

How to Borrow a Power Wheelchair

This information is intended for those who need to borrow a power wheelchair or a power assist device for a manual wheelchair. From here on, the term "power wheelchair" will be used to refer to both power wheelchairs and power assist devices for manual wheelchairs.

The purpose of this information is to explain the process of prescribing a power wheelchair.

The steps:

Your Needs

The prescriber will ask about your mobility issues and discuss the possible solutions available.

You will have the opportunity to express your preferences, and the prescriber will explain the options that can be offered.

An occupational therapist, in consultation with a doctor, has the authority to prescribe a power wheelchair based on their professional expertise. If you have some ability to walk, a physiotherapist will conduct a walking assessment. The right to prescribe is regulated by regional and municipal guidelines.

There are specific guidelines for which needs and difficulties qualify for borrowing a power wheelchair, and the prescriber must follow them. Power wheelchairs are among the devices subject to special regulations, known as Special Prescriptions. This means that the case will be reviewed by the Länshjälpmedelsgruppen, a group for Region Norrbotten and the municipalities of the county. If the case complies with the current guidelines, the group will recommend proceeding with the prescription.

Choosing a Power Wheelchair

The healthcare provider procures tested and approved aids intended for people with disabilities.

You will be informed about the available models in the healthcare system's catalog. The prescriber will explain the pros and cons of each model based on your needs and the goals you've set together.

Once you have agreed on a suitable model to try, the prescriber will place an order. Some models are kept in stock, while others may have longer delivery times if ordered from a supplier. The prescriber will inform you when your power wheelchair is available for trial, though it may sometimes be difficult to provide an exact delivery date.

Trial and Fitting

The prescriber will meet with you to fit the power wheelchair to ensure it suits you and is safe to use. Often, several appointments are needed for this process.

The prescriber will consult with an assistive technology specialist and/or technician during the fitting, adjustment, and customization.

It's important to test the power wheelchair in the environment where it will be used. The environment may need modifications to accommodate the wheelchair, such as removing thresholds, widening doorways, or installing a ramp (home adaptations). Storage with charging capabilities in a frost-free environment is also required.

Inform, Instruct, and Train

The prescriber will instruct you on how to operate the power wheelchair. Often, training is needed to ensure you can use it properly. The prescription will only be finalized once you can safely handle the wheelchair.

If it becomes apparent during the trial that you are not able to operate the wheelchair safely, the prescription will not be completed, and the wheelchair will be returned.

The prescriber will also provide you with the manual and written information about the loan conditions, as well as the patient information leaflet "Borrowing a Power Wheelchair."

All aids prescribed by healthcare are on loan and must be returned when they are no longer needed. If your medical condition or living situation changes, or if you misuse the power wheelchair, the prescriber has the right to reassess your need for the device. A reassessment may result in the prescriber reclaiming or replacing the power wheelchair.

It is important that you contact the prescriber if your circumstances change.

Follow-Up

Once the power wheelchair has been fitted, the prescriber will inform you about how and when the follow-up will take place. It is important that the prescription meets your needs and the goals set.

Power wheelchairs require regular follow-ups. Sometimes, this may involve another consultation with a doctor and/or a new driving test. The prescriber will reach out when a follow-up is necessary.

Contact Information

Prescriber (Professional title):

Workplace:

Phone number: