



Passenger assistance guide

DFDS is committed to making travel on our services as comfortable and accessible as possible for all passengers, especially those who may require additional assistance during their journey.

Our teams, both onboard and ashore, have received awareness training to ensure the highest standards of care and support.

We are dedicated to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment, making travel easier for everyone.

As proud members of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Programme, we are here to recognise and assist customers with non-visible disabilities, conditions, and chronic illnesses, ensuring every passenger feels seen, supported, and respected.

You are entitled to certain assistance both in port and onboard the ship. Therefore, to help us make your journey as smooth and comfortable as possible, we need to know your requirements at your earliest convenience, ideally when you make your booking, but no later than 48 hours before you travel. We will always try our utmost to accommodate all requests whilst travelling with us.

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Making a booking

Preparing your trip

A member of our Customer Care team will assess your needs to ensure appropriate assistance is provided for your chosen crossing. They will review any specific requirements you may have and advise you of any relevant restrictions.

For more information/make a reservation

- Call us on **0344 848 6090**
- Email us at **accessibletravel@dfds.com**

The disabled person, or a person who is making a reservation on their behalf, must notify DFDS of their needs at time of booking or no later than 48 hours prior to a journey. If 48 hours' notice is not given, we will still make all reasonable efforts to provide the passenger with assistance, every effort will be made to take your booking however, in a very small number of exceptional cases, a request to travel at a particular time or date may be refused on the grounds of safety.

Please let us know the nature of your disability and any specific requirements that you may have e.g. particular type of seating or accommodation, adapted facilities and any medical equipment you may need to carry.

After assessing your specific requirements, we may require that you are accompanied by an individual that can assist you during the journey. Any accompanying person can travel free of charge.

If you have booked through a travel agent or a tour operator you should advise your booking agent that you will require assistance and ask to pass this information on to DFDS.

Exceptions

Whilst every effort will be made to accept a booking, a request to travel may be refused on the grounds of safety.

This is typically due to the legal requirement to ensure that all passengers can be evacuated from the vessel within a specified timeframe in the unlikely event of an emergency.

It may also apply in cases where the design of the ship or the port infrastructure makes it impossible to accommodate you in a safe or operationally feasible manner.



Assistance on arrival at the port, embarkation and disembarkation

Upon arrival at the port, passengers with disabilities or those requiring assistance should inform a member of our team of their presence.

We kindly ask that any passengers needing assistance arrive at check-in at least 90 minutes before the scheduled departure time. Please note that failure to meet this check-in time may result in assistance not being guaranteed.

When we are notified - either in advance or at the time of travel - that assistance is needed, our team will ask, in a polite and respectful manner, what type of support is required. If the passenger is accompanied by someone providing assistance, we will ensure that the accompanying person can remain with them during check-in, boarding, and disembarkation.

If you are traveling in a vehicle, please drive up to the check-in booths and confirm with the team that:

- You use a wheelchair and wish to be parked near the lift or ramp.
- You require any other specific assistance.

You may be asked to switch on your hazard lights to alert the ship's crew that you need assistance. If you require to use your wheelchair or mobility scooter, our team will inform you on how this will be identified and the next step to follow.

Please note: your boarding time or vehicle placement on the vessel may vary depending on the ship and loading requirements

Vehicle passengers who cannot use the ship's stairs will be parked as close as possible to lifts or ramps.

On routes that we carry foot passengers, please inform the check-in staff at the desk if you use a wheelchair or need any other form of assistance. After check-in, you will be directed to a designated waiting area for embarkation. You will be called forward when it's time to board.

Boarding times and the order of embarkation may vary depending on the vessel and loading requirements. In some ports, an adapted vehicle may be available to assist you in accessing the ship. All terminal areas are equipped with ramps and accessible toilet facilities.

If you are travelling with an Assistance Dog

We welcome Assistance Dogs recognised by the Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and International Guide Dogs Federation (IDGF). These programmes ensure dogs are trained to support individuals with disabilities.

If you're travelling with an Assistance Dog, please notify our team in advance. Ensure your dog complies with the pet travel rules of the destination country and provide the necessary documentation. Assistance Dogs travel free of charge, are allowed in public areas on a harness or lead, and there is no fee to bring them on board.

Please note, Emotional Support Animals are not legally recognised by ADI or IDGF as Assistance Dogs. They may travel with us but must adhere to the same rules as pets. More details are available on our pet travel page.

On domestic routes, Assistance Dogs travel free. For travel to or from France, the PETS travel scheme applies.



Whilst onboard

Once onboard, crew members are happy to help throughout the journey. If requested, disabled passengers can be guided to their seat or cabin. The crew will also explain the location of toilets and other onboard facilities, how to request help, what to do in case of an emergency, and the procedure for disembarkation.

