

The Road to Recovery: Providing Transportation Services!

Easterseals affiliates often provide transportation services to their participants to facilitate their ability to attend programs. Other affiliates may rely on transportation provided by community services, while some affiliates may have participants who use public transportation. This guide provides considerations and resources for Easterseals affiliate colleagues who administer transportation programs. The [CDC](#) has developed guidance materials regarding transportation service (mass transit specifically – but, many of the recommendations pertain to smaller operations). Affiliates are encouraged to customize considerations and guidelines to meet the circumstances of their own settings and the individuals they serve.

Transportation Operations

- Consider adjusting vehicle schedules to and from your facility to minimize vehicle crowding;
- Minimize rider time on vehicles;
- Reward and affirm the performance of your drivers;
- Use recommended CDC procedures to clean your vehicles – and let the public know how often you are cleaning your fleet;
- Use a plastic protection curtain to separate the driver from passengers if feasible;
- If possible, add vehicles to your fleet to reduce crowding;
- Have PPE available prior to riders boarding – provide these to families so that participants are equipped prior to boarding;
- Work with other community transportation providers on sharing vehicles, or sharing riders to reduce crowding – contact your local planning organization to identify if there are forums to exchange practice information;
- Evaluate “essential trips” – does a trip have to occur now or can be rescheduled;
- Learn from other community transportation and human service providers. Partner with your local transit agency and planning organization to develop return to transportation service policies and practices. Use national resources to confirm your policies and practices – and invite the participation of drivers in policy development.

Communications and Engagement

- Use signage to widely share information with the public and your riders about your transportation policy and practices;
- Touch base often with families, staff, and participants regarding transportation service and continuously monitor the service and as appropriate, report what you learn to stakeholders;
- One affiliate administered a survey to obtain the perceptions and concerns of participants and their families or caregivers about Covid-19 and returning to Easterseals services. Address these concerns in your messaging and practices; and
- One affiliate uses weekly emails or newsletters as a way to share information with audiences about Covid-19 practices. This candid information helps to reduce anxiety and fear related to return to transportation service.

Education

- Develop education materials for staff and participants and their families as a way to enhance their knowledge about safety considerations in using transportation. Use a multi-modal educational platform, such as print materials and videos to convey important messages about traveling to and from your facility. For individuals with disabilities, especially with cognitive disabilities, use pictures and graphics to convey information about safety measures such as social distancing, hand washing, staying home when sick, and other CDC recommended practices;
- Use props and tools to educate participants. For instance, one affiliate uses a pool noodle to educate participants about six-foot social distancing practice; and
- Continuously assess understanding of family and participants regarding Covid procedures. Empower families and participants to be decision-makers and reinforce good judgement regarding travel.

Resources

[APTA's Transit Restoration Checklist](#)

[CDC Mass Transit Decision Tool](#)

[Community Transportation Association of America.](#)

[National Aging and Disability Transportation Center – Easterseals is a partner. Resources regarding ADA, and funding sources from FTA.](#)

[National Center for Mobility Management – Easterseals is a partner. Resources regarding human service transportation.](#)

For questions about transportation services or this information brief, please contact [Judy Shanley, Ph.D.](#), Asst. VP, Education and Youth Transition, Easterseals Director, Nat. Ctr. For Mobility Management.