

Find a Ride Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Monday, October 6, 2025 from 1 pm – 2:45 pm

Meeting Attendees: Sara Sisco, Tony Hester, Lyn McCarthy, Jeff Abrams, Kimberly German, Phirun Lach, Natalie Sharp, Staci Sahoo, Olivia Butkowski, Sara Sisco, Pran Wahi, Lisa North, Daeveene May, Brian Vallene, Dinah Stephens, Cliff Perry, Dean Sydnor, Jenny Hayslip, Jacque Mann, Benjamin Atwell, Kimberly Meck, Griffin Cole, Roz Novikova, Sean Bouffiou, Kevin Chambers, Antoinette (Anny) Smith, Amy Biggs, Heather Clark, Alex O'Reilly, Mackenzie Kneeland, Dinah Stephens, Brock Howell, Dorene Cornwell, Matthew Weidner

Staff Support: Laura Loe, Dean Sydnor, Grace Georgitsis

Summary:

The meeting focused on the Find a Ride program's updates and future plans. Laura Loe discussed the **new 888-697-9080** phone number for transportation navigation for a 3-County Launch. Daeveene May and Jacque Mann from Pierce County detailed the **Access Pierce** program, which streamlines transportation referrals by integrating local experts and providers. The program aims to reduce wait times and improve client satisfaction. The discussion also covered the need for inclusive planning for phase two, emphasizing community engagement and data exchange to enhance transportation services. The meeting discussed the transition from a 211 system to Access Pierce, aiming for more compassionate care. Pierce has had a One-Call/One-Click that has been operational for 11 years, reducing client transfer times from three to one. The system requires no additional documentation for low-income qualifications. The discussion also covered the integration of Ride United for emergency transportation, the importance of cross-county coordination, and the need for a streamlined intake process. Future plans include potential statewide system consolidation and increased service volumes.

Action Items

- [] Explore opportunities for data sharing and feedback loops between Access Pierce and the transportation providers to improve client experience.
- [] Follow up with United Way & Access Pierce to learn more about plans for collecting and utilizing client feedback.
- [] Investigate how the Access Pierce model and lessons learned can inform the development of the Phase 2 centralized eligibility system for the Find a Ride program.

Partner Announcements

- Amy Biggs from SVT shares their hiring needs, including an HR manager, marketing person, finance manager, driver supervisor, and weekend drivers.
- Kimberly Meck from Disability Empowerment Center announces a hiring for a pre-ETS program coordinator.

Communication Toolkit and Phone Number Updates

- Laura Loe introduces the new 888-697-9080 phone number for transportation navigation and Medicaid transportation.

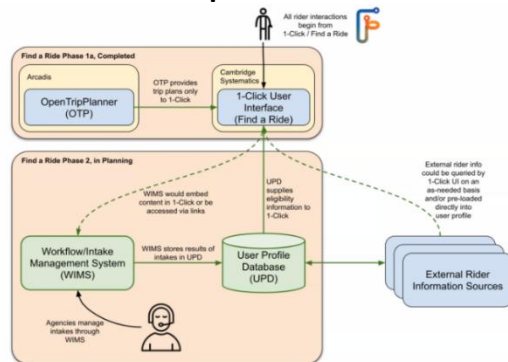
- Laura Loe explains the development process of the phone number and the importance of feedback for improvements.
- Laura Loe mentions the availability of materials like swag, palm cards, and flyers translated into 16 languages.
- Kimberly Meck asks about the accessibility of the flyers for screen readers, and Laura Loe explains the steps taken for accessibility.

