

To: O&S Committee

Date: April 24, 2020

From: Rashida Kamara, Manager of Accessible Services

Reviewed by: *WC.*

---

## SUBJECT: Paratransit Operations Report COVID-19 Update

---

### Background:

Since the shelter in place order issued by the Governor, County Connection has experienced an 80% drop in Paratransit trips. As a result, a new need arose in the community. County Connection was quick to identify the new needs which included essential trips to medical appointments, meal delivery, and recently, in conjunction with, the County Health department COVID-19 transports. County Connection is working with the community in several areas. Below are some statistics which include the services we now offer, the volume and scope.

### Service Adjustments and Community Partnerships:

#### Meals on wheels

- 39 Drivers registered
- 1430 meals delivered to date
- Cities include (Bay Point, Concord, Walnut Creek, San Ramon, Danville, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, Antioch, Brentwood, Discovery Bay, Oakley, Concord, Clayton, Bethel Island)
- Service provided 5 days a week

#### Church of the Bay in Collaboration with the Mt. Diablo School district

- Service provided 3 days a week
- Serving upward of 200 students
- 434 meals/ 77 bags of groceries, toilet rolls, paper towels and Easter baskets per family
- Cities include Bay Point, Martinez, Concord, Walnut Creek

#### Contra Costa County EOC Collaboration:

**COVID-19 TRANSPORT-** This particular collaboration was born of the Contra Costa County EOC. A call was made to all Transit Providers in the county and in Alameda county for assistance in transporting both 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, PPE and volunteer drivers. The county provided the training and we worked together with our contractor to modify the vehicle 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
- 45 Positive transport to date (March 30 request came, Training held April 6<sup>th</sup>, Transport, started April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020)
- 3 dedicated drivers
- 4 Dedicated vehicles
- Vehicles cleaned after each transport
- County provided PPE, mask, and gloves.
- CCCTA provided overalls.
- Contractor provided Face shields.

### **Homeless relocation Transport:**

Tri-Delta and County Connection are collaborating with the County in this program. County Connection receives the call to transport individuals who are homeless and need to be relocated to hotels in the Richmond and or Concord areas. County Connection has been tasked specifically for individuals with access and functional needs like wheelchair assistance.

- Service provided 7 days a week
- Dedicated drivers
- Dedicated fleet
- Drivers in full PPE (as in the county has these individuals listed as PUI persons under investigation for possible COVID-19 exposure)
- Vehicle sanitized after each trip
- 30 Transport requests

### **Agency Collaborations:**

County Connection continues to collaborate with other transit agencies, to share ideas, training materials, processes and protocols. They have since provided this for the following agencies:

- AC Transit and Bart (East Bay Paratransit)
- Marin County Health department
- West CAT

### **Attachments:**

- Meals on Wheels Newsletter
- Mass Transit Newsletter

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)



April 2020

Issue 8 | Volume 4



Dear Friends,

Over this past month, I have been incredibly inspired at the outpouring of support from our community. From groups of friends sewing masks for our volunteers and staff, to individuals donating funds to keep our doors open, Contra Costa

residents have gone above and beyond to show their support for seniors.

The seniors we serve rely on our services now more than ever as they are further isolated from friends and family. We have also seen a huge increase in the number of requests for meal delivery as seniors that were independent before this crisis are finding themselves newly homebound as a result of the stay at home order.

Our Nutrition Services team is working extra hours to respond to ensure we are increasing our services to meet the need. I am grateful to work with a dedicated group of people who answer the call to prevent hunger among older adults in our community.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Our Frontline Responders Rock
- Seniors in Need Receive Free Microwaves
- Concord's Neighborhood Express Program Delivers
- Thank You to All Generous Donors
- Homemade Masks are So Fashion Forward
- We're So Happy You Want to Volunteer - We

I have also been encouraged by the innovative partnerships that have blossomed in responding to this pandemic. Read below to see how we have joined the City of Concord and Mt. Diablo Unified School District to provide meals and grocery delivery to seniors in Concord.

While this could easily be a time when everything going on in the world could get us down, I hope the stories included here lift your spirits as they do mine.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Sly  
Executive Director

Need You More  
Than Ever



## OUR FRONTLINE RESPONDERS CREATE ORDER FROM CHAOS



When Gavin Newsom issued an executive order last month for all individuals, especially those over the age of 60, to stay home for their own safety it set in motion the need for MOW Diablo Region to rethink how we would continue providing services to the seniors who depend on us. Requests for deliveries quickly climbed and the importance of keeping our clients safe became paramount. Enter our frontline responders.

