

# **INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE**



This section contains additional information and guidance for persons who are using the materials in this workbook to train others in how to make ADA paratransit eligibility determinations and how to conduct interviews and functional assessments. This includes guidance on how to use the materials contained in each previous section, answers to tests and exercises contained in previous sections, and additional discussion materials that can be used as part of a training program. Instructor information is provided for sections of this workbook that include exercises, tests, or CDs that are to be used in training.

In addition to reading and having a comprehensive knowledge of all of the information in this workbook, it is highly recommended that instructors using this material also attend national trainings on ADA paratransit eligibility determination. For more information about available training, contact the Registrar of the National Transit Institute at the following location:

National Transit Institute  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
120 Albany Street  
Suite 250, Tower Two  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901-2126

Phone: 732-932-1700  
NTI Online: <http://policy.rutgers.edu/nti>



# Instructor Guidance and Information for Section 1

Section 1 provides an overview of the regulatory requirements for ADA complementary paratransit service and the criteria for ADA paratransit eligibility. Trainees should be asked to read the overview and then complete the “Section 1 Test” provided at the end of that section. It is assumed that this training would be one-on-one or in small groups. Once the trainees have completed the test, the instructor should discuss their answers to each question. In addition to giving the answers, instructors should discuss the key concepts and issues underlying each question. Following are answers to the questions in the “Section 1 Test” as well as a discussion of key underlying concepts.

## Part 1. True/False Questions:

- 1. Public entities which provide ADA complementary paratransit service are required to have a process for determining who is ADA paratransit eligible.**

*True.* Having an eligibility process is necessary for determining who qualifies for this required service.

- 2. Only persons who meet the regulatory criteria for ADA paratransit eligibility should be issued documentation indicating that they are “ADA paratransit eligible.”**

*True.* As described on pages 12-13 of the Overview, the regulations intend ADA paratransit eligibility to be strictly limited to persons who meet the criteria for eligibility contained in §37.123 (one or more of the three “categories” of eligibility).

*Be sure that trainees understand the importance of strictly limiting eligibility to those who meet the regulatory criteria. Note that eligibility determination should be about identifying abilities to use fixed route service and that the process should support the broader goal of the ADA to encourage access to and use of mainline fixed route services. Note also that strictly limiting eligibility is important in order to ensure that adequate resources and paratransit service can then be provided to persons who are ADA paratransit eligible and who can't use fixed route services.*

- 3. Public transit agencies can only provide paratransit service to persons who are determined to be ADA paratransit eligible.**

*False.* The ADA does not prohibit public entities from providing paratransit services to others, including seniors, low-income persons, or others needing transportation. It is important that trainees understand, though, that if other groups are served, they should be identified as being eligible under those programs – not as “ADA paratransit eligible.”

**4. A person with a disability who lives outside of the designated ADA complementary paratransit service area cannot apply for ADA paratransit eligibility.**

*False. Individuals who live outside of the ADA complementary paratransit service area, or even outside of the transit agency's jurisdiction, can still apply for ADA paratransit eligibility. Their applications should be accepted and considered. This includes persons visiting from other transit districts as well as persons who live just beyond the borders of the transit agency or in other areas where no public transit service is provided. These persons may be able to get to the ADA paratransit service area on their own and would then be able to ask for paratransit service.*

*It should be made clear that while these individuals may apply for and be determined ADA paratransit eligible, they do not have to actually be provided ADA complementary paratransit service unless they are traveling in the defined paratransit service area (both the origin and destination are in the area). It may be important to explain this to people who are applying and who live outside the paratransit service area. This might be done in the in-person interview or as part of the determination letter sent to them.*

*This is also a good point at which to discuss the "visitor" requirements described on pages 10 and 11 of the Overview. Trainees should understand that persons from outside the area may be served as visitors for a period of time and then could apply for ADA paratransit eligibility locally.*

**5. Public transit agencies are not required to provide service to someone who uses a wheelchair that exceeds the size or weight limits of a "common wheelchair."**

*True. As explained on page 4 of the Overview, the regulations define a "common wheelchair." This is a "wheelchair" which does not exceed 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length (measured two inches above the ground) and which does not weigh more than 600 pounds when occupied. A "wheelchair" is defined as any mobility aid belonging to any class of three or four-wheeled devices, usable indoors, designed for and used by individuals with mobility impairments, whether operated manually or powered. Transit agencies are not required to provide either fixed route or paratransit service to someone using a wheelchair that exceeds any of these limits.*

*It may be appropriate at this point to describe the local transit agency's policy regarding accommodating mobility aids since the ADA does not prohibit transit agencies from serving persons using wheelchairs that exceed the standards of a "common wheelchair."*

- 6. If a transit agency makes a “reasonable” percentage of buses on a route accessible (e.g., every other bus), persons with disabilities can be asked to use the accessible buses and trips in that corridor are not ADA paratransit eligible.**

*False.* Unless a fixed bus route is fully-accessible (meaning that all buses on the route have lifts or ramps and other features that meet the ADA standards for an “accessible bus”) trips in that corridor by persons who need accessible vehicles are ADA paratransit eligible. This is explained on page 5 of the Overview.

- 7. Transit agencies are required to allow persons with disabilities other than those who use wheelchairs (e.g., persons who use walkers, crutches, etc.) to enter and exit vehicles by standing on the lift.**

*True.* This is explained on pages 4-5 of the Overview. For eligibility determination, this means that even if a person is unable to enter a bus using the stairs, they may still be able to use the fixed route service by entering and exiting vehicles using the lift. This should be reflected in determination decisions.

- 8. ADA paratransit eligibility is based on functional ability to use fixed route bus and rail services.**

*True.* This is a basic and important underlying concept. Trainees should understand that ADA paratransit eligibility is based on functional ability to use fixed route service, not on any particular diagnosis of disability, type of mobility aid, age, or other factors. It should be noted that the effects of a particular type of disability on functional ability to travel by fixed route can vary from individual to individual.

- 9. To be able to use fixed route service, individuals with disabilities who use wheelchairs must be able to independently get on and off lifts (or up and down the ramps of low-floor buses).**

*False.* As explained on page 4 of the Overview, operator assistance with using lifts, ramps, and securement systems is required by the ADA regulations. This assistance should be considered available when making eligibility determinations.

*As a related matter, it might be noted that other than operator assistance required by the regulations, ADA paratransit eligibility should be based on the abilities of the applicant to independently perform all of the tasks necessary for using the fixed route system. Eligibility determinations should not assume the assistance of an attendant or other companion – only the assistance that is required to be provided by transit operators.*

**10. Individuals with disabilities cannot be required to participate in travel training programs, even if it is determined that such training might enable them to use fixed route services.**

*True.* A person's "potential ability" to use fixed route service cannot be used as a reason to deny ADA paratransit eligibility. Current functional abilities – as determined at the time the person is applying for eligibility – should be considered.

