

Tips for Doctors Filling Out Applications for Access-A-Ride Benefits

If you have a patient who wants to apply for Access-A-Ride (“AAR”), you are a vital source of accurate information and evidence. AAR is a demand-responsive, origin-to-destination transportation service for people with disabilities traveling in New York City. AAR is administered by the New York City Transit Authority (“NYCTA”). To be eligible for AAR, the patient must have a physical or mental disability and, as a result of the disability or its symptoms, be unable to ride, board, or disembark from public transportation in New York City without assistance from another individual. A successful applicant must prove that she has a disability **that makes her unable to take public transportation**. Medical records and proof of disability are necessary, but insufficient. An applicant must show how her disability prevents her from using public transportation, which is where you as her doctor come in.

The following tips will help you be a better resource for your patient during the application process. Keep them in mind when your patient asks you to fill out any forms or questionnaires or write a letter to the NYCTA.

1. **Describe your treatment of the patient, including: the length of time you’ve treated her, how often you see her, her medical history, symptoms, and the treatment you’ve provided.**
2. **Explain and describe her limitations, if any, in the following areas:** standing, walking, crossing streets, reading signs, navigating unfamiliar places, pace, and other relevant activities of daily living and/or cognitive abilities.
3. **Provide details and specific examples.**

Don’t write: “Ms. X has difficulty in crowded areas.”

Instead write: “Ms. X has difficulty in crowded areas. For example, when she is alone in a crowded place, she usually has extreme panic with physiological symptoms like chest pains, sweating, and blurred vision.”

Don’t write: “Ms. X has difficulty with physical activities.”

Instead write: “Ms. X has difficulty with physical activities. For example, if she has to stand for several minutes, she experiences painful swelling in her legs.”

4. **Explain how her symptoms and the examples you offered make her unable to take public transportation.** The most important issue is your patient’s inability to take public transportation. After explaining her symptoms and giving examples, describe why she is unable to use public transportation. For example: “Because her disability severely impairs her ability to function in crowded or cramped places, Ms. X cannot take public transportation.”

**DISCLAIMER: This fact sheet gives general information
for NYC residents; it is NOT legal advice.**