### The Meals on Wheels Team Shifts Gears Seamlessly

The executive order created challenges for MOW Diablo Region's Nutrition Services Division. Many of our volunteers are over 60 and felt they needed to temporarily stop delivering meals. In addition, we have increased service by over 25%! Suddenly several routes were without drivers and more people needed meals to remain safely

at home Also, MOW Diablo Region needed to purchase masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and other equipment to make delivery safer. The Nutrition Services Team did not miss a beat and worked tirelessly to find substitutes, often making deliveries themselves when none could be found, procuring and distributing the supplies to volunteers, and creating routes to meet the increased demand for meals. One month later, they continue to sign up new clients and coordinate deliveries of meals ensuring that no homebound senior in our program goes hungry. If asked, this team would say that they're just doing their job. We say hunger doesn't stop and neither does this rock star team!



## CCC Transportation Authority Link Drivers Keep the Wheels Turning

As of April 6th, we began delivering seven frozen meals rather than a daily hot meal. We understood that the volume of meals delivered in a day would create yet another challenge, but Contra Costa County Transportation Authority's County Connection bus service came to the rescue. Buses that were sitting idle are now transporting delivery volunteers across Contra Costa County and coolers filled with a week's worth of frozen meals five days a week. They are driven by 16



Bus drivers who readily volunteered for Meals on Wheels duty. On a recent ride along with bus driver Gonzalo Garcia, it was apparent that he is taking his new role seriously. He happily loaded his bus with 14 heavy coolers and made sure to stand outside of the bus at every stop and watch while the volunteer took the meals to the doors. He waited for the seniors to open their doors so that he could give a quick wave from the sidewalk. "I feel good that I am able to help these elderly people. We can't forget about them."

## C.C. Cafe Doors are Shuttered for Now But Meals Haven't Gone Away

Our C.C. Cafés are a social lifeline for many seniors throughout the County and often provide the only hot meal that they will eat in a day. Social distancing has temporarily suspended sit-down meals at all six cafés. C.C. Café Specialist, Bonnie Paulson and her team of café managers went into action to fill the gap. While the cafés are temporarily shuttered, café guests and new participants can now receive a seven-day meal pack that includes a loaf of bread and milk.



Orders are taken via phone and coordinated carefully for each site - a monumental task to say the least. For those that are mobile, drive-up sites for pick-up are conveniently located in the café parking lots and where volunteer drivers can also pick them up for delivery to homebound seniors. The social aspect that seniors enjoy might be

# Transdev and County Connection partner with local community to offer essential ride and delivery services

Services currently offered include meal and grocery delivery, essential supplies delivery and relocation services for homeless individuals, among others.

[Transdev North America](#)

Apr 17th, 2020



Transdev

The Contra Costa County Transit Authority (CCTA-County Connection) has partnered with Transdev North America (Transdev) to provide shuttles for essential employees, services, food and supplies to address an emerging community need during COVID-19 crisis.

The service has incorporated a weekday reservation system to ensure timely and efficient response and currently includes:

- Meal and grocery delivery programs in partnership with Mt. Diablo School district and local churches for up to 200 students, while students are sheltering in place.
- Rides for life sustaining services as approved by CCCTA staff (grocery store, pharmacy and medical appointments).
- Delivery of food in partnership with the Meals on Wheels organization
- Delivery of essential supplies to any location in Contra Costa County and to approved destinations in adjacent counties as needed.
- Relocation services for homeless individuals from shelters to hotels and other congregant living spaces.
- Transportation for potentially COVID-19 positive patients that need to get to medical appointments and testing (extra training and protective measures are being taken to provide this service safely).

“We are excited about the support we are receiving in the community from local senior centers, charitable organizations such as Meals on Wheels, along with the ongoing communications we are having with the County Emergency Operations Center and our client agency partners,” said Johanna Duran, Transdev general manager for County Connection.

Transdev is continuing to implement social distancing practices, in addition to an increased frequency of its cleaning and disinfecting processes to ensure a safe environment for employees and passengers.

“Since we started these services, our operators are returning from the workday with smiles on their faces and a sense of gratitude for the ability to give back to the community in which they live,” continued Duran.

County Connection, Transdev’s client partner, also has positive feedback about the initiative.

“We are very happy to be able to help our community in this time of need. Transdev, and all of our community partners, are really stepping up to make things happen. We are able to offer a variety of support throughout the region. Everyone’s creativity and energy to help those in need has been amazing,” said Rashida Kamara, manager of Accessible Services for County Connection.

“In this moment, we are in the thick of it and working together to find ways to make this work for all of our stakeholders. The Transdev team and our community partners are going well above and beyond!” said Rick Ramacier, general manager of County Connection. “I am really happy with the partnership we have to work together through this crisis to implement solutions that directly help the community we serve.”

