



## Medical Preferential Load Program Rules and Regulations

***WSF customers and medical personnel, please review the following before submitting an application.***

The Washington State Ferries Medical Preferential Load program provides exemption from the standard “first-come first-served” policy when a customer has a medical condition where an extended wait on the dock would cause detrimental risks to their health. When sailings are on overload and there are long wait times at the terminal, a customer with Medical Preferential status will sail on the next available sailing. **This assures space on the vessel but does not entitle the user to first on/first off positioning.**

- The Medical Preferential Load program is for customers with an illness who are undergoing treatment by a physician. The program is not for use for regular travel, general medical appointments, non-urgent dental appointments, routine exams, immunizations, any other medical check-up, or customers in labor.
  - Customers in labor should call 911 to be transported on the ferry via ambulance. WSF does not have medical staff aboard vessels. The ambulance medical professionals can provide the patient and child the best possible care.
- The need for preferential loading must be certified by a physician on a Medical Preferential Load Program Attending Physician/Hospital/Clinic Form faxed directly to the terminal.
  - Only doctors, nurses and affiliated positions (RN, PA, etc.) can certify need. Midwives, physical therapists, etc. cannot certify need.
  - Applications can be requested by calling WSF Information Agents at 1-888-808-7977 or 206-464-6400 and can be sent to the physician via email, fax, or US mail.
  - Applications will be sent only to a physician, hospital or clinic. WSF never sends applications to the patient/customer.
- The doctor or clinic is required to fill out the application in its entirety. This includes travel dates, route information, timeframe of travel, and departing and arriving terminal information. Incomplete forms will NOT be processed and will be returned to sender.
  - It is the customer’s responsibility to follow up with their physician, clinic, or hospital.
  - WSF will only follow up if there is a problem with the application form. For example, if the wrong form is faxed in, the form is incomplete, or if the form is received from a fax number that is not a medical facility, etc.
- There are two types of travel with the Medical Preferential Load program:
  - **One-Day Travel:** Good for bi-weekly or monthly treatments of medical conditions, or returning from surgery or a medical appointment that requires anesthesia

- **Multi-Day Travel:** Good for daily or weekly treatments of chronic medical conditions. Good for two (2) to ninety (90) days.
- After the physician certifies the patient's eligibility for this program, they should fax the Attending Physician/Hospital/Clinic Form to the departing and arriving terminals for the patient. Forms faxed from any other number will not be accepted. Physicians should provide the Patient Copy of the application to the customer.
- The customer should carry the Patient Copy with them when traveling on the ferries and present it to the ticket seller at the time of travel.
  - The terminals receive One-Day Travel and Multi-Day Travel applications daily.
  - A Multi-Day Travel program participant list is kept in the tollbooths at each terminal for verification. Terminal Supervisors have access to the daily updated participant list.
- **Arrival times:**
  - For the San Juan Islands, customers are required to arrive thirty (30) minutes before sailing time. Early arrival is mandatory to facilitate setting up for vessel load. Due to limited sailings in the San Juans, customers who arrive before the vessel has departed but after the gate is closed will not be able to board.
  - For all other routes, customers are required to arrive at least twenty (20) minutes prior to sailing time. WSF cannot guarantee boarding for late arrivals.
  - WSF will try to load late arrivals if space and time permits, but will NOT hold vessels or delay sailings to accommodate late arrivals.
- If patient has a chronic condition, (i.e., kidney failure, cancer), that requires treatment for more than ninety (90) days, a new application form must be filled out and submitted every ninety (90) days to re-enroll the customer in the program.
  - When re-enrolling, submit a new Attending Physician/ Hospital/Clinic Form a few days before the previous one has expired. WSF cannot accept new application forms until five days prior to expiration if the customer is currently on the Medical Preferential Loading list.
- If you have an emergency where driving yourself is faster than calling an ambulance, the terminal staff can fill out an Emergency Medical Preferential Loading form for travel.

#### **Title VI Notice to Public**

It is Washington State Department of Transportation policy to ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his or her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity. For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our nondiscrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator: Oscar Cerda 360- 705-7082.

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information**

WSDOT is committed to providing equal access to its facilities, programs and services for persons with disabilities. The material contained in this document can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Affairs team at [wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov) or by calling toll free: 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

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