

*Moving forward together*

## **Transportation for Pandemic Response (TPR) COVID-19 Mobility Services**

### **Problem:**

King County Public Health, area medical providers, and other social human services agencies are finding an increasing need for transportation services for confirmed positive COVID-19 patients, and symptomatic, test-pending individuals.

### **Initial contact:**

King County Department of Public Health and Community and Human Services were engaged in establishing isolation/quarantine sites, and larger assessment centers / recovery centers (AC/RC). They needed a way to transport COVID-19 positive, or potentially positive to their sites, and to critical medical facilities.

### **Approach:**

Metro's solution to meet this need is a fully separated, subset of its Access paratransit service. Key aspects of the service include:

- Early engagement with Metro's paratransit contractor, MV Transportation, resulting in a contract amendment, and associated supplemental scope of work
- Scope of work provided higher pay rate for volunteer drivers, and cleaning staff
- Selection of a set of vehicles for the service fleet, which included 10 ten-passenger, cutaway vans, and 20 smaller, two-passenger SUVs set up for wheelchair use
- Identification/lease of a separate vehicle base, all vehicles removed from general paratransit operations, segregated from broader fleet, dedicated solely to TRP service
- Use of Metro/MV's Trapeze software, and MV dispatch to set up a dedicated phone contact for dispatch, including coding for public health sites
- Public Health establishment of a central call center to manage trip requests to its sites, and provide a single point of contact for Metro/MV's dispatch
- Public Health provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety training in its use
- Public Health guidance on appropriate PPE, and health safety for service operations
- Provision of driver shield, and protocol separating drivers from passengers

### **Scope of Work**

The attached scope of work summarizes the entire operations approach, including health safety provisions, and expectations. Below is a summary:

- Serving trips to and from five to ten sites, serving up to 1,000 individuals, including four key sites serving 150-300
- Service provided seven days a week – 8 AM and 9 PM within King County
- Customers must

- Be escorted to/from the vehicle by healthcare personnel,
- Wear a mask at all times,
- Be capable of independently boarding and securing themselves in the vehicle
- When booking a ride, must provide:
  - Name of health system requesting the ride (e.g. Public Health, or UW Medicine)
  - Customer Status (Presumed Positive/Confirmed Positive)
  - First, last name
  - Origin, destination
  - Requested time of pickup or dropoff
- Trip tracking: dispatcher provides callers with a booking confirmation number, which dispatchers can use to provide updates and vehicle ETAs
- Dispatch includes:
  - All routes assigned dedicated provider identification
  - All bookings assigned dedicated funding source identification
- Fleet sub-divided into two duty groups: confirmed COVID-19 positive, and non-confirmed, presumptive, symptomatic COVID-19
  - Dedicated vehicles set aside for COVID-19 positive use only
- All vehicles equipped with back-up PPEs
- Except in the case of an emergency, vehicle operators shall not leave the driver's seat to assist passengers
- MV driver, and cleaning staff provided with Public Health recommended PPE, including training in proper use of PPE
- Cleaning protocol includes:
  - Don mask and gloves
  - Wipe down all interior surfaces with sanitization wipes
  - Dispose of cleaning supplies and PPE, perform hand hygiene
- Health agencies responsible for loading and unloading all riders, communicating with drivers and dispatch loading and arrival, and maintaining passenger counts, and names
- Total hourly rates for drivers and cleaning staff are about double, other support services isolated from TPR, but part of loaded rate remained the same
- Driver shield design and fabrication were custom work, using vehicle measurements and templates (see attached photos)

### **Partners/Agreements**

Below is a list of key partner groups and their responsibilities for service development and operation.

A key aspect of this partnership is Public Health financial backing, and swift coordination to set up proper billing channels, including fast work to connect key staff. King County's Incident Management Command structure facilitated communication and final approval on the service.

Contract amendment and supplemental scope of work were shared with Public Health for feedback in real time during negotiations, and a Memorandum of Understanding was developed between King County's Metro, Dept of Public Health,

and Dept of Community and Human Services to capture contract amendment responsibilities for agencies not party to the contract.

### **King County Metro**

#### Access team:

- Liaison to MV staff on all levels
- Vehicle assessment, selection
- Base identification
- Dispatch set up and coding
- Subject matter experts on operations
- Amendment scope of work, contract amendment review
- Cost and rate assessment
- Billing, financial review

#### Component Supply Center (Body shop/upholstery/materials) team:

- Design of custom driver shields for 2 unique vehicles
- Materials procurement
- Work orders, billing
- Expedited build out, testing
- Consideration of safety and security

#### Safety:

- Design/construction review for operational and health safety

#### Legal/Risk:

- Draft, finalization, review of contract amendment, scope of work
- Risk/indemnity evaluation, and contract language

### **King County Public Health / Community and Human Services**

- Liaison to Public Health, Incident Command, and medical, human services community
- Financial responsibility
- Provision of personal protection equipment
- Safety training on PPE for operations staff (PPE)
- Protocol for safe working environment, and PPE
- Contract Amendment and scope of work review
- Dispatch coordination
- Pick-up/drop-off support
- Destination/origin definition, and other service parameters