Questions:

- Kimberly: have you had anyone use a screen reader on the flyer like “be my eyes”/ “be my AI”
- Laura: we have not, we have alt text and tested it for low vision, but we have not tried that AI tool
- Kimberly: it is catching on and more people are using it
- Dorene: I have not used it, i will take the tip and use it. Dorene likes how AI pulls in things you would not normally look for, sometimes this can be good sometimes it is annoying.
- Kimberly: my husband uses it to sight see, it is one more new tool that people will use to interact with print media.
- Tony: I did try it with ira explorer (?) and it did not work that way, maybe AI will be different. We will have to test it.
- Dorene: QR codes can be difficult
- Success Stories: Staci mentions that we were ready with the new Metro Flex Overlake boundary and able to use that right away for supporting trip planning!
- Kimberly Meck used the trip planner to show her kid that they needed to take an earlier bus to get to their destination on time.

Transportation Service Updates and Phase Two Overview

Phase 2



- Laura Loe provides an update on the transportation services in the trip planner, including new services and ongoing testing.
- Laura Loe introduces the phase two solution overview, focusing on a centralized, easy onboarding system for data exchange.
- Laura Loe outlines the steps for phase two, including inclusive outreach planning, community engagement, and product scope development.
- Laura Loe emphasizes the importance of community co-design and the role of the inclusive planning task force.

Questions:

- Pran: what will be discussed in community engagement

- Laura: we don't know yet, we will decide in the next phase, likely will revolve around eligibility
- Pran: could you ask them to send you questions ahead of time
- Laura: as long as its about the Phase 2 work that would absolutely be something we want to do

Inclusive Planning and Taskforce Formation

- Laura Loe explains the inclusive planning framework and the need for a task force to guide the process.
- Laura Loe lists the potential members of the task force, including system users, transportation providers, and health care partners.
- Laura Loe discusses the importance of community compensation for task force members and the potential for state funding.
- Staci Sahoo adds that the state grant would allow for community compensation, including materials, language translation, and culturally relevant food.
- Questions / Comments
- Staci: still working with the government to meet that two year timeline in the grant
- Lisa North, CT DART paratransit: I saw that you mentioned eligibility about the scope of phase 2, is this envisioned to take in various eligibility from all paratransit agencies?
- Laura: it would be great to have that, we had a speaker at our last meeting about the ST3 mandate regarding rider experience and standards for paratransit, the role of data. We are tracking this, we are not trying to take the place of the work that is being done, we want to talk to the same vendors and make things interoperable and that they can talk to each-other. Could be a lot of background work on the legal, political end, but we can make the tech side prepared to work together. Goal is for less hoops to jump through and a streamlined experience.
- Staci: We have done this inclusive process before and there is some trust there, there is a tension and opportunity between the clients, assistors, and transportation providers. We hope paratransit can be at the table but they cannot be compelled.
- Kevin Chambers: not a lot more to add, onboarding is painful for riders, even when they are eligible for just one service, we want to make things easier and include all voices. Understand the constraints.
- Kevin: what is a world cafe?
- Staci: small groups rotating to iterate on bold ideas, a model to have larger group conversations.

Access Pierce & Transportation Navigation with Daeveene May, & Jacque Mann

What is Access Pierce? What can Find a Ride learn from Pierce County's eligibility screening processes? Plus, time for Q&A

Access Pierce Presentation

- Daeveene May and Jacque Mann present the Access Pierce program, explaining its history and current operations.
- Jacque Mann describes the initial collaboration among special needs providers to streamline transportation referrals.

- Started in a café in 2011! Small collaborative and informal to support clients in Pierce County. Really admirable work!
- Daeveene May explains the transition from 211 to Access Pierce and the benefits of a local, personalized support system. Working to lower call times and client frustration.
- Jacque Mann highlights the importance of intensive case management and the potential for future improvements with the new system.

