

To: Operations and Scheduling Committee
From: Rashida Kamara, Manager of Accessible Services

Date: June 29, 2020

Reviewed by: *RK*

SUBJECT: Paratransit Report COVID-19 Update #3

Background:

California Governor issued a shelter-in place order on March 16, 2020. As a result, Paratransit service dropped by 80%, an all-time low. County Connection staff collaborated with the different programs to provide essential services to the community. This included meal and grocery deliveries. Contra Costa County Office of Emergency Services also asked all transit agencies to assist with transporting COVID-19 positive passengers to hospitals and other congregant living facilities. This request included the relocation of homeless individuals that were either positive for COVID-19 or were considered persons under investigation (PUI) for COVID-19.

In May of 2020, the Board of Directors authorized the General Manager to amend the contract with Transdev, our paratransit provider, enabling them to modify their scope of work to accommodate meal deliveries and other necessary services during this pandemic, thus having the ability to use CARES Act funds to keep service going. In addition, this enabled Transdev to keep a ready work force in anticipation of Paratransit services returning to normal levels. The committee has asked staff to provide a monthly update on the activities of LINK service during this pandemic. Below is a summary of services provided to date.

Meals on wheels: Meals on wheels lost most of their drivers due to the fact they were volunteers and were either over the age of 65 or at high risk of contracting COVID-19. We contacted Meals on Wheels during the first week of the shelter in place order to offer our services. Our drivers registered for their program so they could be vetted as having the proper background checks.

- 39 Drivers registered
- 4,470 meals delivered to date
- Cities include (Bay Point, Concord, Walnut Creek, San Ramon, Danville, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, Antioch, Brentwood, Discovery Bay, Oakley, Clayton, and Bethel Island)
- Service provided 5 days a week

Church of the Bay in Collaboration with the Mt. Diablo School district (Bel Air Elementary School and Riverview Middle School)

- Service provided 3 days a week
- Serving over 200 students
- 934 meals
- 422 bags of groceries, toilet rolls, and paper towels
- Cities include Bay Point, Martinez, Concord, and Walnut Creek

City of San Ramon Senior Meal Delivery Program:

- Service provided 2 days a week
- Meals delivered to 150 participants

Contra Costa County Food Bank program: In collaboration with the Contra Costa County Food Bank, County Connection was asked to deliver groceries to families at risk. These grocery boxes contained food that would last between 4-7 days. The county provided volunteers to accompany the drivers to deliver the food boxes. Each food box weighed 22lbs. **To date we have delivered 199 boxes from week one to week five, totaling 4,378 lbs. of food.**

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) COVID-19 TRANSPORT- This particular collaboration was born of the Contra Costa County EOC. A call was made to all Transit Providers in Contra Costa and Alameda counties for assistance in transporting both COVID-19 positive and PUI passengers from hospitals to hotels or other congregant living facilities. County Connection, although willing to assist, felt ill equipped to handle the sensitive nature of the request. Upon working with the county health department, we determined we needed training, personal protective equipment (PPE) and volunteer drivers. The county provided the training and we worked together with our contractor to modify several vehicles for COVID-19 transport. County Connection quickly developed protocols that have now been shared with AC Transit, BART, and the Marin County Health Department.

- Service provided 7 days a week
- 81 positives transported to date (March 30th request came, training held April 6th, transport started April 11th, 2020)
- 4 dedicated drivers
- 4 dedicated vehicles
- Vehicles cleaned after each transport
- County provided PPE
- CCCTA provided overalls.
- Contractor provided Face shields.

Homeless relocation Transport: We continue to work with the County Health department in relocating homeless individuals on an as needed basis. The same drivers that transport COVID-19 positive passengers are the same drivers dedicated to transport and relocate homeless individuals, because most of them are considered persons under investigation.

County Opening Protocols: Staff has reached out to County Health services to provide assistance in establishing protocols that will allow for increased service. Currently the County and CDC guidelines still require 6 ft. of social distancing. This means that only 3 persons can fit in a traditional Paratransit cutaway van. With the help of the County, we are hoping to better understand what safety measures we can take within the guidelines to ensure that we carry the appropriate number of individuals and still have the resources for sustainable services.

Recommendation: None for Information only