

Assistance Quality Standards for Disabled Passengers and Passengers with Reduced Mobility

1. Scope and Our Commitment

Stena Line is committed to providing safe, accessible and inclusive travel for all passengers.

We want disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility to be able to travel with dignity, independence and confidence, without discrimination.

These Quality Standards explain the minimum standard of assistance passengers can expect when travelling with Stena Line, including assistance at the port, during embarkation and disembarkation, and throughout the journey.

Assistance for disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility is provided free of charge.

These standards support our obligations under applicable UK maritime passenger rights legislation, including Regulation (EU) No. 1177/2010 as retained in UK law.

Requesting assistance

Passengers who require assistance should tell us about their requirements when booking or at least **48 hours before departure** so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

This may include requirements relating to:

- mobility or wheelchair assistance;
- visual or hearing impairments;
- hidden disabilities;
- medical equipment or oxygen;
- assistance dogs; or
- other accessibility or assistance requirements.

Passengers travelling with a wheelchair or mobility aid should inform us during the booking process.

Where less than 48 hours' notice is given, Stena Line will make every reasonable effort to provide the assistance required.

If a passenger has booked through a third party, we recommend contacting the Stena Line Contact Centre to confirm that the assistance request has been communicated to the relevant port and vessel.

Passengers who would be unable to reach an assembly point without assistance during an emergency should tell us when booking.

The number of passengers requiring certain types of assistance on an individual sailing may be limited due to maritime safety requirements.

2. Assistance at the Port and Embarkation

Designated assistance meeting points

There is a **designated assistance meeting point** where passengers who require assistance can announce their arrival and request support.

Passengers who have requested assistance should arrive within the published check-in times for their sailing and make themselves known at the designated assistance meeting point.

Passengers who have pre-requested assistance will be met by a member of staff in a timely manner.

Assistance through the port

Where assistance has been requested, trained staff will provide support according to the passenger's individual requirements.

Depending on the port, route and passenger's requirements, this may include:

- guidance through the terminal;
- assistance with check-in;
- assistance through security or border controls where applicable;
- assistance with luggage or walking aids;
- use of wheelchairs or lifts where available;
- assistance between the designated meeting point and the vessel;
- assistance boarding the vessel.

Boarding arrangements vary between ports and vessels and may include a passenger gangway, accessible route, vehicle or bus transfer.

Where a passenger is travelling with an accompanying person or carer, we will, wherever practicable, assist them together.

Not all ports used by Stena Line are owned or operated by Stena Line. Where third-party terminals are used, we work with the relevant terminal operator to coordinate assistance where possible.

Foot passengers

Passengers travelling on foot who have requested assistance will be supported through the terminal and boarding process according to their individual requirements and the facilities available at the relevant port.

Once onboard, assistance can be provided to help the passenger reach their seating area or cabin.

Passengers travelling by vehicle

Passengers travelling with a vehicle should tell us about their mobility or assistance requirements before travel.

Where required, staff will assist passengers from their vehicle to the passenger accommodation.

Where practicable, vehicles carrying passengers with mobility requirements will be positioned close to a lift or accessible route on the vehicle deck.

Operational and safety requirements may affect the exact position in which a vehicle can be parked.

3. Assistance Onboard

Stena Line crew are trained to provide assistance to disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility throughout the voyage.

Depending on individual requirements, assistance may include:

- helping passengers reach their cabin or seating area;
- explaining the location of onboard facilities;
- assistance moving around the vessel where safe and practicable;
- assistance reaching accessible toilet facilities;
- support for passengers with visual, hearing or mobility requirements;
- providing relevant journey information; and
- providing information and assistance relating to emergency arrangements.

Crew can provide mobility and travel assistance but cannot provide personal care.

Passengers who require personal care during the journey should travel with a companion or carer able to provide that support.

Accessible facilities

Most public areas onboard Stena Line vessels are wheelchair accessible.

Facilities vary between vessels and may include:

- accessible cabins;
- accessible seating;
- accessible toilets;
- lifts;
- clear signage; and
- hearing support.

Accessible cabins and seating are subject to availability and operational requirements.

Where a passenger travels with a companion or carer, we will endeavour to provide accommodation together or as close together as reasonably possible.

Assistance dogs

Recognised assistance dogs travel free of charge and are welcome in passenger areas, subject to applicable national regulations and route-specific requirements.

Passengers should notify Stena Line in advance when travelling with an assistance dog and must have the documentation required for the country to which they are travelling.

A **spending area is available for assistance dogs** during the journey.

Passengers requiring information about the location or use of the spending area should ask a member of staff.

Hidden disabilities

Stena Line recognises the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme on some routes.

Passengers may wear a Sunflower lanyard to discreetly indicate that they may require additional support, understanding or time during their journey.

4. Disembarkation

Passengers who have requested assistance will be supported during disembarkation according to their individual requirements.

Foot passengers

Where required, assistance will be provided to help passengers:

- leave their cabin or seating area;
- reach the appropriate disembarkation point;
- disembark using the appropriate accessible route or assistance available; and
- proceed through the terminal as appropriate.

The exact arrangements will depend on the vessel and port.

Passengers travelling by vehicle

Where required, staff will assist passengers in returning safely to their vehicle before disembarkation.

Passengers should follow instructions provided by the crew before entering the vehicle deck and during disembarkation.

5. Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids and Medical Equipment

Mobility equipment

Wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other recognised mobility equipment are carried free of charge, subject to applicable safety requirements.

Passengers travelling with a wheelchair or mobility aid should tell Stena Line during the booking process.