*If the local transit system has a travel training program, it may be appropriate to note that identifying the potential for travel training might be important so that applicants can be offered travel training.*

**11. A person who is able to get to the bus stop nearest her home and board and ride buses from that location would not be ADA paratransit eligible.**

*False.* Even though it is known that the person can get to the nearest bus stop to their home, they may not be able to get from the stop where they exit the bus to their final destination. The distance to the destination might be farther than the person can manage or there might be other barrier between the existing bus stop and the final destination. Similarly, not all of the person's trips will originate at their home and they may not be able to get to bus stops from other locations. The person's ADA paratransit eligibility needs to consider ability to travel to and from any location in the defined ADA paratransit service area.

**12. ADA paratransit eligibility is considered a civil right.**

*True.* Persons with disabilities who cannot use fixed route services and who meet one or more of the regulatory criteria of eligibility have a right to ADA paratransit eligibility and complementary paratransit service. It is important for trainees to understand that they are making decisions about people's rights. Carefully following the eligibility process requirements and careful consideration of travel abilities and issues are therefore important.

## **Part 2. Eligibility Scenarios:**

*General note to instructors:* These scenarios are intended to illustrate specific factors that can make certain trips ADA paratransit eligible. They also illustrate the "trip-by-trip" nature of ADA paratransit eligibility. In several scenarios, the riders described may be ADA paratransit eligible but the particular trip they are seeking may not be eligible. It will be important to focus the discussion of the specific issue being described.

*It should also be noted that these scenarios are intended to generate more general discussion. In some cases, limited information is provided. Trainees may note that other factors may apply and*

*additional information would be needed before a decision could be made. Again, begin by focusing on the facts given, but then allow the discussion to raise other related factors.*

- 1. A woman with paraplegia, who uses a wheelchair, reports that she has been "hassled" by youths in her neighborhood. She fears for her safety and so has requested paratransit service.**

*The reason cited by this woman – fear of crime – would not be a factor in considering her eligibility for ADA paratransit service. Crime is a broader public safety issue and is an environmental factor not under the control of the public entity that provides ADA complementary paratransit service. Fear of crime is listed as one of the factor that would not confer eligibility in Figure 1-1 on page 9 of the Overview.*

*In this scenario, since it is noted that the woman uses a wheelchair, it is possible that she is ADA paratransit eligible due to other applicable factors. For example, her trips would be eligible if traveling in a fixed route corridor that is not 100% accessible. She would also be eligible if travel was prevented by barriers such as the lack of a safe and accessible path of travel or when the presence of snow prevented travel. Other factors as well might apply (such as distance to/from stops and steep terrain if she uses a manual wheelchair). Again, though, the specific issue being considered - her fear of crime – would not be a factor.*

*It should be noted that if the scenario described a person with a psychiatric disability that resulted in an irrational fear of crime (which was severe enough to keep the person from using fixed route service), the person might be eligible. The case presented, though (a woman with paraplegia) does not suggest this is the case.*

- 2. A Chicago man with cardiac disease is described in his application by his doctor as being "at special risk when exercising in hot weather." For the trip requested, the bus stops are nearby, but the current summer weather is severe.**

*In this scenario, more information would be needed to determine if the person was "prevented" from getting to and using the fixed route system. Specifically, it would be helpful to know what the doctor means by "exercising" and what kind of weather is considered "hot." Follow-up with the professional to determine if walking to and from bus stops would pose a risk and what degree of heat would make walking to and from bus stops a risk.*

- 3. A blind woman can get to and from her home to the bus stop. At her downtown destination, however, a busy intersection - where right turns on red are permitted - prevents her from getting to her office.**

*This scenario implies that the intersection in question is a busy one (i.e., where cars are constantly turning in front of the traveler) and that the situation “prevents” her from crossing the street and getting to her final destination.*

*It will be helpful to note that persons who are blind listen for the surge of parallel traffic and use this as a cue to know when it is safe to initiate a street crossing. Since traffic is constantly turning in front of this woman, she would not be able to use this cue.*

*Trainees may note that traffic laws give pedestrians the right of way in these cases. While this may be so, sighted pedestrians know when to initiate a crossing and to exercise this right by looking left to see if there is a car waiting to turn right on red. Our blind traveler would not be able to do this.*

*Finally, as a related matter, it might be informative to note a blind persons traveling with a service animal would still face the same issues. It should be pointed out that a service animal follows the instructions of the handler and does not possess the judgment to know when to initiate a street crossing.*

- 4. A man with AIDS needs to get medical treatment on a daily basis. On most days, he is well enough to travel using the subway, but on other days he is prevented from doing so by severe fatigue. He seeks subscription trips for daily transportation to a clinic.**

***Note:** It may be necessary to explain what is meant by “subscription service.” Subscription service allows riders to be automatically scheduled for repeat, ongoing trips without having to call to book each trip. It is sometimes referred to as “standing order” service.*

*This man would be eligible for ADA paratransit service at times when severe fatigue related to his health condition prevents him from using the fixed route service. Since the scenario notes that on most days he is well enough to travel, it is implied that he would not always be prevented from using fixed route service.*

*While all of his trips would not be ADA paratransit eligible, the decision to grant “subscription service” is an operational one. If the paratransit service policy requires riders to book trips on a “next day” basis, this person may not know how he will be feeling on the day of service. Allowing subscription service might then be appropriate (maybe combined with the understanding that he will cancel the paratransit ride if he is well enough to use fixed route service and will not be penalized for these same day cancellations). Another option might be to allow this rider and others with similar issues to request service on a same-day basis if they are not well enough to use the fixed route service.*

- 5. On occasion, a woman with a mobility impairment, who uses a walker, has made the trip to a bus stop to get to the doctor's office. The three-block walk to the bus stop takes her more than half an hour. She has just qualified for ADA paratransit, however, and seeks to make the trip to the doctor using that service instead.**

*Even though this woman has made this trip by fixed route in the past – possibly because it was vital and no other travel options were available – this scenario suggests that making the trip by fixed route requires an unreasonable effort. An individual without a disability who walks at a 20-minute mile pace would make the walk to the bus stop in about five minutes. Expecting this woman to take 30 minutes could be considered unreasonable.*

*This scenario is intended to illustrate how “prevented from getting to and from bus stops” is to be interpreted. As explained on page 7 of the Overview, a person could be considered prevented from getting to or from a bus stop if the effort involved was unreasonable.*

- 6. A 6-year old child with spina bifida, who uses a wheelchair, needs to get to day-care. His mother seeks paratransit trips for the child.**

*Whether these trips would be ADA paratransit eligible depends on policies that the transit agency has for use of the fixed route service. If the transit agency does not have a minimum age policy – below which children using the fixed route system must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, then the ADA paratransit eligibility process would have to consider this six year old's **independent** ability to use the fixed route system (and it is likely the child would have at least conditional ADA paratransit eligibility). If, on the other hand, the policy for use of the fixed route system is that children under the age of seven (as an example) must be accompanied by an adult, then the ADA paratransit eligibility process would consider whether this six year old, with the assistance of an adult, would be able to use the fixed route system. It is possible that there may then still be some level of eligibility, but it is likely that the child with an adult would be able to use fixed route service more often.*

