

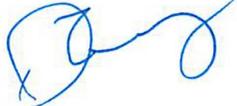


Metro

AUGUST 6, 2014

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ARTHUR T. LEAHY 
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: DAN LEVY 
DIRECTOR CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

**SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP REGARDING COMPLAINTS RAISED
ABOUT ACCESS SERVICES**

ISSUE

Five patrons of Access Services (Access) spoke at the July 17, 2014 System Safety, Security and Operations Committee. The patrons were all visually impaired and some had service animals. All five described problems they had encountered with Access and stated they had formally submitted their claims to Access. The individuals believed their complaints had not been resolved and asked our Board to act on their behalf to resolve the issues.

Shelly Verrinder, the CEO of Access, was present and spoke with each of the individuals and obtained further details so she could check on the details with her staff.

After listening to comments from the patrons, the System Safety, Security and Operations Committee requested the following from the Metro and Access staff:

1. Provide a response to the five complaints from visually impaired Access patrons and identify the action that Access took once these complaints were logged, how the complaints were resolved and whether there was a follow-up response to the party that made the complaint;
2. Audit Access' practices in addressing complaints in Metro's annual audit of Access.

BACKGROUND

As follow-up to the complaints raised by Access patrons at the July 17, 2014 System Safety, Security and Operations Committee, Metro staff met with Access staff to review the complaints and the response by Access. Access sent response letters to the Access patrons that spoke at the Committee (attachment A). Also, the patrons who spoke at the committee meeting were

invited to a special meeting of Access' Service Animal Subcommittee on July 29, 2014. Attachment B is a summary of the meeting. Access also issued directives to all service contractors to enforce the overcrowding issues as well as a directive on transporting customers with diabetes (attachment C).

Each year, Metro and Access sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). During the July 17, 2014 System Safety, Security and Operations Committee meeting the Board directed Metro staff to address customer service complaints in the MOU. For FY 2015 the MOU will include a number of new provisions that will improve the ability of Metro to provide oversight of Access and its service. In response to the Board Committee direction, the following items will be included in the MOU:

1. Response and actions related to customer complaints;
2. Scope of Annual Access Audit- The audit scope will include a review of Access responses to complaints filed during the period of the audit.

NEXT STEPS

Civil Rights Program Compliance will continue to monitor Access to ensure program compliance.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Responses to complaints raised by Access patrons
- B. Summary of Service Animal Subcommittee meeting from July 29, 2014
- C. Service directives to Access' contractors



Access Services
PO Box 5728
El Monte, CA 91734
213.270.6000
accessla.org

Attachment A

July 28, 2014

Mr. Michael Conrad

RE: Follow up to Public Comment at Metro Board Meeting on July 17th

Dear Mr. Conrad:

This letter is a follow up to public comment you provided to the Metro Board during its July 17, 2014 meeting.

Access Services Executive Director Shelly Verrinder, who was in attendance, contacted you and the other four customers, and then assigned key Access personnel to address your concerns and reach out to you to discuss these issues further. Based on the public comment provided by you and others at the meeting the following issues were raised:

- Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals;
- Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons;
- Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals;
- Dogs' paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp;
- Better routing.

Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals

To promptly address the overcrowding issue, Ms. Verrinder instructed all service providers to discontinue booking trips with more than two customers in the rear of any sedan at any time. This immediate change will help resolve the issue of overcrowding. Ms. Verrinder has requested that she be personally notified going forward if any overcrowding complaint is received.

Additionally, as Access Services Project Administrator David Foster discussed with you during a conference call earlier this week, the Southern Region service provider, Global Paratransit, developed a manual routing process to eliminate situations where customers with service animals are not properly accounted for from a capacity perspective. If this process proves to be successful in the reduction or elimination of these situations then Access can look to this as a potential future best practice for all service providers that have similar complaints.

Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons

It is Access policy that a rider can eat or drink, if needed, due to a medical condition, such as diabetes. In the next few weeks, Access will be issuing a newsletter to all of the 2,000 drivers providing Access trips reminding them of this policy, as well as the policy described above regarding no more than two customers in the back of a sedan.

Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals

All Access vehicles have heat shields in place and staff worked with a group of visually impaired individuals a couple of years ago to change the flooring material to one that would be "cooler" for service animals and that would prevent the service animals from sliding in the vehicle. All of the minivans have had the new flooring installed.

Additionally, as Mr. Foster and Access Services Fleet Manager Rick Streiff explained during a conference call with you earlier this week, the vans currently being purchased have the catalytic converter placed in the engine compartment instead of underneath the vehicle. Access Services' fleet management department estimates that the majority of the vans with the catalytic converter located under the floor will be retired by the end of the year.

Moreover, Access has mats available for service animals if a rider would prefer that option. Mr. Foster explained to me that, during the conference call, you pointed out that you had concerns for the safety of other passengers regarding mats in the vehicle in the event that someone were to trip over the mat while entering or exiting the vehicle. I found that to be excellent feedback and also a clear indicator that you are looking out for the best interest of all Access customers.

Dogs' paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp

Access minivans have manual or electric wheelchair ramps that do not have sensors to create a forced stop; however, the larger vehicles do have sensors that will stop if an object gets in the way. If you have experienced or heard about an incident where a service animal was injured on an Access vehicle, please provide us with dates and times so that we can investigate immediately.

Better routing

Trip routing is a process that is continually under scrutiny by Access and its service providers to ensure our customers the best possible service and on time performance. Our performance standard for travel time for a paratransit trip is that it should not exceed a comparable trip on fixed route bus service. While we strive to far exceed the standard, there are trips where this standard is not met. Again, please provide us with the date and time of these trips so that we can investigate immediately. All of our vehicles are equipped with GPS equipment that allows us to track the path of each Access trip.

Next Steps

Among the key personnel assigned by Ms. Verrinder to address and resolve these matters is Access Project Administrator, Geoffrey Okamoto, who is the staff liaison for the Access Services Service Animal Subcommittee.

Ms. Verrinder instructed Mr. Okamoto to schedule a meeting for the week of July 28th and accordingly, he has arranged a meeting for Tuesday, July 29th at the Disabled Resource Center in Long Beach located at 2750 E. Spring Street. The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. and it is my understanding that Mr. Okamoto has already contacted you and confirmed your attendance at the meeting.

Additionally, I want to thank you for attending the Call Center/Dispatch Supervisor meeting at Access Services on May 29, 2014. During this meeting, the service animal group addressed concerns as it relates to the use of heat shields and animal tethers. We thank you for your recommendation to contact Guide Dogs of America. We have since reached out to this organization to educate us to further provide services that ensure a higher level of care to Access Services customers with service animals. We hope to have a confirmed date and time for Access Services operations and customer services staff, provider staff and the Animal Sub-

Committee members to meet with Guide Dogs of America in the very near future.

Access Services Community Advisory Committee

Mr. Foster also informed me that, during the conference call, he inquired if you were still interested in serving on the Access Services Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and you indicated that you were. As Mr. Foster explained, he is in the process of filling two vacancies on the committee as part of the transition process of the CAC from his oversight to mine as the new Senior Manager of Customer Service. Mr. Foster will be conducting a meeting next week with the CAC selection subcommittee of which I will participate and your application will most assuredly be part of the selection process.

Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns and please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or issues at 213-270-6000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherry Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "K".

Sherry Kelley

Senior Manager of Customer Service
Access Services



Access Services
PO Box 5728
El Monte, CA 91734
213.270.6000
accessla.org

July 28, 2014

Sammie Shipman

RE: Follow up to Public Comment at Metro Board Meeting on July 17th

Dear Ms. Shipman:

This letter is a follow up to public comment you provided to the Metro Board during its July 17, 2014 meeting.

Access Services Executive Director Shelly Verrinder, who was in attendance, contacted you and the other four customers, and then assigned key Access personnel to address your concerns and reach out to you to discuss these issues further. Based on the public comment provided by you and others at the meeting the following issues were raised:

- Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals;
- Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons;
- Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals;
- Dog's paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp;
- Better routing.

Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals

To promptly address the overcrowding issue, Ms. Verrinder instructed all service providers to discontinue booking trips with more than two customers in the rear of any sedan at any time. This immediate change will help resolve the issue of overcrowding. Ms. Verrinder has requested that she be personally notified going forward if any overcrowding complaint is received.

Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons

It is Access policy that a rider can eat or drink, if needed, due to a medical condition, such as diabetes. In the next few weeks, Access will be issuing a newsletter to all of the 2,000 drivers providing Access trips reminding them of this policy, as well as the policy described above regarding no more than two customers in the back of a sedan.

Issues regarding heat emerging from the floor of Access vans with respect to service animals

All Access vehicles have heat shields in place and staff worked with a group of visually impaired individuals a couple of years ago to change the flooring material to one that would be "cooler" for service animals and that would prevent the service animals from sliding in the vehicle. All of the minivans have had the new flooring installed.

Additionally, the vans currently being purchased have the catalytic converter placed in the engine compartment instead of underneath the vehicle. Access Services' fleet management department estimates that the majority of the vans with the catalytic converter located under the floor will be retired by the end of the year.

Moreover, Access has mats available for service animals if a rider would prefer that option.

Dogs' paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp

Access minivans have manual or electric wheelchair ramps that do not have sensors to create a forced stop; however, the larger vehicles do have sensors that will stop if an object gets in the way. If you have experienced or heard about an incident where a service animal was injured on an Access vehicle, please provide us with dates and times so that we can investigate immediately.

Better routing

Trip routing is a process that is continually under scrutiny by Access and its service providers to ensure our customers the best possible service and on time performance. Our performance standard for travel time for a paratransit trip is that it should not exceed a comparable trip on fixed route bus service. While we strive to far exceed the standard, there are trips where this standard is not met. Again, please provide us with the date and time of these trips so that we can investigate immediately. All of our

vehicles are equipped with GPS equipment that allows us to track the path of each Access trip.

Next Steps

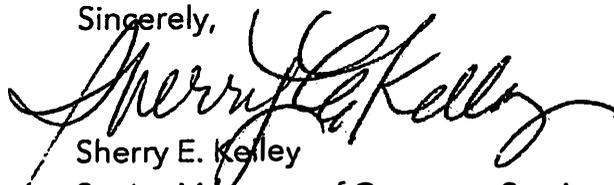
Among the key personnel assigned by Ms. Verrinder to address and resolve these matters is Access Project Administrator, Geoffrey Okamoto, who is the staff liaison for the Access Services Service Animal Subcommittee.

Ms. Verrinder instructed Mr. Okamoto to schedule a meeting for the week of July 28th and accordingly, he has arranged a meeting for Tuesday, July 29th at the Disabled Resource Center in Long Beach located at 2750 E. Spring Street. The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. and it is my understanding that Mr. Okamoto has already contacted you but unfortunately you are unable to attend.

Additionally, as a result of an Access Operations Supervisors Call Center/Dispatch Supervisor Meeting attended by some of your colleagues, Mr. Okamoto is in the process of arranging a date/time to have Guide Dogs of America from Sylmar visit Access to provide a presentation to further educate Access staff and provider staff on issues related to transporting service animals

Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns and please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or concerns at 213-270-6000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherry E. Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sherry E. Kelley
Senior Manager of Customer Service
Access Services



Access Services
PO Box 5728
El Monte, CA 91734
213.270.6000
accessla.org

July 28, 2014

Janet Johnson

RE: Follow up to Public Comment at Metro Board Meeting on July 17th

Dear Ms. Johnson:

This letter is a follow up to public comment you provided to the Metro Board during its July 17, 2014 meeting.

Access Services Executive Director Shelly Verrinder, who was in attendance, contacted you and the other four customers, and then assigned key Access personnel to address your concerns and reach out to you to discuss these issues further. Based on the public comment provided by you and others at the meeting the following issues were raised:

- Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals;
- Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons;
- Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals;
- Dog's paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp;
- Better routing.

Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals

To promptly address the overcrowding issue, Ms. Verrinder instructed all service providers to discontinue booking trips with more than two customers in the rear of any sedan at any time. This immediate change will help resolve the issue of overcrowding. Ms. Verrinder has requested that she be personally notified going forward if any overcrowding complaint is received.

Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons

It is Access policy that a rider can eat or drink, if needed, due to a medical condition, such as diabetes. In the next few weeks, Access will be issuing a newsletter to all of the 2,000 drivers providing Access trips reminding them of this policy, as well as the policy described above regarding no more than two customers in the back of a sedan.

Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals

All Access vehicles have heat shields in place and staff worked with a group of visually impaired individuals a couple of years ago to change the flooring material to one that would be "cooler" for service animals and that would prevent the service animals from sliding in the vehicle. All of the minivans have had the new flooring installed.

Additionally, the vans currently being purchased have the catalytic converter placed in the engine compartment instead of underneath the vehicle. Access Services' fleet management department estimates that the majority of the vans with the catalytic converter located under the floor will be retired by the end of the year.

Moreover, Access has mats available for service animals if a rider would prefer that option.

Dogs' paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp

Access minivans have manual or electric wheelchair ramps that do not have sensors to create a forced stop; however, the larger vehicles do have sensors that will stop if an object gets in the way. If you have experienced or heard about an incident where a service animal was injured on an Access vehicle, please provide us with dates and times so that we can investigate immediately.

Better routing

Trip routing is a process that is continually under scrutiny by Access and its service providers to ensure our customers the best possible service and on time performance. Our performance standard for travel time for a paratransit trip is that it should not exceed a comparable trip on fixed route bus service. While we strive to far exceed the standard, there are trips where this standard is not met. Again, please provide us with the date and time of these trips so that we can investigate immediately. All of our

vehicles are equipped with GPS equipment that allows us to track the path of each Access trip.

Next Steps

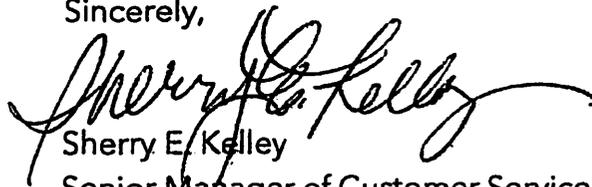
Among the key personnel assigned by Ms. Verrinder to address and resolve these matters is Access Project Administrator, Geoffrey Okamoto, who is the staff liaison for the Access Services Service Animal Subcommittee.

Ms. Verrinder instructed Mr. Okamoto to schedule a meeting for the week of July 28th and accordingly, he has arranged a meeting for Tuesday, July 29th at the Disabled Resource Center in Long Beach located at 2750 E. Spring Street. The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. and it is my understanding that Mr. Okamoto has already contacted you and confirmed your attendance at the meeting.

Additionally, as a result of an Access Operations Supervisors Call Center/Dispatch Supervisor Meeting attended by some of your colleagues, Mr. Okamoto is in the process of arranging a date and time to have Guide Dogs of America from Sylmar visit Access to provide a presentation to further educate Access staff and provider staff on issues related to transporting service animals

Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns and please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or concerns at 213-270-6000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherry E. Kelley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sherry E. Kelley
Senior Manager of Customer Service
Access Services



Access Services
PO Box 5728
El Monte, CA 91734
213.270.6000
accessla.org

July 28, 2014

Rachele Goeman

RE: Follow up to Public Comment at Metro Board Meeting on July 17th

Dear Ms. Goeman:

This letter is a follow up to public comment you provided to the Metro Board during its July 17, 2014 meeting.

Access Services Executive Director Shelly Verrinder, who was in attendance, contacted you and the other four customers, and then assigned key Access personnel to address your concerns and reach out to you to discuss these issues further. Based on the public comment provided by you and others at the meeting the following issues were raised:

- Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals;
- Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons;
- Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals;
- Dog's paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp;
- Better routing.

Overcrowding in vehicles; customers and those with service animals

To promptly address the overcrowding issue, Ms. Verrinder instructed all service providers to discontinue booking trips with more than two customers in the rear of any sedan at any time. This immediate change will help resolve the issue of overcrowding. Ms. Verrinder has requested that she be personally notified going forward if any overcrowding complaint is received.

Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle due to medical reasons

It is Access policy that a rider can eat or drink, if needed, due to a medical condition, such as diabetes. In the next few weeks, Access will be issuing a newsletter to all of the 2,000 drivers providing Access trips reminding them of this policy, as well as the policy described above regarding no more than two customers in the back of a sedan.

Issues regarding heat emerging from the floor of Access vans with respect to service animals

All Access vehicles have heat shields in place and staff worked with a group of visually impaired individuals a couple of years ago to change the flooring material to one that would be "cooler" for service animals and that would prevent the service animals from sliding in the vehicle. All of the minivans have had the new flooring installed.

Additionally, the vans currently being purchased have the catalytic converter placed in the engine compartment instead of underneath the vehicle. Access Services' fleet management department estimates that the majority of the vans with the catalytic converter located under the floor will be retired by the end of the year.

Moreover, Access has mats available for service animals if a rider would prefer that option.

Dogs' paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp

Access minivans have manual or electric wheelchair ramps that do not have sensors to create a forced stop; however, the larger vehicles do have sensors that will stop if an object gets in the way. If you have experienced or heard about an incident where a service animal was injured on an Access vehicle, please provide us with dates and times so that we can investigate immediately.

Better routing

Trip routing is a process that is continually under scrutiny by Access and its service providers to ensure our customers the best possible service and on time performance. Our performance standard for travel time for a paratransit trip is that it should not exceed a comparable trip on fixed route bus service. While we strive to far exceed the standard, there are trips where this standard is not met. Again, please provide us with the date and time of these trips so that we can investigate immediately. All of our

vehicles are equipped with GPS equipment that allows us to track the path of each Access trip.

Next Steps

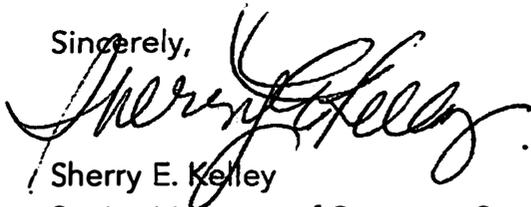
Among the key personnel assigned by Ms. Verrinder to address and resolve these matters is Access Project Administrator, Geoffrey Okamoto, who is the staff liaison for the Access Services Service Animal Subcommittee.

Ms. Verrinder instructed Mr. Okamoto to schedule a meeting for the week of July 28th and accordingly, he has arranged a meeting for Tuesday, July 29th at the Disabled Resource Center in Long Beach located at 2750 E. Spring Street. The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. and it is my understanding that Mr. Okamoto has already contacted you and confirmed your attendance at the meeting.

Additionally, I want to thank you for attending the Call Center/Dispatch Supervisor meeting at Access Services on May 29, 2014. During this meeting, the service animal group addressed concerns as it relates to the use of heat shields and animal tethers. We thank you for your recommendation to contact Guide Dogs of America. We have since reached out to this organization to educate us to further provide services that ensure a higher level of care to Access Services customers with service animals. We hope to have a confirmed date and time for Access Services operations and customer services staff, provider staff and the Animal Subcommittee members to meet with Guide Dogs of America in the very near future.

Thank you for taking the time to voice your concerns and please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or concerns at 213-270-6000.

Sincerely,



Sherry E. Kelley
Senior Manager of Customer Service
Access Services



Access Services
PO Box 5728
El Monte, CA 91734
213.270.6000
accessla.org

July 28, 2014

Aisha McKinney

RE: Follow up to Public Comment at Metro Board Meeting on July 17th

Dear Ms. McKinney:

This letter is a follow up to public comment you provided to the Metro Board during its July 17, 2014 meeting.

Access Services Executive Director Shelly Verrinder, who was in attendance, contacted you and the other four customers, and then assigned key Access personnel to address your concerns and reach out to you to discuss these issues further. Based on the public comment provided by you and others at the meeting the following issues were raised:

- Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals;
- Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons;
- Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals;
- Dog's paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp;
- Better routing.