To: O&S Committee

Date: May 29, 2020

From: Rashida Kamara, Manager of Accessible Services

Reviewed by: *WC.*

---

## **SUBJECT: Paratransit Report COVID-19 Update #2**

---

### **Background:**

California Governor issued a shelter-in place order on March 16, 2020. Since then Paratransit service has dropped by 80%. Although the governor has eased up on some of the restrictions, it has not dramatically increased paratransit service. In an effort to still support the community, County Connection in partnership with Transdev, identified essential needs in the community, in which we have participated in for the past three months.

In May 2020, staff updated the committees on these essential efforts. In addition, the board authorized the General Manager to amend the Paratransit contract to allow for such essential services to be provided. This has had a huge impact on the community. It has provided constant work for our drivers and allowed seniors and high-risk individuals to remain safely at home as essential meals and groceries are brought to them. Below is an update of services provided so far.

### **Service Adjustments and Community Partnerships:**

**Meals on wheels:** Meals on wheels lost most of their drivers due to the fact they were volunteers, and either over the age of 65 or were at high risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. We contacted Meals on wheel during the first week of the shelter in place order, our drivers registered for their program, this was especially important because drivers have to be vetted to volunteer to drive and our drivers already go through a thorough vetting process to qualify to drive Paratransit passengers. This made it easier for meals on wheels to continue and even increase their deliveries to seniors in need, knowing that our drivers already fit the bill.

- 39 Drivers registered
- 3700 meals delivered to date
- Cities include (Bay Point, Concord, Walnut Creek, San Ramon, Danville, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, Antioch, Brentwood, Discovery Bay, Oakley, Concord, clayton, Bethel Island)
- Service provided 5 days a week

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

- Service provided 3 days a week
- Serving upward of 200 students
- 577 meals
- 277 bags of groceries, toilet rolls, and paper towels

- Cities include Bay Point, Martinez, Concord, Walnut Creek

**City of San Ramon Senior Meal Delivery Program:**

- Service provided 2 days a week
- Meals delivered to 84 participants

**Contra Costa County Food back program:** In collaboration with the Contra Costa County and the food bank, County Connection was asked to assist in delivery 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. This program started on May 11<sup>th</sup> as a pilot and with each successful delivery week, more names have been added. To date we have delivered 2134lbs of food.

- Week 1, 19 food boxes
- Week 2, 27 food boxes
- Week 3, 51 food boxes

The feedback from the families have been a pleasure to hear:

“I received my two boxes and the process has been so simple and wonderful. The food lasts me around 4 days to a week and I am trying to limit my use of rice or macaroni and cheese as I’m trying to eat healthy, but the canned vegetables and meat has been fantastic. Tell everyone in the program, I say Thanks!”

“The boxes of food have been very helpful. I’m thankful for the food, as it allows me to cook meals for my son and I. The canned vegetables last longer than the fruit. The pastas and rice are what I eat first”

**EOC COVID-19 TRANSPORT-** This particular collaboration was born of the Contra Costa County EOC. A call was made to all Transit Providers in the county and in Alameda county for assistance in transporting both positive and Persons Under Investigation (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, PPE’s 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
- 68 Positive transport to date (March 30 request came, Training held April 6<sup>th</sup>, Transport, started April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020)
- 4 dedicated drivers
- 4 Dedicated vehicles
- Vehicles cleaned after each transport
- County provided PPE, mask, and gloves.
- CCCTA provided overalls.
- Contractor provided Face shields.

**Homeless relocation Transport:** As reported last month, at the start of this collaboration, we were transporting up to 30 passengers in the first week. As the COVID-19 cases stabilize in the county, transport of PUI homeless individuals has been on the decline. For the past two weeks, we have transported less than 15 in

a week. The county health department will call Transdev and we would dispatch a driver to transport the individual, sometimes two individuals at a time to a hotel. The other transit agency participating at this time is Tri-Delta. As a result, we receive calls to transport passengers also from West County to Central County or vice versa.

- service provided 7 days a week
- Dedicated drivers
- Dedicated fleet
- Drivers in full PPE (as in the county has these individuals listed as PUI persons under investigation for possible COVID-19 exposure)
- Vehicle sanitized after each trip

**Lift in restriction:**

As the county continues to open gradually, there has been a slight increase in paratransit riders. Staff anticipates social distancing will continue to be a part in which we operate paratransit services, making it difficult to meet our productivity goals. We are currently transporting one passenger at a time. With social distancing, Paratransit vehicles can only transport 3 passengers at a time. Consideration will have to be given for passengers traveling with attendants which will further limit actual ADA passengers on the bus. On-going enhanced vehicle sanitation will be required in order for us not to be caught up in the anticipated second wave. Passengers will continue to be required to wear face covering as directed by the CDC and the county. We will continue to look to them for guidance in enforcing transit operations for the protection of drivers and passengers alike.

**Recommendation:**

None for Information only