*The ADA paratransit eligibility process can consider the abilities of the “team” (child and accompanying adult) when determining eligibility because the child would also be required to be accompanied by an adult when using fixed route service. In most other cases, the ADA regulations do not allow transit systems to require that riders be accompanied by attendants, but in this case, the attendant is being required because of age not disability.*

*It might be interesting to note that if the child and an accompanying adult were determined eligible for this trips (because the route service the day care was not yet 100% accessible, for example), the transit system would not have any obligations to transport the mother or accompanying adult after a drop-off was made at the day care center*

- 7. The lack of curb cuts in a downtown area of Philadelphia forces a man using a wheelchair to travel in busy downtown streets to get to the office from the bus stop.**

*The regulations indicate that the lack of curb-cuts, per se, does not mean that a person cannot get to and from fixed route stops or stations. If a reasonable alternative path of travel exists to get around the uncut curb, the person can be expected to use this alternative path (see the excerpt from Appendix D to the regulations on page 7 of the “Overview”). However, in this case, the alternative path is not along another sidewalk or safe path, but out into a busy street in a downtown urban area. While this is possible, it is not reasonable to expect people to do this. This would present an unreasonable risk – particularly for someone using a wheelchair who might be at a lower height and less visible to drivers. Because the scenario implies that this is the only reasonable alternative path, this trip would be ADA paratransit eligible.*

- 8. All the buses operated by the New York Transit Authority are accessible, but some key stations in the subway system have not yet been made accessible. Residents of the Bronx (at the north side of the City) can get to the mid-town office district by buses or by subway. A Bronx man with a mobility impairment cannot climb a flight of stairs. He can board a bus but the subway stations have no elevators. Because the bus trip involves two transfers and takes 2 hours, versus 30 minutes on the train, he has requested paratransit service.**

*This scenario is meant to illustrate eligibility issues when more than one mode of fixed route service can serve a particular trip. In these cases, the eligibility decision should be based on use of the fixed route mode that would typically be used by the public. Even though bus service could be used for this trip, very few if any riders in New York would take the 2 ½ hour bus ride to get to downtown – they would use the subway. Therefore, this rider’s ability to use the subway must be considered. Because the scenario indicates that this person cannot get into the subway station, this trip would be eligible.*

*An interesting related discussion is that even if paratransit service is provided, this rider might face a long ride on surface streets into the city. Ask trainees if they can think of a good alternative program that might better serve this person. One option would be to give this person “feeder service” (take him to the nearest accessible subway station on a paratransit vehicle).*

- 9. A man from the western suburbs of Boston who uses a wheelchair can drive to the park-and-ride lot, but the Green line trains that stop there are not accessible. He seeks paratransit to get into the City.**

*This scenario is meant to illustrate two key eligibility issues: First, that the fact that someone drives a private vehicle has no bearing on their ADA paratransit eligibility. Second, that ability to use the fixed route service should be based on using the service at the station/stop that the person wants to use. In this case it would not be acceptable to say that the person can drive and therefore is not ADA paratransit eligible. And, it is also not*

*appropriate to ask the person to drive to a different light rail or subway station that is accessible. Because the station at the park-and-ride lot that this person wants to use is not accessible, the trip would be ADA paratransit eligible.*

- 10. During the long winters, snow piles up on the curbsides of Pittsburgh streets. This often prevents the operation of the lift that a man needs to utilize the bus. He therefore requests "seasonal eligibility" permitting all trips during the winter to be made on paratransit.**

*First, this scenario assumes that snow at the bus stops is the only barrier preventing use of the fixed route system (whether this is a reasonable situation might make a good discussion with trainees as the presence of snow would likely impact travel to and from bus stops as well). Assuming this is the case, this person's trips would technically only be ADA paratransit eligible at times when snow is actually present and the trip is prevented. Providing "seasonal eligibility" is an operational matter (similar to scenario 4 above). As in scenario 4, if this rider is required to book rides a day in advance, and because this person may not know if snow will be present at the stop, and if the transit system does not feel they can predict when this might occur, the offering "seasonal eligibility" during times of the year when it might snow might be a reasonable solution. Ask trainees if they can think of other ways to do this, though, so that paratransit service does not have to be provided during winter months when there is no snow. One alternative might be to use the weather forecast (and then provide same day service if an unexpected storm arrives). Another might be to provide same-day service to this group of riders.*

- 11. A woman requests trips to and from her dialysis treatments, which leave her "too exhausted" to use the bus.**

*Taking this scenario literally, it says that the ride is too exhausted to use fixed route service after dialysis treatments. Technically then, only trips after dialysis treatment – when the person is experiencing fatigue - would be ADA paratransit eligible. It might be important to note, though, that in reality many people who are undergoing dialysis treatments experience fatigue at other times. This might include times before treatment or might be even more often. It is important that trainees not feel that people are typically only fatigued after dialysis treatment. This is a good illustration of the fact that people with the same health conditions or disabilities can have very different functional abilities and it is therefore important to determine the extent of the disability and the exact functional ability of each applicant and not rely on diagnosis or type of disability in making ADA paratransit eligibility determinations.*

- 12. A woman with moderate mental retardation has traveled with her parents on the bus since she was a child. She cannot travel alone without becoming lost, however, even when using paratransit service. Her parents are seeking paratransit service for the woman and an attendant.**

*This person would likely be unconditionally ADA paratransit eligible and all her trips would be eligible since the scenario implies that she cannot travel independently. This scenario is meant to illustrate the regulatory prohibition against requiring riders to travel with*

*attendants or considering ADA paratransit eligibility based on assistance of an attendant or companion. The regulatory requirement that **independent** ability to use the fixed route service must be considered in determining ADA paratransit eligibility is explained on page 4 of the Overview. Even in this situation, where the parents are indicating that their daughter always travels with someone – even on paratransit – the eligibility determination must be based on the applicant’s independent abilities to use fixed route service.*

*An interesting related discussion with trainees might be the operational issues that might arise in this case. Information from the eligibility determination process indicates that this person needs to be accompanied while traveling – even on paratransit. Yet, the transit system cannot require that the person be accompanied by an attendant when using the paratransit service. In these cases, transit agencies may want to develop a clear understanding with parents or guardians about the level and type of paratransit service that will be provided. If the parents or guardians are not going to have someone riding with the person on the paratransit system, they may be expected to always have someone meet the person at the destination.*

## **Instructor Guidance and Information for Section 4**

Before training staff in how to conduct interviews and collect follow-up information from professionals, make sure they have reviewed Sections 1 and 2 of this workbook and have completed the exercises and the tests included in these sections. It is important that they have a thorough and correct understanding of ADA paratransit eligibility before receiving instruction on interviewing and collecting follow-up information.

If training staff in how to conduct successful interviews, first have them read the “Guidance for Conducting In-Person Interviews” document in Section 3. The following role-play can then be used to illustrate the key points made in this document about conducting interviews.