Overcrowding in vehicles; customers and those with service animals

To promptly address the overcrowding issue, Ms. Verrinder instructed all service providers to discontinue booking trips with more than two customers in the rear of any sedan at any time. This immediate change will help resolve the issue of overcrowding. Ms. Verrinder has requested that she be personally notified going forward if any overcrowding complaint is received.

Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle due to medical reasons

It is Access policy that a rider can eat or drink, if needed, due to a medical condition, such as diabetes. In the next few weeks, Access will be issuing a newsletter to all of the 2,000 drivers providing Access trips reminding them of this policy, as well as the policy described above regarding no more than two customers in the back of a sedan.

Issues regarding heat emerging from the floor of Access vans with respect to service animals

All Access vehicles have heat shields in place and staff worked with a group of visually impaired individuals a couple of years ago to change the flooring material to one that would be "cooler" for service animals and that would prevent the service animals from sliding in the vehicle. All of the minivans have had the new flooring installed.

Additionally, the vans currently being purchased have the catalytic converter placed in the engine compartment instead of underneath the vehicle. Access Services' fleet management department estimates that the majority of the vans with the catalytic converter located under the floor will be retired by the end of the year.

Moreover, Access has mats available for service animals if a rider would prefer that option.

Dogs' paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp

Access minivans have manual or electric wheelchair ramps that do not have sensors to create a forced stop; however, the larger vehicles do have sensors that will stop if an object gets in the way. If you have experienced or heard about an incident where a service animal was injured on an Access vehicle, please provide us with dates and times so that we can investigate immediately.

Better routing

Trip routing is a process that is continually under scrutiny by Access and its service providers to ensure our customers the best possible service and on time performance. Our performance standard for travel time for a paratransit trip is that it should not exceed a comparable trip on fixed route bus service. While we strive to far exceed the standard, there are trips where this standard is not met. Again, please provide us with the date and time of these trips so that we can investigate immediately. All of our

vehicles are equipped with GPS equipment that allows us to track the path of each Access trip.

Next Steps

Among the key personnel assigned by Ms. Verrinder to address and resolve these matters is Access Project Administrator, Geoffrey Okamoto, who is the staff liaison for the Access Services Service Animal Subcommittee.

Ms. Verrinder instructed Mr. Okamoto to schedule a meeting for the week of July 28th and accordingly, he has arranged a meeting for Tuesday, July 29th at the Disabled Resource Center in Long Beach located at 2750 E. Spring Street. The meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. and it is my understanding that Mr. Okamoto has already contacted you and confirmed your attendance at the meeting.

Additionally, I want to thank you for attending the Call Center/Dispatch Supervisor meeting at Access Services on May 29, 2014. During this meeting, the service animal group addressed concerns as it relates to the use of heat shields and animal tethers. We thank you for your recommendation to contact Guide Dogs of America. We have since reached out to this organization to educate us to further provide services that ensure a higher level of care to Access Services customers with service animals. We hope to have a confirmed date and time for Access Services operations and customer services staff, provider staff and the Animal Subcommittee members to meet with Guide Dogs of America in the very near future.

Sincerely,



Sherry E. Kelley
Senior Manager of Customer Service
Access Services



Access Services
PO Box 5728
El Monte, CA 91734
213.270.6000
asila.org

ATTACHMENT B

July 31, 2014

Access Services is providing the following response to comments made by Access Services customers at the July 17th Metro System Safety, Security and Operations Committee. Access believes that the immediate changes that have been made address the concerns made by our customers at the meeting. These changes have been detailed in individual letters to each customer to explain what actions have been taken.

In addition, Access staff met with these customers on July 29th to discuss these issues with them in person and to agree upon future collaborations. The group discussed a number of ideas which are detailed under the Next Steps section of this memo. Among the 150,000 Los Angeles County residents who are eligible for Access Services, 345 have service animals.

