



ADA PARTICIPATION GROUP FORUM Wednesday, January 12, 2022

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, 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 – Dinah Davis, Lynn Evans, Beverly Jackson, Peggy Johnson, and Janet Wallans

First Transit (FT) – John Elkey, Anand Gounder, Erris Yarbrough, and Rita Voskanova

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

The forum began at 5:00 p.m.

Operations:

November 2021 passenger trips were 30,617, no shows 1,033 (3%), and cancellations 7,602 (25%).

December 2021 passenger trips were 31,654, no shows 940 (3%), and cancellations 6,359 (20%).

Customer Service:

In November 2021, 292 comments were received from passengers and 13% were compliments, 8% driver, dispatch, reservationist, and/or scheduling concerns, 4% late/early arrival, ride length or missed trip concerns, 13% 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, 0% no show concerns, 3% unknown, 1% other, and 57% n/a, record only, general information.

In December 2021, 268 comments were received from passengers and 18% were compliments, 4% driver, dispatch, reservationist, and/or scheduling concerns, 3% late/early arrival, ride length or missed trip concerns, 10% invalid concerns, 0% mechanical and/or related to safety concerns, 3% door-to-door and/or related to wrong drop-off or pick-up concerns, 0% courtesy, 0% no-show concerns, 3% unknown, 2 % other, and 57% n/a, record only, general information.

Staff Comments:

Upcoming forum dates are as follows: March 9, 2022, May 11, 2022, July 13, 2022, September 14, 2022 and November 9, 2022.

Ms. Ellis informed the group about a new program called Aira. Aira is a pilot program launched by the State of Connecticut. This service allows persons who are blind or have low vision to connect with highly trained agents in real-time for assistance with using the public transportation system and other essential services. For further information visit the website <https://ctrides.com/aira-en/> or call 1-800-835-1934. The S.T.A.R. Winter-2022 newsletter will be available on all vehicles soon. Passengers may also call (860) 247-5329 x3086 to be mailed a copy.

Ms. Banker updated the group with the following Encompass program information: The Town of Ellington was added in January, and in February Tolland will be added to the service area. The federally funded program is expected to run through the spring of 2023. In addition, the federal mask mandate will be in place until March 18, 2022.

Mr. Gounder ensured passengers that all vehicles receive extensive cleaning with an emphasis on high touch areas. All drivers are required to wear their masks and practice social distancing. During inclement weather, for the safety of drivers and yourself, please make sure your driveway and walkway are clear of snow and ice. In addition, remember to cancel all trips in advance.

Mr. Elkey let the group know the reservation department answered 25,000 calls for the month of December 2021, with an average pickup time of one minute. It is beneficial for passengers to have all their pertinent information ready when booking rides. In addition, the reservation department continues to negotiate trips with passengers for scheduling purposes. Mr. Elkey reminded passengers to give themselves enough time when traveling due to the shared-ride nature of ADA Paratransit.

Mr. Yarbough, Operations Manager, stated he can be reached by dialing the dispatch department at (860) 724-5340 ext 2.

Participant Comments

Peggy Johnson

Ms. Johnson would like to see improvement with social distancing on vehicles. Does ADA Paratransit follow the CDC guidelines for social distancing? The Encompass program does not provide on-demand service, and she had to wait for an extensive amount of time to be picked up.

Staff Response

Mr. Gounder and Ms. Banker commented ADA Paratransit follows the federal mask mandate guidelines and encourages social distancing when possible on the vehicles. The Encompass program serviced and operated by M7 (taxi company) has updated their scheduling system and prioritized trips to alleviate scheduling problems. Encompass has a customer service department that is to be called to issues with passenger trips.

Beverly Jackson

Can the time of the forum be changed? Why does the Freedom Ride program only take checks?

Staff Response

Ms. Williams commented that the team will revisit the time change of the forum. Paying by check is currently the only form of payment, and immediate changes are not anticipated at this time. If a passenger does not want to use a check and prefers to use a debit or credit card, they can use the on-demand Encompass program.

Lynn Evans

She had concerns with some of her trips, and would like information about the Encompass program. She expressed praise for a weekend dispatcher.

Staff Response

The customer service department will investigate these issues and will respond to her. A commendation to the dispatcher will be provided. An Encompass packet will be mailed to her.

Dinah Davis

The vehicles are not thoroughly cleaned. Drivers are waiting longer than five minutes for some passengers, and this is not fair to other passengers.

Staff Response

Mr. Gounder stated that Ms. Davis's concerns will be reviewed and addressed.



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

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

Gujarati

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