### **Interviewing Role-Play**

Make copies of the interviewing scenarios provided on the following pages. Have one trainee assist you with this role-play. You (the trainer) should play the part of the Eligibility Coordinator and the trainee should play the applicant in each scenario. Have two chairs and a small table arranged to simulate an interview room. Following are instructions for conducting each of the role-play scenarios.

#### **“Greeting” Role-Play**

Have the trainee stand outside the “interview room” (the table and chair area). Walk up to the trainee as if you were meeting and greeting an applicant waiting in a reception area. Recite the first greeting included in the “Introduction” scenario (“Hi Bob, come on in and make yourself comfortable.....”). As you are reciting this first greeting, lightly slap the trainee on the back as if you are old friends. After reciting this first greeting, ask the trainee how they felt about that greeting. Note that this greeting is too informal, that interviewers should not call people by their first name, and that it assumes that the applicant has an interest in sports.

Begin again and this time use the second greeting (“Hello Mr. Jones. How are you today?...”). Again, ask the trainee how they felt about that greeting. Note that this is a much better greeting. The interviewer has called the person by their last name and then made an effort to make the process less formal by giving their first name and asking if it is okay to use first names (note that if the applicant says no, last names should be used). A “safe” topic – the weather – is used as an icebreaker.

Begin again and use the third greeting (“Hello Mr. Jones. My name is Sam Spade...”). Ask how the trainee felt about this greeting. Note that this is much too formal. The interviewer has introduced herself using her official title and words like “protocol” are used.

### **“When emotions are high” Scenario**

Give the trainee some time to read the part and then have him or her read it acting as an applicant who is very upset. Read each of the three responses and ask how the response made him or her feel.

The first and third responses really don't deal with the applicant's emotions. The third also inappropriately suggests that the person will get eligibility if they will just cooperate. The second response is the better response. It acknowledges the applicant's and then tries to explain why the interview is needed in a way that assists the applicant.

### **“Make it possible for people to talk about their concerns” Scenario**

Again, give the trainee some time and then have him or her read the part of the applicant. Read each of the three responses and ask how the response made him or her feel.

The first two responses don't acknowledge the applicant's expressed concerns and problems. The fourth response jumps to the conclusion that the person is nervous and that practice will help. The third responses (“Let's talk a little more...”) is the best – it acknowledges the applicant's concerns and then requests more information about exactly what the issue is. Note that the third response also asks a “What” question, which is best for getting interviewees to explain issues.

### **“Willingness to listen and understand – keeping focused” Scenario**

As above, have the trainee read the applicant part and then read each response and ask how the response made the trainee feel.

In this scenario, the third response is best. It acknowledges the applicant's issues, refocused on the interview without being dismissive, and makes an offer to provide assistance. Note to trainees that if they make an offer of assistance as suggested by the third response, they should be able to deliver.

The first response dismisses the applicant's concerns. The second response doesn't even acknowledge them.

### **“Applicant may withhold information” Scenario**

In this scenario, the third scenario is best. It acknowledges the issue raised by the applicant but then explains why the information is needed. The first and second responses are almost confrontational and dismiss the issue. The second response also implies that if the person will just cooperate they will get their eligibility.

### **“When you don’t understand, ask for clarification” Scenario**

In this scenario the third response is again the best. The first response is “cold” and asking the person to be “more specific” is not going to help. The second response jumps to conclusions.

### **“Don’t jump to conclusions” Scenario**

In this scenario, the second response is best. The first response jumps to a conclusion – the applicant didn’t say that falling was a concern. The third response dismisses the applicant’s concerns and also jumps to the conclusion that the applicant really will be able to get to and from bus stops.

# Interviewing Scenarios

## “Greeting” Scenario

### *Instructor (greeting the applicant):*

1. Hi Bob. Come on in and make yourself comfortable. Did you watch the game last night? That Sammy Sosa sure brought excitement back to the game. Do you think the Bucs have a chance this year? And how about that new stadium!”
2. Hello Mr. Jones. How are you today. My name is Sam Spade but you can call me Sam. Is it okay if I call you Bob? Haven’t we had a beautiful spring? The flowers are just beautiful this year. Please have a seat and I’ll explain a little about what we’re going to do.
3. Hello Mr. Jones. My name is Sam Spade. I am the ADA Eligibility Coordinator for the Lizard Creek Transit Authority and I will be conducting the interview today. Please sit here while I review the interview protocol.

## “When emotions are high” Scenario

### *Trainee (as an upset applicant):*

*This is a bunch of crap. I can’t believe you people dragged me down here. I already sent you information from my doctor. I can’t ride the bus and you’re not going to make me. If I don’t get what I want, I’ll expose this whole scam to Channel 2*

### *Instructor (as the interviewer):*

1. This is the law. We have to do it this way. Now let’s get started.
2. I know you are angry about having to come down here today. This interview is to give you an opportunity to make sure we understand your point of view about traveling in the community.
3. You shouldn’t be upset. Everybody has to do this. We’ll be out of here in a few minutes and you’ll have your transportation soon.

## **“Make it possible for people to talk about their concerns” Scenario**

### ***Trainee (as applicant):***

*I just don't think I can ride the bus. Its just too hard with all my problems. I'm afraid of falling, I can't afford to fall. And the drivers are so rude. They won't even let you get a seat.*

### ***Instructor (as the interviewer):***

1. It's not really that hard once you get used to it and you can travel whenever you want. You should give it a try.
2. You shouldn't let those stories about the drivers worry you. I think you'll find they are really nice.
3. Let's talk a little more about what makes you think you will fall.
4. You're a little nervous about trying it and it might take some practice. When was the last time you used it?

## **“Willingness to listen and understand – keeping focused” Scenario**

### ***Trainee (as applicant):***

*I really need help with getting around. I can't get out to the doctor. I can't even read anymore to pay my bills. I'm all alone in the world. It's really tough being old. I'm in constant pain. Sometimes I just don't feel like I can go on. If I have to ride the bus, I just won't go out at all.*

### ***Instructor (as the interviewer):***

1. Everyone goes through ups and downs in life. Don't let that get you down. Getting out is important. Let's get back to completing this form so you can get your eligibility.
2. We really need to complete these questions if you want transportation.
3. You sound pretty down. When we are through here, I can tell you about some other programs that might be able to help you. Will that be okay?

## **“Applicant may withhold information” Scenario**

***Trainee (as applicant):***

*I don't want to give you that information. That's my own business.*

***Instructor (as the interviewer):***

1. I'm sorry but it's the rules. We must have that information to complete the application process.
2. We need that information or you won't get your eligibility.
3. I know this seems like confidential information, but it will help us understand your capability.

## **“When you don't understand, ask for clarification” Scenario**

***Trainee (as applicant):***

*It's hard and confusing to tell you exactly how I feel and how difficult it is for me to get around. I get upset because I can't explain it right. I know you don't understand what I mean. You don't know what it's like.*

***Instructor (as the interviewer):***

1. I know it's hard, but we will need very exact information for the eligibility form. Please try to be more specific.
2. I think I understand. Is it because you are scared, or is it a physical problem that makes it difficult for you to get around.
3. Relax, let's slow down and you explain it again in your own words.