Assistance provided onboard may include help with:

- Assistance with embarkation and disembarkation
- Storing and retrieving baggage
- Accessing food and drinks from outlets

During the journey, support is available to assist disabled passengers in getting to and from the toilet facilities. However, please note that crew members are not trained to provide personal care. If a passenger requires specialist or hands-on assistance to use the toilet or manage personal needs during the trip, they must travel with a companion who can provide the necessary support.

Please note: Power outlets on some of our vessels use European plugs. A UK adapter may be required.

Accessible seating, cabins & onboard facilities

We aim to provide seating or cabin accommodation that suits the needs of disabled passengers, subject to availability. These areas are clearly marked with appropriate signage. If you are travelling with a companion who is assisting you, we will ensure you are seated or accommodated together, or as close as possible.

Outdoor deck access

All our ferries offer access to an outside deck. Please note that some doorways may have a small step or “lip.” Crew members are available to assist if needed.

Onboard services

If you require assistance during your journey, including with onboard facilities, please speak to a member of the Onboard team at the Guest Information Desk, or ask any member of the crew

Safety information & accessibility

At the beginning of each journey, safety instructions are shared via the public address (PA) system or TV screens onboard.

If you or a member of your party has a hearing impairment, please mention this when making a reservation and report to the Guest Information Desk when you board the ship. The crew will make sure that you receive any important messages which are broadcasted during the crossing.



Public announcements

The ship's PA system is used to communicate important safety information. It may also be used during the crossing for general announcements about onboard facilities, services, and promotions. Each announcement is preceded by a distinctive "bing-bong" sound.

Emergency procedures

In the unlikely event of an emergency, a loud alarm will sound. Please note that this alarm is intentionally loud to ensure everyone hears it. Passengers will be directed to designated Muster Stations by our trained crew, who regularly participate in safety drills. Our emergency procedures are reviewed and approved by maritime authorities to ensure your safety.



Sunflower lanyards

At DFDS, our teams, both onboard and ashore, are committed to making travel easier for everyone. We are part of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower programme, we're here to recognise and assist customers with non-visible disabilities, conditions and chronic illnesses.

Our staff are trained to understand that you may require additional support or assistance during your ferry journey. Whether it's extra time during boarding or finding places onboard, we're here to make your trip more comfortable.

The Sunflower is completely voluntary and open to all customers with invisible disabilities without needing to disclose details about their disability. Request a Sunflower lanyard by email at sunlan@dfds.com they are also available at our ports and onboard our ships. Simply ask a crew member or visit the Guest Information desk.

At the end of your journey

If you require assistance at the time of disembarkation with a wheelchair or luggage, please identify yourself to our onboard crew.

If you need to take extra time to make your way back to the car deck, please tell us in good time. The time or order you are disembarked will depend on the vessel or loading requirements. If you need to have space to fully open your vehicle door it may mean waiting for vehicles to vacate the surrounding area, please ask a member of the crew.



Your rights

The provisions outlined within this are compliant with EU Regulation (EC) No 1177/2010 'The rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterways'. Copies of the legislation are available on our website, onboard and in our Terminals.

You are entitled to certain assistance both in port and on-board ship. This includes assistance with boarding and/or leaving the ferry, assistance with baggage and/or any specific medical equipment that you may be carrying, and assistance in making your way to toilet facilities.

Your request to travel cannot be refused solely on the grounds of a disability, or reduced mobility, and you are entitled to travel at no extra cost, under the same conditions that apply to all other passengers. Accessible versions of this information are available on request and kept on-board our vessels and within our Terminals. We also have an audio and BSL version of 'Your rights EU Regulation 1177/2010' available on our website.

Feedback

The Carrier will undertake regular assessments of the assistance given to disabled persons to monitor the service standards and keep improving. The above will be achieved by:

- 1) Registering complaints filed with regards to the process and experience of the Disabled persons;
- 2) Active engagement with institutions that handle matters of the Disabled persons;
- 3) Passenger satisfaction surveys.

To ensure the highest standard of service and assistance for disabled passengers, we provide regular staff training covering support for people with various types of disabilities or impaired mobility, equal treatment, and disability awareness. All staff interacting with passengers, from the booking process to those working onboard, all of teams will undergo this training.

Any feedback regarding the service provided, including assistance offered to disabled passengers, should be sent to: **uk.customercare@dfds.com**.

Any complaints should be addressed to the DFDS in the first instance. Where the passenger is not satisfied with the response received, they can refer their complaint to the designated voluntary Complaint Handling Body (CHB). If, after the CHB have considered the complaint, the passenger may refer their complaint to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.



