the vehicle floor level.***

***Put the lift controls in a secure location with one hand while holding the wheelchair with the other. Release the wheelchair wheel locks and guide the wheelchair into your vehicle.***

***Reach in and lock at least one wheel. Unless absolutely necessary, never leave a passenger sitting on the lift platform unattended. When boarding, guide their wheelchair into your vehicle; when exiting, pull it out.***

*NOTE: This procedure may be difficult for some operators. Therefore, ask passengers if they can assist in moving their wheelchair in and out of the vehicle.*

### **Motorized wheelchairs**

Extra caution is needed when assisting a customer who uses a power wheelchair. Some individuals operating these devices are slow in reaction, or may have involuntary movements, which may cause their hand to hit the controls. Also, some of the devices may be set on "high speed".

When boarding these passengers ask them to turn the power to the device off after getting on the lift. When the lift comes up to floor level ask the passenger to turn the power on again and only tap their controls in the direction you want them to travel. This may require two or three taps, but you want to be certain they are going in the correct direction.

When exiting the vehicle, ask the passenger to again tap their controls once, twice or three times to get them onto the lift platform. Once on the platform tell them to turn off the power.

Make certain you are clear in your directions and, that the passenger understands what you are saying.

### **Standees on the Lift**

Remember, the lift is an accessible entrance to your vehicle. Therefore, individuals using walkers, crutches, canes or braces, or who otherwise have difficulty using step are permitted, under the ADA, to stand on the lift for entry or egress.

Standees should stand in the center of the platform facing the direction of travel. If capable the passenger should hold both handrails when on the platform. The driver must use good judgment to determine if he or she will ride the lift with the passenger, or, operate the lift from the ground. How you decide to protect the passenger must be assessed with each situation.

### **Manual operations of the lift**

Most lifts are equipped with a hydraulic manual pump located within the plastic motor housing on the side of the lift. A steel pump arm may be mounted on the inside or outside of this plastic housing.

The manual operation pump is designed to get passengers out of a vehicle. It is not intended to be operated to bring passengers into a vehicle. If the hydraulic lift is not working properly, the bus should be taken out of service.

**NOTE:** During manual operation, the driver must be inside the vehicle. This is the only time under normal conditions that it is acceptable for the driver to operate the lift from inside the vehicle.

### **Lowering**

To lower the platform manually, insert the pump arm onto the bleeder valve making certain the two flanges fit inside the pump arm. The pump arm should be parallel to the vehicle floor. Turn the pump arm, counter clockwise one quarter turn, just enough to allow the platform to drop slowly. Do not unscrew it too far or hydraulic fluid will leak. When the platform has reached the ground, tighten the valve by turning it clockwise.

### **Raising**

To raise the platform, insert the pump arm into the pump opening. Pump the arm by raising and lowering it a full stroke. The lift platform will rise very slowly to floor level. Talk to your passenger during this entire operation to make certain they are aware of what is happening.

If your lift is fully automatic, after moving your passenger off the lift, continue to pump the arm to fold the lift into the vehicle. If your lift is not fully automatic refer to the lift operating instructions which should be mounted directly on the lift.

### **FMVSS 403 Compliant Lifts**

The 403 lift must be classified by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) as a "Public Use Lift" with a continuous lifting capacity of 800 pounds.

Do not attempt to load or unload a passenger using a wheelchair or other mobility device that does not fit on the lift platform. Also, do not exceed the 800-pound load capacity of the lift.

The operator should not ride on the lift platform with the passenger. The lift is intended for one wheelchair and its occupant or one standee.

### **Braun**

Vehicle movement is prohibited unless the lift is fully stowed, and the lift will not function unless the vehicle is parked and secured.

A visible and audible threshold warning system will activate if 25 pounds or more are on the threshold warning plate when the platform is one inch or more below floor level.

The inner roll stop and outer barrier sense weight to prohibit lift operation. The lift will not function if 25 pounds or more are on the inner roll stop or outer roll stop. The lift platform cannot be folded if fifty pounds or more are on the platform.

The lift cannot be raised more than 3 inches unless the outer barrier is vertical, and the outer barrier latch is positively engaged.

A power switch is located on the power box to the lift itself and is accessible from outside the vehicle when the lift doors are open.

## **RICON**

Two light beams detect if someone passes through either when the platform is one inch below the floor. An audible and visual signal is activated.

The RICON lift bridge plate is equipped with a load sensor which will prevent lowering of the lift platform if an object is on the bridge plate.

The RICON lift will not operate unless the occupant restraint belt is properly fastened.

A power switch is located on the hand controls for the lift.

## **Cycle Counter**

All 403 lifts have a lift cycle counter located inside or near the hydraulic pump housing, visible through a slot on the aisle side of the housing. The counter advances each time the platform moves through a complete cycle. The number of cycles displayed is used to schedule preventive maintenance services. Consult the owner's manual of each lift to determine the manufacturer's maintenance schedule.

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