

ACAT FAQs

2022 applicants



What is ACAT?

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) is a group of volunteers who provide advice and recommendations to the TTC Board and TTC staff on matters pertaining to accessible public transit in the City of Toronto. These matters include the removal of barriers to accessibility and improving the customer experience for persons with disabilities and seniors.

What is the role of ACAT members?

The role of ACAT members is to represent the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities and seniors. Using an intersectional approach, they provide advice to the TTC Board and staff about accessible transit, policy issues, consultation, education, and support pertaining to persons with disabilities and the community at large.

People with intersecting identities including Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, the 2SLGBTQ+ community, newcomers, as well as people with multiple physical, cognitive, sensory and mental health conditions, experience compounding and complex accessibility barriers. ACAT members represent those voices and provide insight and advice on their behalf to the TTC.

How is the ACAT Committee structured?

The ACAT Committee consists of 15 volunteers broken down as follows:

- At least eight persons with disabilities from various disability communities and cultures.
- At least two seniors.
- A maximum of three advocates for people with disabilities exclusive of the members above. These members must have a demonstrated knowledge of and interest in accessible transit issues.
- Members reflecting the racial diversity of Toronto based on population demographics (currently, 52% of Toronto's population are people from racialized communities).

Eight ACAT members shall constitute a quorum for every ACAT General or Special meeting.

Members of ACAT are appointed for a period of up to three years.

One-third of the members are replaced each year.

Retired members may reapply for a subsequent term following a one-year absence from ACAT.

Two to four ACAT Pool members (alternates) will also be appointed each year for a one-year term. ACAT Pool members may be called on by the ACAT Executive and TTC staff to fill a vacancy in the course of a year.

An ACAT Pool member who fills a vacancy for less than 12 months, may reapply to be an ACAT member without serving the one-year absence requirement from ACAT membership.

What are the prerequisites to join the ACAT Committee?

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- a. Must be a resident of Toronto.
- b. Must use the conventional TTC (bus, streetcar, subway, community bus) or Wheel-Trans.
- c. Must be a person with a disability, a senior, or must have a demonstrated knowledge/interest in accessible transit issues and represent the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities and seniors who use the TTC.
- d. Must be available for meetings as required.
- e. Must be familiar with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Ontario Human Rights Code and related accessibility standard and/or guidelines and legislation as they pertain to public transit.

What is the ACAT Executive Committee and what is their role?

The ACAT Executive Committee is comprised of the Chair and two Vice Chairs. Members of the ACAT Executive Committee are elected by the ACAT membership.

Given the complexity of the Chair position and the fact that ACAT members are appointed for three years, while the executive positions are voted on annually, the Chair is an individual who has served on the current ACAT Committee for a minimum of one year. The Chair presides at all ACAT General and Special meetings, attends TTC Board Meetings and represents ACAT at public functions. The Vice Chairs serve in the absence of the Chair.

How many ACAT Subcommittees are there?

There are four Subcommittees

1. Communications
2. Design Review
3. Service Planning
4. Wheel-Trans Operations

What is the selection and appointment process?

The selection process for ACAT membership starts with the solicitation of the public through advertisements in local newspapers and/or other forms of communication available at the TTC.

Applicants must attend an information session to be eligible to apply for ACAT membership. Selected applicants are interviewed and evaluated by a four-member selection Committee consisting of two TTC staff representatives, personnel from the City of Toronto and ACAT's Chair or Vice Chair. The selection Committee then makes its recommendations to the TTC Board of Directors who make the final decision. Individuals who are appointed to ACAT, will attend an orientation on the roles and responsibilities of ACAT and will be given all the pertinent documents.

How many ACAT meetings are held annually?

The ACAT General Meetings are held monthly (currently the last Thursday of the month). In January each year, two General Meetings are held. The additional meeting is to facilitate the election of the ACAT Executive Committee.

The Subcommittees also typically meet once a month but could meet more frequently during busy times.

Can you provide insight on the routine at ACAT general meetings?

ACAT meetings are public. The ACAT Chair leads the meetings. The agenda is developed in advance working with TTC staff. TTC staff may present to the ACAT Committee for feedback and suggestions. The Subcommittee chairs provide a report at the general meetings on their activities. ACAT members also hear and discuss deputations from the public.

How can the public make deputations to ACAT?

To make a deputation at an ACAT meeting, you must make your request in writing ten (10) days prior to the upcoming ACAT meeting and it should include a brief overview of the topic(s) to be addressed. Deputations can be a verbal or video presentation about a particular initiative. Please forward your request and brief to acat@ttc.ca. A deputation cannot exceed five minutes

Are there any monetary benefits for members of ACAT? Can it lead to securing employment with the TTC?

Membership on ACAT does not lead to paid employment with the TTC.

Members of ACAT have the option to elect for a free annual TTC Monthly Pass or have ACAT related business reimbursed on approval by the TTC.

Besides fulfilling the ACAT mandate what are the expectations of ACAT members?

Members are required to keep confidential any TTC information, documents or other materials identified as confidential, that are not in the public domain and are provided to facilitate the work of ACAT.

Members are required to adhere to the Conflict of Interest provisions in the City of Toronto Public Service By-law, abide by the ACAT Terms of Reference, ACAT Member Guidelines, ACAT Subcommittee Guidelines, ACAT Meeting Protocols, and other pertinent stipulations.

From time-to-time, ACAT may be asked to designate a representative to serve on other transit-related Committees to advise on accessibility matters, and prepare reports to be presented on a regular basis at the ACAT General Meetings.

ACAT members are required to address systemic issues only and not individual customer complaints.

What are the minimum attendance requirements for ACAT members?

ACAT members are expected to attend all ACAT General Meetings or Subcommittee meetings held within a year, unless they provide "reasonable cause" for missing a meeting that is acceptable to members of ACAT's Executive Committee and TTC staff. Reasonable cause includes, but is not limited to, illness or injury, specialist appointments that cannot be rescheduled, employment-related travel, the death or serious illness of a family member, etc.

Missing three ACAT General Meetings or more than 25% of Subcommittee meetings within a year, without providing reasonable cause acceptable to the ACAT Executive Committee and TTC staff, can cause members to be removed from ACAT.

What services are available to ACAT members by way of accommodation during ACAT meetings?

General support is provided at ACAT General and Subcommittee meetings, as required, including but not limited to personal support workers for in-person meetings.

How is ACAT meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Currently, ACAT is meeting online using WebEx video conferencing software. This platform also permits Committee members to call in to meetings. It is expected that ACAT will continue to meet virtually for the foreseeable future until Toronto Public Health recommends that in-person gatherings can be held again without physical distancing requirements.