

## Liability

# Wheelchair Securement

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## Question

Several policyholders transport wheelchair residents in passenger vans. The van is a typical conversion van with a mechanical lift. Do you have any information on proper lift transport safety?

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## Response

The wheelchair lift manufacturer provides the instructions regarding how to most safely load and unload passengers. It is possible that various policyholders have installed different lift equipment and warrant different techniques during loading/unloading. If the insured has not already done so, ask them if they have been in contact with the manufacturer regarding loading/unloading procedures for the equipment installed on their vans.

The following information offers best practices for wheelchair loading/unloading and passenger safety:

- The Transportation Research Board (TRB) publishes *Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 171: Use of Mobility Devices on Paratransit Vehicles and Buses*. It describes the current and emerging issues that limit the use of mobility devices in paratransit vehicles and buses, includes a guidance document to assist transit systems, manufacturers, and transit users in the implementation of potential accessible design and accommodation solutions for the short and long term. It is available for download at <http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/171162.aspx>.
- The Arrowhead Group publishes a handout addressing *Wheelchair Passenger Handling Best Practices*. It is available at [http://www.arrowheadgrp.com/pdf/ambulance/Wheel\\_Chair\\_Passenger\\_Handling.pdf](http://www.arrowheadgrp.com/pdf/ambulance/Wheel_Chair_Passenger_Handling.pdf). The handout focuses on common causes of loss for passengers. Common injuries occur during loading and unloading according to the material.
- The article, "*The Dos and Don'ts of Wheelchair Safety*," available at <http://www.schoolbusfleet.com/channel/special-needs/articles/2008/08/the-dos-and-donts-of-wheelchair-transport-safety.aspx> offers tips regarding wheelchair transportation. This article mentions the wheelchair transportation safety education toolbox ([www.ercwts.org](http://www.ercwts.org)).

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