

A Bill for an Act relating to Improved Accessibility in Public Transport.

To be enacted by the YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament;

Improved Accessibility in Public Transport Bill 2021

A Bill for an Act to improve accessibility in public transport. This Bill has been made with the purpose of improving access to trains, stations, and their replacements; driven by the needs of Victorians with disabilities and their experiences, especially those who require public transport. The need to access public transport is one that many Victorian commuters know, and can appreciate the importance of.

The Bill meets these needs by providing all stations with the facilities required for a convenient and punctual transport experience. Moreover, changes are made to the PTV app to ensure that access is transparent and inclusive to all persons that require it. These facility and app modifications improve access for a myriad of Victorian people, including parents with young children, and people with disabilities.

PART I—Preliminary

Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) to provide equal access to train stations for all Victorians;
- (b) to ensure maintenance is regular and timely for all Victorian train stations;
- (c) to facilitate simple and easy use of transport across metro and rural trains;
- (d) to ensure replacements to trains cause minimal disruption.

Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill, we define the following to mean—

- (a) **split station platform** means stations where the platforms are divided by tracks and/or both platforms are not accessible simultaneously;
- (b) **island platform** means platforms that are central to the station meaning all platforms are accessible simultaneously;
- (c) **parents' facilities** means rooms that offer a safe, private place for people to feed, change and care for their young children while they are out and about;
- (d) **PECS communication tools** means the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) used to assist people in communication who are unable to do so through speech. The system uses picture cards for communication;
- (e) **Snap, Send, Solve** means the app or online reporting system that allows citizens to send photos of damaged or unmaintained services to identify and report issues within councils, facilities, utility services and or other authorities;
- (f) **PTV** means Public Transport Victoria.

Part II—Establishment

Clause 4 Location of general station facilities

- 4.1 All stations shall have facilities which are accessible without the need to cross tracks—
- (a) for split station platforms, every platform at the station shall have its own set of facilities;
 - (b) for island platforms, the island shall have one set of facilities accessible from all parts of the platform.
- 4.2 Facilities shall consist of the following—
- (a) toilets—
 - (i) toilets shall be accessible to all genders;
 - (ii) toilets shall be wheelchair accessible;
 - (iii) all toilets shall include parents' facilities.
 - (b) drink taps—
 - (i) drink taps shall have low buttons;
 - (ii) drink taps shall have drink bottle taps.
 - (c) hand sanitiser;
 - (d) PECS communication tools;
 - (e) Myki top-up stations;
 - (f) first aid kits and defibrillator;
 - (g) hearing loop;
 - (h) maps and signage;
 - (i) accessible phones.

Clause 5 Accessible Ramps

- 5.1 Platform access ramps shall be installed at every station.
- 5.2 All ramps shall include the following—
- (a) handrails with gripped, heat resistant surfaces;
 - (b) a 1:14 gradient on the ramp;
 - (c) cross grate ramps shall have ½ inch (13mm) grates;
 - (d) concrete ramps shall have gripped surfaces.

Clause 6 Additional staffing of train stations

- 6.1 All stations shall be staffed by customer services officers—
- a) Customer service officers shall be on site from the first train service to the last train service every day;
 - b) Additional customer service officers shall staff stations during peak times, that being 6:00am–9:00am and 4:30pm–7:00pm on weekdays and 9:00pm through to 1:00am on Fridays and Saturdays.
- 6.2 Access and inclusion training shall be provided for all staff servicing a station including but not limited to—
- (a) customer service officers;

- (b) PSOs;
 - (c) Train drivers.
- 6.3 Access and Inclusion training shall be designed and delivered by the Youth Disability Advocacy Service.

Clause 7 Train replacement services

- 7.1 Replacement services shall have equal access and density as the service they are replacing.
- 7.2 Replacement services shall be accessible for those with disabilities, including but not limited to—
- (a) Wheelchair access;
 - (b) Service animal access;
 - (c) Written and audio announcements.
- 7.3 Replacement service departure locations shall be clearly identifiable, and—
- (a) marked with clear directions;
 - (b) customer service officers shall be stationed along the route from the original departure location to the replacement.
- 7.4 Replacement services shall include visual signage to communicate the route being taken.
- 7.5 On-call ride-share services shall be made available for any persons wishing to carpool—
- (a) this shall be provided at the same price as the equivalent Myki fare;
 - (b) PTV reserves the right to restrict services;
 - (c) if a commuter waits more than 15 minutes for their service they are entitled to a solo ride;
 - (d) for commuters with disabilities an accessible rideshare service shall be provided.

Clause 8 Train station maintenance

- 8.1 For stations, maintenance audits shall take place every six months.
- 8.2 The results of the audit shall be published publicly to ensure accountability.
- 8.3 PTV shall engage the services of Snap, Send, Solve for users to report and document service issues on public transport services.
- 8.4 Any issues that are identified shall be required to be fixed under the following guidelines—
- (a) High priority issues to be addressed within six weeks unless the maintenance period exceeds six weeks;
 - (b) Low priority issues to be addressed within three months.
- 8.5 Priority is determined at the discretion of station staff.

Clause 9 Public Transport Victoria app modifications

- 9.1 The PTV app shall be updated with the following features added—
- (a) appointment bookings available for commuters who require wheelchair access—
 - (i) bookings are not mandatory but shall be encouraged;
 - (b) a tracker for train replacement services—
 - (i) a map of locations and service routes shall also be provided;
 - (ii) this is applicable for both metro and rural services;
 - (c) the ability to favourite routes, service locations and service times with relevant and timely updates provided through push notifications.
- 9.2 Business names shall be integrated into the search function to allow for precise location searching—
- a) businesses and facilities shall be included in the search function as well as their address.