

# Behind the Scenes



## Executive Director's Report

The Access Services Board of Directors met on April 19, 2021.

The Board approved the Consent Calendar, which included items that renewed the employee benefit insurance policies, self-insured retention automobile liability program, and commercial business package insurance. The action also included extending the term and adding funds for the language interpretation services, on-board vehicle camera recording system, and Where's My Ride (WMR) software and services contracts. The Board authorized the purchase of 118 vehicles for paratransit service along with a letter of support for an accessible electric vehicle project.

The Board also heard presentations on the latest customer technology survey, a budget update, and the Agency's actions and plans towards the restoration of paratransit service.

There will be Board committee meetings on May 17, 2021 and the next full meeting of the Board of Directors will be on June 21, 2021.

**Andre Colaiace**  
*Executive Director*

## Access implements Service Restoration Plan

At the Access Services Board of Directors meeting on Monday, the Board and the public were briefed on Access Services' actions and plans to restore paratransit services to pre-pandemic levels. As Los Angeles County reopens because of rapidly declining COVID cases and increased vaccine availability, service demand and traffic congestion have increased significantly which has led to impacts to service quality. Given that customer demand is expected to continue to increase, the following actions have been taken and are planned for the future:

- > Vehicle disinfecting has been reduced to just requiring "end of day" cleaning and disinfection. In response to comments received at the Board meeting, contractors will still be paid if they choose to wipe down the vehicle after each passenger trip.
- > Our largest meal and delivery program in partnership with the City of Los Angeles ended on March 31st and all remaining meal/grocery deliveries will end by April 30th.
- > On April 12th, our temporary Same Day Service program shifted from required to discretionary with trips provided based on contractor capacity. On May 1st, the program will end.
- > Prior to the pandemic, more than 60% of all Access trips in the LA Basin were shared ride. Now that trip demand has returned to more than 50% of normal, Access no longer has the resources to continue the non-shared ride service that was an important component of our pandemic service plan. Effective April 12th, two-person maximum-shared rides were allowed on all Access vehicles except sedans. Then on May 1st, full shared ride service will resume on all vehicles.
- > Transportation for COVID vaccinations will continue, including drop off and drive thru sites, such as Dodger Stadium and the Forum; these trips will continue to be non-shared rides.
- > Face coverings will still be required on all vehicles.

Customers will be informed of the changes planned for May 1st through the reservations process and other communication outlets.

**Mike Greenwood**  
*Chief Operations Officer*

## CTSA Extension hosts ADA Eligibility Training

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination based on a disability and ensures equal access to services and programs available to the public. CTSA Extension recently hosted a 2-day live Zoom training on ADA Paratransit Eligibility. Monica Simon with Simon & Simon Resources Inc. facilitated the session; she provided the class with a comprehensive overview of the ADA eligibility process.

Participants engaged in case studies to reinforce their knowledge of the Department of Transportation's ADA regulations in paratransit. The class reviewed guidelines and best practices for making valid eligibility determinations. The eligibility process has transformed over the last year due to COVID-19, but providing the community with dependable paratransit services remains unchanged.

Throughout the year, CTSA Extension will continue to provide the transit community with resources and tools for providing safe and effective paratransit services in L.A. County. Upcoming trainings include Unconscious Bias and Engaging in Succession Planning.

To learn more about registration, click on the Learning & Development program below.

[Learning & Development Program](#)

**Melissa Lucero**  
CTSA Analyst



## Access attends the Virtual Abilities Expo

Access staff recently attended this year's Abilities Expo, which was held virtually due to the ongoing pandemic. Attendees had the opportunity to explore the exhibit hall and view the products and services directory. Attendees were also able to connect virtually for one-on-one conversations and participate in discussion forums, where they could ask questions and share knowledge.



On the first day, there were over 5,000 unique visitors to the Expo. This prompted the Expo to keep the show open for an additional month, instead of the two weeks it was scheduled. All workshops were recorded and available for on-demand access and both spaces remained open for attendees and exhibitors until May 2.

A major resource for exhibitors was the ability to run booth statistics reports of the visitors and leads received from the event. Access' virtual booth received 392 visitors, 36 attendees clicked on the link to the Access website, and 33 visitors downloaded informational brochures.

In addition to having a virtual booth, staff ran promotional reminders on the exhibitor directory highlighting Access's commitment to serving the community as an essential resource during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

As Ms. Blancarte-Chatman, a past employee of the Blind Children's Center (BCC) and Access rider commented, "I've moved to Georgetown, Texas last year but still follow Access through the Virtual Abilities Expo. I hope everyone is doing well, and I thank Access for all you have done for BCC. Access made my life easier and is the best service I ever had living in Los Angeles. Thank you Access for promoting independence!"

**Stephen Wrenn**  
*Mobility Management Administrator*

## Commendations

"I would like to file a smile for Karen D. I was overwhelmed when I called to schedule a pickup and Karen was helpful and sweet. Karen was nice enough to listen to me discuss a personal matter with her while booking the appointment. She was patient, accepting, and kind. Karen was soothing at a time when I needed it the most."

**James Marshal**  
*Rider since April 2014*

"I am filing a commendation for my driver Alberto. He was just wonderful. Alberto was professional and well versed in scooter safety. He was able to secure my wheelchair tightly and reassured me to feel safe and secure throughout the ride."

**Rocio Robledo**  
*Rider since July 2014*