## **“Don’t jump to conclusions” Scenario**

***Trainee (as applicant):***

*I’m worried about getting from my house to the bus stop and back.*

***Instructor (as the interviewer):***

1. You must be worried about falling.
2. Could you tell me a little more about what your concerns are?
3. What do you mean? Everybody worries about these kinds of things. You will make it there alright.



## **Instructor Guidance and Information for Section 5**

As noted in the “Recommended Core Competencies for Persons Conducting Physical Functional Assessments for ADA Paratransit Eligibility” portion of Section 5 of this workbook, it is assumed that occupational therapists, physical therapists, clinical kinesiologists, or other appropriate professional with the recommended core competencies will be conducting physical functional assessments. These individuals should have a basic knowledge of physical functioning and of proper procedures for the safe administration of functional assessments.

Ideally, instruction in conducting physical functional assessments will be provided by a person who also meets the core competencies outlined in Section 5. This qualified professional can then use the information in this workbook to instruct staff in the specific tasks that applicants will be asked to perform and the specific observations that will be made.

Before providing instruction in conducting physical functional assessments, make sure that trainees have reviewed Sections 1 and 2 of this workbook and have completed the exercises and the tests included in these sections. It is important that they have a thorough and correct understanding of ADA paratransit eligibility before receiving instruction in conducting physical functional assessments.

Trainees should then read the step-by-step instructions for conducting physical functional assessments (which should be modified to be appropriate to the local area). They should be encouraged to ask questions about any parts of the assessment that are unclear.

Next, have trainees view the CD-ROM provided at the end of Section 5 (titled “Guidance for Conducting Physical Functional Assessments for ADA Paratransit Eligibility”). The CD-ROM is set-up to allow review of the core elements of the process separately. View each part and then discuss the key points that are noted in the CD-ROM.

After all of the workbook material has been reviewed, have trainees practice conducting assessments with the assistance of other staff. Have the other staff present themselves as recent applicants with various types of disabilities. Compare the trainees’ observations with the actual forms completed for those applicants.

When trainees are deemed ready to conduct real assessments, have them do several with another experienced assessor. First, have the experienced assessor conduct several assessments and have the trainee observe. Then, have the trainee conduct the assessments with the experienced staff person observing. The trainee’s performance in each assessment should be rated. Be sure to review the thoroughness of the trainee’s documentation about observations and her attention to detail to ensure that the complete picture of the applicant is presented.

It is also recommended that a supervisor periodically observe each trained staff person as they conduct assessments. Observations made by different assessors for applicants with similar disabilities or health conditions should also be periodically compared to ensure consistency.

Weekly meetings with the assessment team also provide a good opportunity to discuss specific issues or procedures for handling unusual situations. And, encourage all staff to discuss issues or questions they have as they conduct assessments.

Finally, encourage all assessors to travel with individuals with disabilities on public transit. Even experienced professionals will benefit from accompanying individuals with disabilities on transit. Trainees will gain an understanding of the accessibility of the transit system and the challenges for the user in a real world setting.

## Instructor Guidance and Information for Section 6

As noted in Section 6, begin by first obtaining FACTS documents from Easter Seals Project ACTION. You should download “FACTS – Development and Validation of a Functional Cognitive Test” and “FACTS – Guidelines for Production, Administration and Scoring” from the Easter Seals Project ACTION web site ([www.projectaction.org](http://www.projectaction.org)). You may also wish to call Easter Seals Project ACTION and ask them to send the CD-ROM that contains the original set of FACTS slides.

Before you serve as an instructor, you should be proficient in administering FACTS and should be thoroughly familiar with all of the material and both of the CDs included in this workbook. Read both documents and review the sample photographs. Then follow the direction in Section 6 of this workbook and use both FACTS CDs. You should then practice administering FACTS on other staff until you feel comfortable with the protocol and the scoring. If you still have questions, you might consider contacting one of the authors of FACTS at the following e-mail addresses for assistance:

Karen Hoesch, ACCESS Transportation Systems, Inc.  
[khoesch@accesstransys.com](mailto:khoesch@accesstransys.com)

Susan Chase, Working Order  
[schase@workingorder.org](mailto:schase@workingorder.org)

When training others to administer FACTS, have them first read both FACTS documents, and review the script several times. This will give them a better understanding of the tool and will familiarize them with the protocol before they use the CDs.

Next, view CD 1 with the trainees. It may also be helpful to provide each trainee with a blank FACTS Response Sheet and FACTS Scoring Sheet, which you can print as Word files from CD 2, as they are viewing CD 1. This way, they will see how each part of the assessment ties in with the forms. Make sure each trainee fully understands how each part of the assessment is to be administered. Review sections a second time if necessary. The CD is designed to allow specific sections of FACTS to be reviewed without having to review the entire assessment. The trainee should then practice with you acting as the applicant several times to develop familiarity with the various sections of FACTS.

Next, test each trainee’s understanding of how to record and score applicant responses using CD 2. Provide each trainee with a copy of the scoring sheet printed from the CD for the exercise. Review how the forms are to be completed – using check-marks to record applicant actions and putting an “0” on each line where there was no action or response. Have each trainee then view the full assessment on CD2, record applicant responses, and translate the responses into scores on the FACTS Scoring Sheet.

Once trainees have scored the sample assessment on CD 2, provide them with correctly completed response and scoring sheets, which you will print from the CD, and review their scoring. Explanations of correct responses to each section of the assessment are provided on the following pages.

Finally, have trainees practice administering FACTS many times with other staff members. Observe them doing this and provide guidance as needed. They must have the script and procedures completely memorized before testing real applicants, using only the minimal cues provided on the response sheet. It is also recommended that staff have an opportunity to practice on individuals with disabilities (outside the context of a real evaluation,) be observed, and receive specific feedback from you. The trainee should be able to demonstrate several error free demonstrations before testing a real applicant. You should also observe the tester the first few times they administer the tool on real applicants and then periodically to ensure continued proficiency and accuracy.

## ANSWERS TO FACTS SCORING EXERCISE

### A. ORIENTATION

1. Applicant (Nancy) responds appropriately by saying “hello.”

**Score 2 points**

2. Nancy initially asks the examiner (Susie) if she wants to know her mother’s name, but after clarification, readily gives her own full name.

**Score 2 points**

When asked where she lives, Nancy promptly provides her street number, but attempts to spell the name of her street. Her response is difficult to understand and Susie asks her the name of her street. Nancy makes several more attempts to spell it before finally saying it.

Nancy does know her address, but requires multiple cues to get her to provide the full street name.

**Score 1 point**

Nancy readily, and accurately provides her telephone number, contact name (her mother) and her mother’s phone number.

If necessary, the examiner can check the paratransit application form to verify the accuracy of the information provided before scoring this item.

**Score 2 points each**

3. Nancy responds appropriately to the instructions provided by Susie, is able to independently, without verbal or physical prompts, follow the arrows to the testing area, and sits in the correct seat as requested.