### **MV Transportation**

- Drivers and other operations
- Systems, and infrastructure
- Labor liaison
- Dispatch
- Vehicle maintenance
- Sanitation
- Billing, legal, risk

### **Adapting and expanding**

TPR mobility service as first developed had two key limitations. Work is currently under way to address both of these needs as part of the service program, which are:

- Need for separation prevented non-ambulatory assistance, preventing trips for wheelchairs and other mobility devices
- Desire of other medical institutions for COVID-19 positive transport services

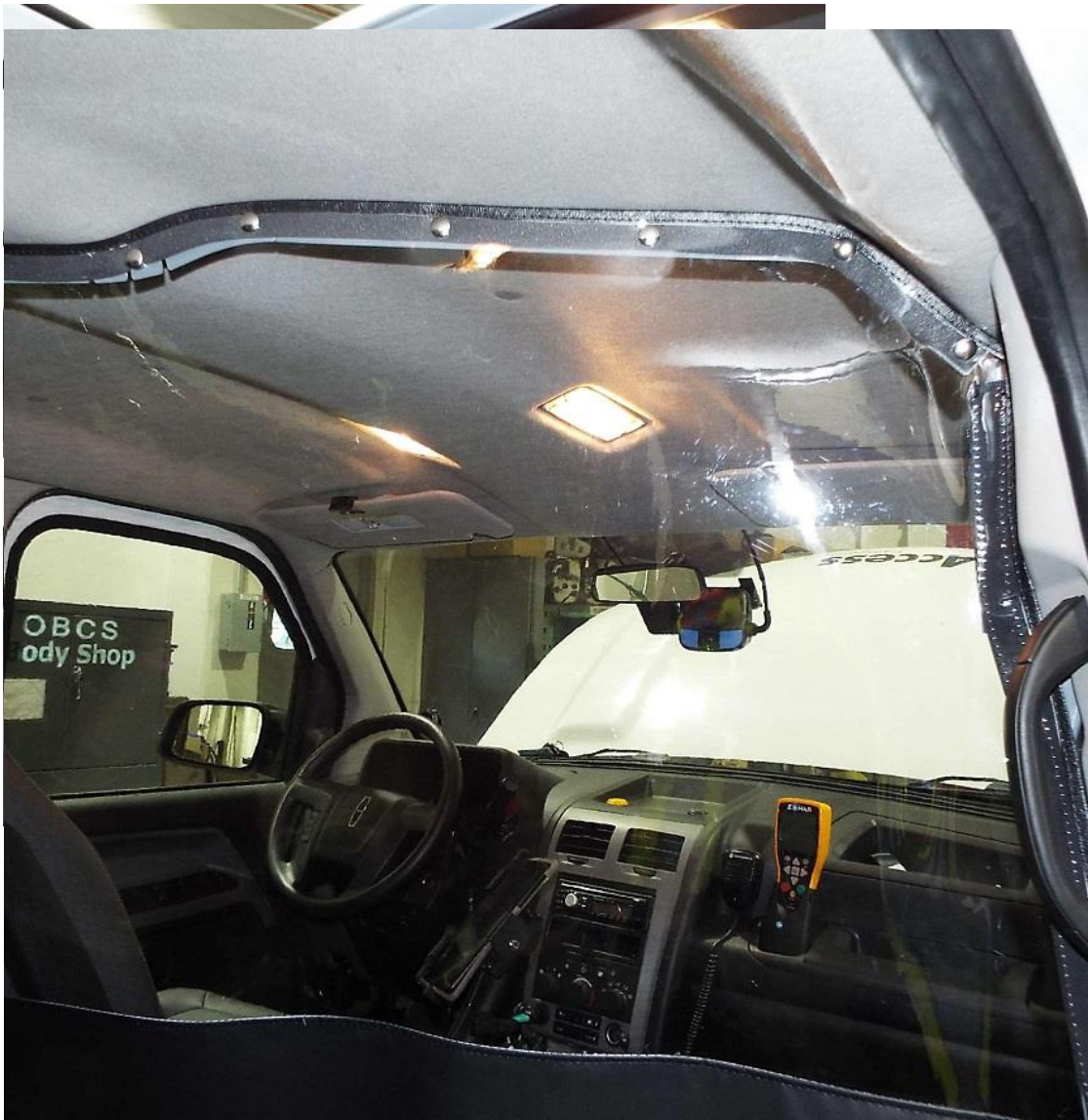
For non-ambulatory assistance, two models are being looked at:

- Third party contracting with services that are already providing trips specifically for COVID-19 positive non-ambulatory customers
- Public Health staff support, trained by the operator in wheelchair securement, and other assistance, scheduled to ride-along as needed

As MV ramps up driver and cleaning staff resources, Public Health trip demand is assessed and monitored, and vehicles outfitted with driver shields come online, Metro is working with additional medical providers, such as UW Medicine, to be trained on using the dispatch system. Public Health enthusiastically supports this use.

### **Driver shield photos**

Here are a few representative photos of the driver shield.



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