What follows is a summary of our response to comments made at the July 17th meeting:

Overcrowding in vehicles both in terms of customers and customers with service animals

To promptly address the overcrowding issue, Access Services Executive Director Shelly Verrinder instructed all service providers to discontinue booking trips with more than two customers in the rear of any sedan at any time. This immediate change will help resolve the issue of overcrowding, particularly for customers with service animals. Ms. Verrinder has requested that she be personally notified if any overcrowding complaint is received. Furthermore, a notice was sent to every driver and dispatcher in the system to reinforce this directive.

Access policy regarding customers eating or drinking in the vehicle when necessary due to medical reasons

In general, it is Access policy that customers may not eat or drink in the vehicle. However, it has always been Access policy and practice that a rider can eat or drink, if

necessary, due to a medical condition, such as diabetes. The notice referenced above will remind drivers about Access policy on this issue.

Issues regarding the heat of the floor in Access vans with respect to service animals

All Access vehicles have heat shields in place and staff worked with a group of visually impaired individuals several years ago to change the flooring material to one that would be “cooler” for service animals and that would prevent the service animals from sliding in the vehicle. All of the minivans have had the new flooring installed. Access does not believe this is currently an issue but asked the customers at the July 29th meeting to notify our Fleet Manager if they feel the floor of a vehicle is too hot so it can be inspected.

Dogs’ paws getting stuck in the wheelchair ramp

Access minivans have manual or electric wheelchair ramps that do not have sensors to create a forced stop; however, the larger vehicles do have sensors that will stop if an object gets in the way. Access believes that such incidents are very rare but again asked customers at the July 29th meeting to notify staff immediately if they are made aware that a service animal was injured on an Access vehicle so an immediate investigation can take place.

Next steps

At the July 29th meeting, a number of collaborative ideas were discussed and agreed to. Access plans to implement the following:

- Access will hold a “Train the Trainer” class with Guide Dogs of America to enhance driver training for all of our drivers. Access will look at making this an Annual event.
- Access will also consult with Guide Dogs of America to see if they have video training tools that can be used in driver and dispatcher training classes. Depending on the availability and quality of these resources, Access may work with the visually impaired community on a dedicated training video.
- Access will hold separate community meetings twice a year specifically for the visually-impaired community and for individuals who use service animals. The customers enthusiastically supported this idea.

Driver/Dispatcher Alert

Only Two Passengers Allowed in Back Seat of Sedans

In recent years, an increasing number of Access customers have commented about their discomfort in having to ride in the back seat of sedans with two other people. It is now Access policy that all sedans may only carry a maximum of two (2) ambulatory customers in the backseat. *No exceptions.*

Transporting Customers with Diabetes

Access transports customers with many types of disabilities, including diabetes. Diabetes is a condition that causes unstable blood glucose (sugar) levels. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes in adults.

Customers with diabetes use medication to stabilize their sugar level. They may also use food or drink as a temporary substitute to stabilize their sugar level when medication is not available.

While Access policy, in general, does not allow eating or drinking onboard vehicles, drivers must allow customers with diabetes or other similar medical conditions, to eat or drink during their trip.

ATTACHMENT C

Alerta para conductor/despachador

Sólo se permiten dos pasajeros en el asiento trasero de los sedanes

En los últimos años, un creciente número de clientes de Access han comentado sobre la incomodidad de tener que viajar en el asiento trasero de un sedán con otras dos personas. De ahora en adelante, la norma de Access estipula que todos los sedanes certificados por Access sólo pueden llevar un máximo de dos (2) clientes ambulatorios en el asiento trasero. *No hay excepciones.*

Transporte de clientes con diabetes

Access transporta a clientes con distintos tipos de discapacidades, incluyendo la diabetes. La diabetes es una condición que provoca inestabilidad en los niveles de glucosa (azúcar) en la sangre. La diabetes tipo 2 es la forma más común de diabetes en los adultos.

Los clientes con diabetes usan medicamentos para estabilizar su nivel de azúcar. También pueden usar una comida o bebida como sustituto temporal para estabilizar el nivel de azúcar cuando no está disponible su medicamento.

Aunque la política de Access, en general, no permite comer o beber en los vehículos, los conductores deben permitir a los clientes con diabetes u otras condiciones médicas similares comer o beber durante su viaje.