Most electric wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other battery-powered mobility aids can be accommodated.

For safety reasons, damaged batteries or unsafe equipment may not be permitted onboard.

If mobility equipment is lost or damaged while under Stena Line's responsibility, compensation will be provided in accordance with applicable legislation.

Where reasonably practicable, temporary replacement equipment will be made available until repairs or replacement can be arranged.

Medical equipment

Passengers may bring essential medical equipment onboard, subject to applicable safety requirements.

Medical equipment carried onboard must normally be operated by the passenger or their accompanying companion.

Passengers travelling with oxygen should contact Stena Line before travel because specific conditions and quantity restrictions apply.

6. Providing Accessible Information

Stena Line provides information to help passengers plan and complete their journey.

This includes information about:

- requesting assistance;
- accessibility at ports and onboard vessels;
- accessible facilities;
- booking and check-in requirements;
- passenger rights;
- delays and cancellations;
- conditions of carriage;
- complaints procedures; and
- contacting Stena Line for further assistance.

Essential passenger information is available in accessible formats, including **large print, Braille and subtitled formats**, as appropriate to the information being provided.

Passengers who require information in an accessible format should contact Stena Line or speak to a member of staff.

Delays and cancellations

If a sailing is delayed or cancelled, Stena Line will provide information as soon as possible using the appropriate communication channels available.

Where required by passenger rights legislation, passengers may also be entitled to assistance, refreshments, accommodation, rerouting or compensation depending on the circumstances.

The accessibility requirements of disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility will be considered when assistance has been arranged and travel is disrupted.

Where available, **Stena Line will also provide relevant information about connecting and alternative modes of transport following a delay or cancellation** to help passengers understand their onward travel options.

7. Staff Training

Stena Line ensures that staff members who interact with disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility receive disability-related training appropriate to their role.

Our disability-related training programme has been **developed with the assistance of representatives from disabled persons' organisations**.

Training is delivered through a combination of:

- **in-person training sessions;**
- **Stena Line-developed training online learning**
- **Safety drills**

Personnel responsible for reservations, ticket sales, embarkation or disembarkation receive **disability-awareness training** covering the requirements of Annex IV Part A of the applicable maritime passenger rights legislation.

Personnel who directly provide assistance to disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility receive both **disability-awareness and disability-assistance training**, covering Annex IV Parts A and B.

Disability-awareness training

Training includes:

- awareness of physical, sensory, hidden and learning disabilities;
- understanding the different needs of passengers whose mobility, orientation or communication may be reduced;
- barriers faced by disabled passengers, including physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers;
- the role and needs of recognised assistance dogs;
- responding appropriately to unexpected situations;
- appropriate communication with passengers with hearing, visual, speech or learning disabilities; and
- awareness of relevant IMO guidance concerning the needs of elderly and disabled passengers.

Disability-assistance training

Personnel who directly provide assistance also receive practical training appropriate to their duties. This includes:

- assisting wheelchair users with transfers;
- assisting passengers travelling with recognised assistance dogs;
- escorting passengers with visual impairments;

- understanding and carefully handling mobility and assistance equipment;
- using boarding and disembarkation assistance equipment;
- providing assistance during boarding and disembarkation in a manner that protects the passenger's safety and dignity;
- understanding the importance of reliable and professional assistance and the potential vulnerability of passengers who depend upon that assistance; and

Training records are maintained and relevant personnel are required to maintain their competence through further instruction or refresher training, as appropriate.

Training requirements and content are reviewed periodically and following significant changes to legislation, guidance, equipment or operational arrangements.

8. Monitoring Our Quality Standards

Stena Line is committed to continually improving the assistance provided to disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility.

We monitor our Quality Standards by:

- reviewing requests for assistance and the services delivered;
- monitoring the number and type of assistance requests;
- analysing trends in assistance requirements to help ensure sufficient trained staff and resources are available;
- monitoring staff training;
- reviewing operational accessibility issues;
- working with ports and relevant organisations to improve accessibility;
- investigating complaints relating to accessibility or assistance; and
- reviewing passenger feedback.

Passenger satisfaction

All passengers are sent a customer satisfaction survey following travel.

Feedback received through these surveys is used to monitor the passenger experience and identify areas where improvements may be required.

Complaints concerning accessibility or assistance are investigated. Findings and trends from complaints are considered when reviewing our services, procedures and training.

These Quality Standards are reviewed every two years or more frequently if required, to ensure that they continue to meet applicable legal requirements and passenger needs or following service change or a serious accessibility incident.

9. Feedback and Complaints

We welcome feedback about the assistance we provide.

Where possible, passengers should raise any concern with a member of staff during their journey so that we have an opportunity to resolve the matter immediately.

Passengers should contact Stena Line as soon as possible if:

- pre-requested assistance was not provided;
- they were refused travel;
- mobility equipment was lost or damaged;
- essential information was not provided in an accessible format; or
- the assistance provided did not meet their requirements.

Following travel, a complaint can be submitted through the Stena Line Contact Form by selecting **Complaint**.

All complaints relating to the provision of assistance will be investigated.

If a passenger remains dissatisfied after receiving Stena Line's final response, the matter may be referred to the appropriate Alternative Dispute Resolution body where applicable or to the relevant National Enforcement Body.

For UK maritime passenger rights, the National Enforcement Body is the **Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)**.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency
National Enforcement Body
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG
United Kingdom

Further information about passenger rights, accessible travel and contacting Stena Line is available on Stenaline.co.uk.