



## **ADA PARTICIPATION GROUP FORUM Wednesday, July 14, 2021**

If you experience an issue with the ADA Paratransit service that requires investigation, please do not hesitate to contact the Customer Service Department at (860) 724-5340 extension 9, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., email [Hartford.Customerservice@firstgroup.com](mailto:Hartford.Customerservice@firstgroup.com), or fax (860) 936-3750. You may also write to: Customer Service Department c/o First Transit, 148 Roberts St, East Hartford, CT 06108. *If you are able, please file any and all complaints within 48 hours of the incident.*

This forum was held virtually and the following were in attendance:

Riders/Public – Gary Allen, Dinah Davis, Mary-Ann Langton, Lynn Evans, Beverly Jackson, and Janet Wallans

First Transit (FT) – Yvette Cruz, Ryan Ewing, Anand Gounder, Angela Glisson

Greater Hartford Transit District (the “District”) – Margaret Banker, Valerie Ellis, and Pat Williams

The forum began at 5:00 p.m.

### Operations:

May 2021 passengers’ trips were 26,307, no shows 886 (3%), and cancellations 5,409 (21%).

June 2021 passengers’ trips were 29,260, no shows 912 (3%), and cancellations 5,443 (19%).

### Customer Service:

In May 2021, 371 comments were received from passengers and 17% were compliments, 6% driver, dispatch, reservationist, and/or scheduling concerns, 8% late/early arrival, ride length or missed trip concerns, 15% invalid concerns, 0% mechanical and/or related to safety concerns, 0% door-to-door and/or related to wrong drop-off or pick-up concerns, 0% courtesy, 0% no show concerns, 2% unknown, 0% other, and 52% n/a, record only, general information.

In June 2021, 411 comments were received from passengers and 18% were compliments, 5% driver, dispatch, reservationist, and/or scheduling concerns, 9% late/early arrival, ride length or missed trip concerns, 11% invalid concerns, 0% mechanical and/or related to safety concerns, 1% door-to-door and/or related to wrong drop-off or pick-up concerns, 0% courtesy, 1% no-show concerns, 3% unknown, 0% other, and 52% n/a, record only, general information.

### Staff Comments:

Ms. Williams reminded all to be respectful of persons speaking and asked that attendees keep their comments to five minutes. Ms. Williams thanked everyone for their patience with the service and especially due to the extreme weather events that have occurred. She also reminded the group about free Saturday and Sunday service which will continue to operate through the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Mr. Gounder let the group know First Transit is striving to recruit new drivers in order to help improve the on time performance. Passengers who know of anyone who may be a candidate should advise them to contact: [www.workatfirst.com](http://www.workatfirst.com) or (860) 380-4870. Finally, he noted that the scheduling system (Trapeze) will be updated with two new features: EZ-Wallet and Pass Web. EZ-Wallet will allow one to pay for your trip online and Pass Web would allow you to make an on line reservation.

For everyone's information it was mentioned that Ms. Banker has been promoted to the District's Director of ADA Paratransit as DJ Gonzalez has announced his retirement, but is still working on special projects for the District. Ms. Banker mentioned that the federally funded Encompass Program is expanding its service to Bloomfield. For further information about Encompass or to apply, you can speak with District staff or visit the website: [encompass.m7ride.com](http://encompass.m7ride.com). If passengers would like to check their Freedom Ride balances, they should contact their customer service department at (203) 777-7777. For concerns regarding replacement cards or transactions, speak with Bernadette at (203) 934-2096 x1101.

Mr. Ewing informed the group that there has been an increase in passenger trips so the best time to call the Reservation Department is between 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. as the busiest time is from 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### Participant Comments

#### Lynn Evans

Ms. Evans provided a driver commendation. She also shared her concern about the trip she took on July 11, 2021 and thanked Ms. Glisson for straightening it out. Ms. Evans is pleased with the Freedom Ride program.

#### Staff Response

Ms. Glisson will make sure the driver receives recognition.

#### Beverly Jackson

Ms. Jackson thanked staff for holding the meeting using Zoom.

#### MaryAnn Langton

Ms. Langton questioned how many people can travel with her when she is using the Freedom Ride. How does she schedule Freedom Ride trips? Can the forum time be changed to a later time? She inquired about her new ADA ID card. She requested that all forum participants should be respectful of passengers who have communication challenges.

#### Staff Response

Ms. Banker advised the group that you can take up to four people (three companions and one personal care attendant) in the cab.

All Freedom Ride trips should be scheduled by telephone at (203) 777-7777 to ensure that funds are matched accurately. The District will mail out her new ADA ID card. Staff will consider and discuss a forum time change.

Gary Allen

Mr. Allen is experiencing drivers arriving outside of the window time. He provided the group with examples of when this occurred. In addition, he was dissatisfied with a customer service letter he received.

Staff Response

Mr. Gounder will address Mr. Allen's issues.

Janet Wallans

No comment.

Dinah Davis

How can she obtain another Freedom Ride card? Ms. Davis acknowledged the good job Mr. Gounder is doing.

Staff Response

The District will look into providing another Freedom Ride card.

Mr. Gounder ended the meeting by informing the group that First Transit is working diligently to hire more drivers, and appreciates passengers being patient during this difficult time in recruiting new employees.

The next ADA Participation Group forum will be a virtual meeting on Wednesday, September 8, 2021. Details about the upcoming forum will be posted on all vehicles or you may call the Customer Service Department at (860) 724-5340 extension 9. Please remember to give everyone a chance to participate; forum attendees need to keep initial questions and/or comments to five (5) minutes. This information is available in an accessible format upon request.

**If information is needed in another language, contact 860-247-5329 x3011**

**French**

Si des renseignements sont nécessaires dans une autre langue, composez le 860-247-5329, poste 3011.

**Serbo Croatian**

Ako su vam potrebne informacije na drugom jeziku, nazovite 860-247-5329 x3011

**Portuguese**

Se precisar de informações em outro idioma, ligue para 860-247-5329, ramal 3011.

**Italian**

Se avete bisogno di informazioni in un'altra lingua, telefonate al numero 860-247-5329 int. 3011.

**Polish**

Jeżeli istnieje zapotrzebowanie na te informacje w innym języku, prosimy o kontakt na numer telefonu 860-247-5329 wewn. 3011.

**Russian**

Если Вам необходима информация на другом языке, пожалуйста, обращайтесь по номеру телефона 860-247-5329, доб. 3011.

**Spanish**

Si necesita información en otro idioma, llame al 860-247-5329, extensión 3011.

**Chinese**

如需其他语言的信息 · 请致电 860-247-5329 x3011

**Vietnamese**

Nếu cần thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ khác, hãy gọi 860-247-5329 x3011

**Korean**

다른 언어로 기재된 정보가 필요하신 경우, 860-247-5329 x3011로 연락해 주시기 바랍니다.

**Hindi**

यदि जानकारी अन्य भाषा में चाहिये, 860-247-5329 x3011 संपर्क करें

**Arabic**

3011 داخلي، 860-247-5329 رقم على الاتصال يرجى، أخرى بلغة للمعلومات الاحتياج حالة في

**Gujarati**

જો બીજી ભાષામાં માહિતી લેવાની જરૂર હોય, તો 860-247-5329 x3011 પર સંપર્ક કરો.