Q&A and Discussion on Access Pierce

- Laura Loe and participants ask questions about the Access Pierce program, including its impact and future plans.
- Daeveene May and Jacque Mann discuss the collaboration with hospitals and the importance of coordinated care.
- Laura Loe emphasizes the lessons learned from Access Pierce and the potential for similar systems in other counties.
- Participants express interest in the program and its potential to improve transportation access for residents.
- Olivia: This work is amazing and so important, thank you for sharing Daeveene and Jacque! I'm curious if you are partnered with elevate health, the ACH (Accountable Community of Health) in the Pierce County region doing care coordination?
- Daeveene: I work with healthcare contacts and connect with the main hospitals, i have been making the most headway with Multicare in helping make sure clients are not stranded.
- Jacque: one of the helpful thing is that the providers who would be best for particular trips are not being turned down as the case managers know the programs.

Pierce Access System Transition and Initial Challenges

- Daeveene May from Pierce County explains the transition from a two-on-one system to Access Pierce to provide more compassionate care.
- Laura Loe from Hopelink mentions that Pran's team has been managing the one-call, one-click system for 11 years in Pierce County.
- Pran acknowledges the experience of the team and suggests learning from their past to improve the current system.
- Staci Sahoo from Hopelink inquires about the data requirements for qualifying for low-income services, and Daeveene clarifies that only income verification is needed if someone qualifies for the low-income portion.

Data and Documentation Requirements

- Staci Sahoo asks about the documentation required for disability certification and income verification.
- Daeveene May confirms that only self-identification of income is needed for low-income qualification.
- Jacque Mann from PSESD/RTI explains that their team verifies eligibility but does not keep the documents, emphasizing the importance of shared documents for easier client processes.

- Daeveene May highlights the main complaints from clients about being transferred multiple times and waiting long periods before getting service.

Statewide 211 System and Crisis Connections Partnership

- Laura Loe mentions the statewide request for a consolidated 211 system and the awarding of the contract to Crisis Connections.
- Benjamin Atwell from Crisis Connections expresses interest in learning more about the Access Pierce system.
- Laura Loe discusses the changes happening in the system, including renaming and rebranding, and the involvement of Kimberly from Volunteers of America.
- Laura Loe emphasizes the importance of new technologies in improving the system and making it more efficient.

Ride United and Transportation Coordination

- Staci Sahoo discusses the Ride United program and its integration with the Access Pierce system.
- Daeveene May explains the Lift program in Pierce County, which is used for emergency purposes only.
- Benjamin Atwell shares the history of the Lift program in King County and its current status.
- Staci Sahoo emphasizes the importance of having a safety net for transportation services that are not covered by existing programs.

Intake Workflow and Efficiency

- Jacque Mann asks for a diagram or chart of the most common intake workflow.
- Kevin Chambers from Full Path explains the need to simplify the workflow to eliminate unnecessary steps for clients.
- Daeveene May describes the intake process, including the use of email for communication between organizations.
- Laura Loe inquires about the number of rides provided by organizations like Mustard Seed, and Daeveene May provides the details.

Cross-County Coordination and Future Planning

- Laura Loe highlights the importance of cross-county coordination, especially for programs like PSESD/RTI that serve multiple counties.
- Jacque Mann explains the training program for CDL trainees and the integration of transportation and employment services.
- Laura Loe emphasizes the need to build a system that can handle future growth and increased demand.
- Daeveene May and Jacque Mann discuss the importance of ongoing communication and collaboration between partners to ensure smooth operations.

Client Referrals and System Compatibility

- Roz from Hopelink Mobility Team asks about the best way to serve clients traveling between counties.

- Daeveene May and Jacque Mann explain the process of coordinating transportation services between different programs.
- Laura Loe emphasizes the importance of following the established system to avoid confusion and ensure efficient service.
- Daeveene May and Jacque Mann discuss the compatibility of the current system with future plans for statewide coordination.

Additional Partner Announcements and Upcoming Events

- Tony Hester from the Center for Independence announces an open house event on October 29 for state legislators and city and county officials. Costumes encouraged!
- Laura Loe encourages participants to spread the word about the event and attend if possible.

Upcoming Meetings: Find a Ride Advisory Meeting, December 8, 2025 1 - 2:45 pm

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