**Score 2 points each**

4. This item will remain blank on the response sheet at this point. It will be completed at Item 32.

**B. SIMPLE TRIP**

5. Nancy begins by reading the signs on the first several slides. She is reminded that she should only select the bus stop slide, which she does, but her initial responses are not distinct and do not clearly discriminate among the slides.

In order to score full credit on these items, the examiner must be certain the applicant knows the correct answer.

The first item on the simple trip is the point when it is critical to make sure that the applicant understands the instructions, and is the best time to clarify the instructions and retest. Susie provides clarification on the task and on the second try, Nancy responds correctly and without hesitation.

**Score 2 points**

6. Nancy selects the correct bus the first time shown.

**Score 4 points**

- 7a. Nancy selects the bus driver the first time shown.

**Score 4 points**

- 7b. When she sees the bus driver on the screen, Nancy independently and without prompting shows the bus driver her bus pass as she has been shown.

**Score 4 points**

- 8a. Nancy rings the bell when she sees the church, but then says “no.” Susie asks her if she was unsure about the stop, and retrains her. She performs the item correctly on retraining.

8b.

**Score 2 points for the stop and 4 points for ringing the bell**

9. This item begins with Susie teaching Nancy the route. You will note that gentle physical prompts are appropriate, and Susie ensures that Nancy stops at each distinct point (target) along the route. The error free trial follows with Susie having Nancy point to each target and naming it before going there. She also makes sure that Nancy pauses at each target before continuing along the route.

Nancy is then asked to demonstrate the route and does so correctly on the first trial.

**Score 4 points**

## CHAIN

If Nancy were taking the trip in the real environment, there would be natural cues to orient her. As noted in the script, Susie provides very minimal cueing to orient Nancy to where she is along the trip, but no additional prompts or instruction.

10. Nancy picks the correct bus

**Score 2 points**

- 11a. Nancy picks the bus driver

**Score 2 points**

- 11b. Nancy shows the driver her pass

**Score 2 points**

- 12a. Nancy picks the correct stop

**Score 2 points**

- 12b. Nancy rings the bell at the correct stop

**Score 2 points**

13. Nancy completes the route, distinctly naming and stopping at each target

**Score 2 points**

## C. TRAVEL SKILLS

This section teaches existing knowledge. The examiner does no teaching or instruction in this section. The script allows for minimal cueing in some sections, but it is limited and scores decrease accordingly.

- 14a. Nancy's selection is correct

**Score 1 point**

- 14b. Nancy's selection is correct

**Score 1 point**

- 14c.** There are coats piled on the only available seat in this photo. Nancy makes 5 selections of possible seats outside the line of sight in the photo and is redirected each time to make a choice within the seats visible in the photo. Nancy then says “I’d stand.” When asked specifically what she would do if she had to sit in one of the available seats, she finally provides the correct response.

Nancy is obviously trying to avoid having to ask the other passenger to move her coat, but requires multiple cues to get into the “spirit” of the problem solving question.

**Score .5 – partial score**

- 14d.** Nancy immediately articulates the correct response.

**Score 1 point**

- 15a.** Nancy’s selection is correct.

**Score 1 point**

- 15b.** Nancy’s selection is correct

**Score 1 point**

- 15c.** Nancy’s selection is correct

**Score 1 point**

- 15d.** Nancy’s selection is correct

**Score 1 point**

- 16.** Nancy immediately and without prompting or cueing knows that the woman is a stranger and indicates that she would not go with her.

**Score 4 points**

- 17.** It is February, and 20 degrees outside. Both of Nancy’s selections are the best choices. On the second photo, Nancy appeared hesitant. Susie merely repeated the question, but provided no prompt or additional instruction.

**Score 2 points for each item**

- 18.** Nancy’s selection is correct

**Score 2 points**

- 19a.** After receiving the instruction on the first set of pictures from Susie, Nancy begins to explain what she sees in each picture, instead of making a selection. Susie clarifies that Nancy is to make a choice of the safest time to cross from between the two photos. Nancy makes the wrong choice.

**Score 0 points**

- 19b.** Nancy selects the photo with the red light, instead of the green light.

**Score 0 points**

- 19c.** Nancy appears to be frustrated with the section of the assessment and tells Susie “she is sorry.” Susie provides reassurance to Nancy that she is doing fine and that she only need to know what Nancy thinks.

Nancy selects the crosswalk photo with the red light, instead of the green light.

**Score 0 points**

- 19d.** Nancy correctly selects the crosswalk photo with the green light

**Score 2 points**

- 19e.** Nancy initially points to the incorrect photo, reads the stop sign, then self- corrects herself with no prompting from Susie. Her final choice of the crosswalk with no cars coming is correct, and Susie is confident that despite her initial hesitation, Nancy chose the correct picture.

**Score 2 points**

- 19f.** Nancy correctly selects the walk sign.

**Score 2 points**

- 20a.** Nancy initially responds that she would ring the bell. Susie rephrases the question with no cues and gives Nancy another opportunity to respond. After considering the question, Nancy replies “Nothing.”

Nancy was not able to spontaneously explain that she did not recognize where she was and should not get off the bus. Susie now provides the cue as outlined in the script, and tells Nancy she could be lost if she got off here. They move to the second part of the item.

**Score 0 points**

- 20b.** Nancy points to the driver as the person she could ask for help. Her non-verbal response is correct, but she seeks reassurance from Susie, who asks a follow up question to make sure that Nancy knows who the person is she has pointed to. Nancy correctly identifies the driver. Nancy did identify the driver as the correct source of help, but required a specific cue, as outlined in the script.

**Score 1 point**

- 21a.** Nancy's selection is correct

**Score 2 points**

- 21b.** Nancy carefully considers this item, and her selection is correct

**Score 2 points**

- 21c.** Nancy's selection is correct

**Score 2 points**

- 21d.** Nancy's selection is correct

**Score 2 points**

- 21e.** Nancy's seems to find this selection difficult, but composes herself, carefully considers the pedestrians in the photo, makes the correct selection with confidence, and says "ask the people."

**Score 2 points**

- 21f.** Nancy's selection is correct

**Score 2 points**

- 22.** In this item, the examiner takes on the role of the "reasonable police officer." The applicant must provide sufficient information for a reasonable police officer to provide assistance.

In response to the question in the script, Nancy does not spontaneously provide enough information for the police officer to assist her with her response of "I'd ask him which bus stop I go."

Susie asks the question the "reasonable police officer" would ask at this point, "What's your name?" Nancy gives her first name, and Susie asks the follow up question the "reasonable officer" would ask, "Nancy what?" Nancy clearly responds without

hesitation and is also able to give the officer her phone number. She required no additional cueing to give the “reasonable police officer” enough information to assist her.

**Score 2 points**

**D. COMPLEX TRIP**

Nancy continues to the complex trip because she was able to learn the first sequenced trip without error. Had she failed two or more critical portions (choosing the right bus, choosing the right deboarding stop and following a route) of the first sequenced trip, or failed one of these critical items and failed it again in sequence, FACTS would be discontinued and the examiner would at this point move to item 31.

