

COVID-19 Impacts - comments from AFA members reported out to TPB on May 20th by Chair Kostiuk)

Nechama Masliansky, from SOME's Clinical team

- Our medical staff reports that delays from Stadium Armory on the Blue and Orange Lines in both directions have caused staff to be late several times a month.
- "Staff that rely on public transportation have really been struggling. It is unreliable, plus the safety concerns and the changes in routes etc. make it hard for both clients and staff that are still required to work to get to their places of employment.
- These issues primarily involve Metrobus-- Delays, not all routes/stops running. Some involve Metrorail.
- We are also experiencing challenges for clients who need to get to medical appointments etc. being able to either – A) make it to our clinic or b) our residential clients getting to other appointments (or feeling safe in doing so).
- For clients/patients, transportation is always a challenge, but especially for those who have wheelchairs, etc. Much harder to get a taxi, Uber etc. on top of public transportation. We have a lot of clients that work in essential services and they are struggling with getting to and from their employment.
- Is the lack of Shelter vans the cause of this issue? Yes- we have a lot of clients that rely on this to get to services, even if they are not staying in a shelter per se. I am thinking it also limits who is coming to the SOME Dining Room as well.
- Is there a Metro Access issue? I have not heard of ones above and beyond the usual regarding timeliness, reliability, etc.
- There are also education issues arising about people feeling unsafe to travel and how to support clients coming to hospitals or chronic-care appointments -- which leads to them getting more sick."

Andy Wexler, Arlington

- As you can imagine, STAR ridership is down considerably as a result of COVID-19. Normally we have several hundred riders on weekdays, but right now we have 50-60.
- Both of our contracted service providers, Diamond Transportation and Red Top Cab, are taking extensive measures to keep their vehicles clean and sanitary. Despite that, Red Top has informed us that many of their independent drivers have stopped driving due to safety concerns, causing occasional shortages of available vehicles.

Karen Smith, Arc of Prince William

- All day services continue to be closed and all residential programs are still on “stay in place.” The result has been no transportation has been utilized since mid- March except for necessary medical appointments that cannot be done virtually or testing for COVID.
- As of today, we have no individuals testing positive but have 4 staff members who have tested positive in our residential services. All have returned to work.

Sara Fought, Jewish Council for the Aging

- Without question the COVID-19 pandemic changed how our community partners provide service to their seniors as well as how VillageRides and NV Rides support our partners. We continue to provide operational and marketing support, have coordinated with our local government counterparts and shared guidelines and tips with our partners about the current environment.
- A number of organizations are still providing rides though have limited them to rides for medical appointments. Overall, the number of rides provided decreased for the quarter as the effects of the stay at home orders took hold, appointments were cancelled, and riders and drivers – typically seniors themselves - remained at home. Many if not all of our partners pivoted to fill a different need and replaced rides with delivery of groceries and supplies and friendly calls.
- NV Rides: Delayed in getting surveys out to drivers and programmatic partners.

Sherri Mohebbi, IT Curves (taxi industry platform)

- During shelter in place a run to market to get grocery or pick up foods was considered necessary/permitted.
- Our impact is with petitioning municipalities to make aware that funding for the transportation disadvantaged can be used towards delivery and pickup to give equitability to the transportation disadvantaged.
- At ITCurves the accounting, audit features makes service platform a transparency solution.
- IT Curves service platform, is a transparent solution, constant ledgering of a trips points of data giving good audit trail regarding when, where, the ride is, who is paying for the ride, how to bill, what is transported, why, being the organization that is requesting.
- This platform currently used with Unscheduled- demand transportation prime contractors to Washington METRO.
- Ride reservation can be managed online, on the web, app, IVR, Excel upload, and button press reservation, from numerous organizations including NIH, and area

Hospitals, adult care centers, as well as individual customers. We serve thousands of ride requests daily and bill hundreds of organizations.

Input based on what Lynn Winchell-Mendy has been reading and information received from our Enhanced Mobility subrecipients:

- Seeing adaptations in transportation services to:
 - Delivery of groceries, prescriptions, meals for at risk populations
 - Rides for essential workers and healthcare workers
 - Volunteer drivers are being used for other volunteer services – friendly calls, grocery/meal/prescription delivery, , some urgent medical appointments
- CARES Act is transit focused and through the 5311 & 5307 programs. Some benefit to independent contractors in the taxi industry (includes drivers for some of our subrecipients operating wheelchair-accessible taxis), but \$ has run out
- 5310/Enhanced Mobility
 - Not part of CARES Act (5311, 5307 – transit focused)
 - No FTA guidance at this time regarding 5310
 - Programs with an outreach or training component have been impacted. Are moving to on-line training and outreach. Those with volunteer recruitment components are emphasizing increased need for volunteers during the crisis.
 - Programs that usually transport people with disabilities to employment, training and adult day programming are focusing on participants in community-based group homes to ensure necessary food, medicine, supplies, emergency medical appointment needs are being met.
 - 5310 normally allows for vehicles funded to be used for other purposes as long as the original intent of the funding of the vehicles is still met during regular hours. Often see this used for meal delivery. Subrecipients have been reminded of this and are looking at other ways to use vehicles.