23. Nancy reads “McDonald’s” on the first slide, and Susie asks her if that where her new bus stop is. Nancy replies “no,” and Susie continues to show her the bus stop photos. Nancy does not read any more signs, and selects the correct stop confidently by pointing and saying “Right there.”

**Score 2 points**

24. Nancy says “no” to all the incorrect photos and selects the correct bus without hesitation.

**Score 2 points**

25. Susie gives Nancy instructions about selecting the correct landmark for her stop and tells her to ring the bell, but fails to demonstrate ringing the bell as called for in the script. She shows Nancy the slides.

Nancy selects the correct stop, points at it and says “right there.”

Nancy receives full credit for her response. Although the applicant is taught to ring the bell as the signal to deboard, this is not scored. Only the selection of the correct deboarding stop (by ringing the bell, pointing or verbally) is scored. *Even experienced examiners are strongly cautioned not to deviate from the script or provide additional retraining and testing not specifically called for in the script.*

When shown the slides again, Nancy chooses the correct stop by ringing the bell.

**Score 2 points for the initial, correct response.**

## TRANSFER CHAIN

26. Nancy points to the card that says 91A, instead of pointing to the screen as she had learned earlier. *At any point during FACTS, if there is any question about the accuracy of the response provided, err on the side of caution and assign the lower points for the item.*

Nancy's response was not distinct, and was not adequate to be considered correct.

**Score 0 points**

27. Nancy selects the correct stop and rings the bell.

**Score 4 points**

28. On the route, Nancy glances at the second stop, the gas station, but does not stop there. She says "gasoline" after she has passed that target poster. She goes on to complete the route correctly.

**Score 0 points**

29. Nancy selects the correct stop, and although she rings the bell, her selection is not ambiguous.

**Score 4 points**

30. Nancy points at the 91A card when she sees the 91A on the screen. and says "no." She rings the bell when she sees the 3C, but as in the first bus item during this chain, her response is ambiguous and considered incorrect.

**Score 0 points**

31. Nancy correctly selects the final deboarding stop and rings the bell.

**Score 4 points**

32. At this point, Susie acknowledges Nancy's effort and praises her for working so hard.

She asks Nancy if they finished on time, and without consulting the clock, Nancy responds "No – don't worry about it."

As directed in the script, Susie directs Nancy's attention to the clock and asks her if they were late. Nancy responds "no" and reads the time on the clock "12:15." Susie directs her to the note that had their estimated ending time and asks Nancy to read it. She does, and although Nancy has already failed this item, Susie asks her if she thinks they were late. Nancy nods her head yes.

For full credit on this item, Nancy would have had to spontaneously remind Susie when it was 11:24, within 3 minutes. Since she did not and required cueing at the end, Nancy would have had to answer both of Susie's questions correctly to get partial credit. She was incorrect when initially asked if they were late.

**Score 0 points**

33. Without prompting or cueing, Nancy leads Susie back to the waiting room where they started.

**Score 4 points**

**TOTAL SCORE – 113.5**



## **Instructor Guidance and Information for Section 7**

As noted in Section 7, Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) should be used if in-person assessments are conducted for applicants who are blind (Process Option #1 in Section 7). If COMS are being trained to do assessments for ADA paratransit eligibility, have them first read Sections 1 and 2 of this workbook and complete the tests and exercises contained in these sections. Next, make sure they are familiar with the application materials, professional verification information, and interview summary forms that will typically be obtained and made available to them prior to any assessments. Finally, have them read the background information contained in Section 7. COMS should have a thorough knowledge of the general issues discussed in the background information, but the information about transit use and barriers will be helpful.

If determinations of ADA paratransit eligibility will be made for applicants with vision disabilities using Option #2 in Section 7, have staff who will be involved in these determinations read Sections 1 and 2 of this workbook and complete the tests and exercises included in those sections. They should then be made familiar with all documents used in the determination process (application forms, types of professional verification obtained, and interview forms). Next, have them read Section 4 and participate in the interview role-play exercise contained in that section. Particular focus should be on the types of interview and follow-up questions that are suggested in Section 4 for applicants with vision disabilities. Provide several sample visual acuity reports to make sure that they can interpret them correctly. Finally, have them read the background information in Section 7. After reading these sections, have them complete the Section 7 Test. Answers to the test are provided on the following pages.

Following this training, arrange a time for the trainee to use transit with customers who are visually-impaired. The trainee should at this point have a good understanding of travel skills and personal and environmental barriers. The customer with a visual impairment can then provide valuable insight in a real-life setting. The trainee should also be encouraged to look for and take photographs of the types of environmental barriers described in Section 7 during these outings. Review the photographs with the trainee to be sure they are able to correctly identify the different types of environmental barriers described.



## Answers to Section 7 Test

Following are answers to the True/False portion of the Section 7 Test:

- 1. Someone who has had orientation and mobility instruction will never seek out the assistance of another person when traveling**

*False.* O&M Instruction can teach an individual to travel using a choice of aids, including a human guide (sighted guide.) The choice of equipment will depend on issues such as personal preference, familiarity with the area, lighting and the nature and extent of the visual impairment.

*At one time or other, most people who are blind will use a sighted guide to assist with travel. Sometimes, a pedestrian who is blind will ask assistance from pedestrians to cross streets at difficult or unfamiliar intersections. This may be one of the many techniques in the tool box of skills that the blind traveler has learned.*

- 2. A long white cane is used to detect obstacles in the path of travel which are then explored by the person using the cane – never their hand.**

*False.* The person using a cane will feel the shaft of the cane contact an obstacle in the path of travel. She must then decide whether to try to find a clear path around the obstacle, or to explore the obstacle in order to identify it using the cane, her hand, or both. This decision would be made, in part, by the sound made when the cane touches the object, giving her a cue about what the object is made from.

- 3. Long white cane users can always cross the street with confidence, since motorists can tell by their canes that they are blind or visually impaired and will yield to them.**

*False.* A white cane with a red tip signifies that the traveler has a visual impairment. Traffic laws require motorists to yield to the pedestrian using a white cane, particularly when the traveler is in the crosswalk, pedestrians who are blind must use good judgment and skill when crossing the street – not just assuming that cars will always stop. Pedestrians who are visually impaired should not expect that all motorists will automatically yield to them.

- 4. To walk in a straight line of travel through an open area, some people will use their cane to follow along the edge of texture changes, like grass and pavement.**

*True.* The cane, in conjunction with the foot, can help the user to identify the type of walking surface. When the cane touches the different surface at the left edge of the sidewalk (such as grass) it serves as a cue to the traveler to move slightly to the right. This helps the traveler to walk straight down the sidewalk. Some people follow along the edge of texture changes in order to maintain a straight line of travel in an open area.

**5. Most people who are blind use a dog guide.**

*False. Less than 10% of people who are blind use dog guides.*

**6. Dog guides are trained to know when it is safe to cross the street.**

*False. The handler must know when it is safe to cross the street, and will command the dog "forward." The dog guide does not watch traffic signals, not does it know when it is safe to cross. It responds to the commands of its handler.*

**7. When crossing the street, the dog guide is trained to keep it's handler safe at all times.**

*False. Dog guides are trained to disobey commands that will put its handler in danger, but they does not mean that the dog keeps its handler safe at all times. The handler that frequently makes poor decisions will confuse her dog guide, causing problems for the team.*

**8. Even with a dog guide, a traveler who is blind may have problems veering if they are not properly aligned for a street crossing.**

*True. The handler must make sure she is aligned to the opposite corner before she starts to cross the street. The dog guide will generally walk straight and may be able to compensate a bit if the team is slightly misaligned, it is not able to compensate for gross errors. If the handler is unsure about whether the team is properly aligned, the risk of veering increases greatly.*

**9. Someone who is legally blind has either a reduced visual acuity or reduced vision field but not necessarily both.**

*False. An individual can have reduced visual acuity, restricted visual field, or both.*

**10. Clinical visual acuity measures all vision issues.**

*False. Clinical visual acuity measurements are obtained indoors in a setting with controlled lighting, like an office. Lighting and contrast, things that can dramatically affect an individual's functional vision, are not measured in clinical visual acuity.*

**11. Someone who travels outdoors but never uses a long white cane or a dog guide would not be considered blind or visually impaired.**

*False. People with visual impairments have choices about the mobility aids they use when traveling. They can use a range including a sighted guide, a long white cane, a dog guide, no tools or travel aids at all. Their choice will depend on the extent and nature of the visual impairment, personal preference and the conditions under which they are traveling.*

*For example, an individual with retinitis pigmentosa may be able to travel without using a long white cane under some daytime conditions with good light, but may need to use the long white cane at night.*

**12. Pedestrians who are blind cannot travel by using landmarks.**

*False. Virtually everyone who travels outdoors does so by using a series of landmarks like buildings and street signs. People who are blind are no different in this respect – they just cannot see the landmarks and must identify them in non-visual ways.*

**13. The sound of traffic is distracting to the traveler who is blind – quiet is needed to know when it is safe to cross.**

*False. The sound of traffic moving forward on the parallel street is an important cue used by the blind pedestrian in crossing the street. It helps the person align herself to the opposite corner, walk straight, and the sound of the surge of parallel traffic is a cue that the traveler has the green light. It is often harder to cross at a street where there is very little traffic since the cues that traffic noise provides are absent.*

*The exception would be the presence of ambient or background noise which is so great and constant that the audible cues in the environment are obscured. Construction and even heavy wind cause ambient noise.*

**14. High curbs and curb ramps with steep slopes can be helpful to the pedestrian who is blind.**

*True. Cues like the curb or distinct slope of the curb ramp help the pedestrian who is blind know when she has reached the street edge. Curb ramps that slope gradually are harder to detect and can cause the individual to unknowingly walk into the street.*

**15. Intersections with pedestrian push buttons are always safe and can be crossed by anyone.**

*False. Pedestrian pushbuttons do not solve all of the street crossing problems encountered by the pedestrian who is blind. They are not installed in a uniform manner, so the individual may not even know whether there is a push button available at the crossing. The traveler must then locate the button, make sure she is pushing the right one for the street she wishes to cross, get back to the curb and realign herself before the walk cycle starts.*

**16. Evaluating a four-way intersection (a “+” intersection) involves looking at eight different crossing possibilities.**

*True. Depending on the direction of travel, there are two ways to cross on each street in a four way intersection, and they are not necessarily all the same.*

**17. Transit systems that use “flag stops” can be easier for travelers with vision disabilities to use since they do not have to locate an exact stop.**

*False.* Flag stops allow the transit user to stand on the side of the road at any point along the bus route and signal the bus to stop. Many routes that use flag stops have few, if any designated stops. Flag stops create special problems for the blind traveler who cannot tell whether the approaching vehicle is a bus, truck, or other type of vehicle.

**18. It is possible to be able to read the newspaper and be legally blind.**

*True.* While this may appear contradictory, especially when the legally blind person can see items which are very small, what the person with low vision can see often depends on the type of eye condition the person has. The legally blind individual who can read the newspaper and use the phone book may not be able to see curbs, or bump into items in her path of travel.

**19. People with low vision can eliminate the effect of glare with the use of sunglasses or a hat.**

*False.* Glare and frequent changes in lighting levels poses a particular problem for many people with low vision, and sunglasses and hats with brims do help reduce the effect. However, it takes individuals with low vision significantly longer to adjust their vision to changes in lighting conditions than those with normal vision. While dark glasses do help some people, they do not completely mitigate the problem.

**20. A person with 20/400 acuity sees at 20 feet what a person with normal vision sees at 2 feet.**

*False.* A person with 20/400 vision sees at 20 feet what the person with normal vision sees at 400 feet or more. For example, if a person with normal vision is standing in the back of the end zone of a football field and looking at the number on a player’s football jersey in the opposite end zone (360 feet away), the person with 20/400 vision would have to stand much closer - less than 20 feet away (about at the opposite goal line) to see the number on the player’s jersey with the same degree of clarity.

Following are answers to the open question portion of the Section 7 Test:

**Describe the types of travel issues that would likely be experienced by someone with macular degeneration.**

*Travel issues for people with macular degeneration:*

- The individual has blind spots right in the middle of his vision
- Difficulty with detailed vision at close distances
  - Reading print materials
  - Reading the numbers on money
  - Reading signs and bus numbers
- May have difficulty seeing curbs and judging the height of a curb

**What would be some of the contingency issues of a traveler who uses a wheelchair and has peripheral field loss?**

*Contingency issues of a traveler who uses a wheelchair and has peripheral field loss:*

- The individual can see objects and details directly in front of him, but cannot see objects and signs off to the side
- Depth perception impaired
  - May not be able to see changes in the surface like cracks, holes or broken or uneven pavement
  - May not be able to see curbs or drop-offs
- To compensate for lack of side vision, the individual may have to turn his head from side to side to cross the street and see obstacles in the path of travel

**Describe the effects that changes in lighting and glare can have on a individual with Retinitis Pigmentosa.**

*Effects of change in lighting and glare on an individual with Retinitis Pigmentosa*

- The individual's vision is much worse when the lighting is low
  - At night
  - On cloudy days
- May be able to see somewhat in ideal lighting conditions, but be almost completely blind in low light conditions
- Will be affected by changes in lighting along a route
  - Glare will reduce vision
  - It takes longer to adjust to the difference in lighting level when moving from indoors to outdoors

- Will be affected by outdoor lighting changes –(if the day starts sunny and becomes very overcast)
  - Stops and locations that are well lit will help the individual
- May have to use different mobility techniques in low lighting conditions or at night (such as the use of the long white cane) while in the daytime may be able to travel without the cane.
- Functional ability can change dramatically based on lighting –independent daytime travel may be possible, but not at nighttime (dusk to dawn eligibility.)