



## Metro Transit

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 To: Members, ADA Transit Subcommittee, Transit & Parking Commission  
 RE: Results - Metro Paratransit Pilot Program - ADA Paratransit In-Person Eligibility Determinations

**Pilot** Metro prepared a pool of persons to participate in the In-Person Assessments (IPAs) from all new customers applying over the pilot period, a selection of persons who had applied for paratransit within the past year, and current customers who had been identified in their initial application process for an IPA. A total of 105 customers were requested to attend an IPA during the pilot.

### Results

Eligibility Results	2011 Paper	2013 IPA	Description
	Process	Pilot	
All Applicants	100%	100%	
Denied	2%	1%	All Trips on Fixed Route
Un-Conditional	80%	35%	All Trips on Paratransit
Conditional	2%	10%	Some trips Fixed Route, Some Paratransit
Temp	15%	3%	Para Eligible for a limited period of time
Visitor	1%	0%	21 days of Para service within 365 day period
Opted Out	0%	51%	Didn't appear for an IPA, received denial letters

A full 51% of all participants opted out of an IPA. 5 Individuals have indicated that they will appear for an IPA at a later date. Reasons for the delay include: not convenient to attend at this time, didn't understand the request to appear, or not well enough to participate.

20% Of customers cancelled after making Metro paratransit trip requests to an IPA. Broken down by new applicants and current customers requested to appear, 72% of new applicants appeared for an IPA. Only 35% of current customers appeared for an IPA.

The number of applicants that received full access to paratransit service dropped from 80% to 35%. The number of temporary applicants dropped from 15% to 3%. The number of applicants the received limited access to paratransit service increased from 2% to 10%.

Also, 5 applicants were referred to travel training programs offered by Dane County. That number is significant because in the last 5 years or more, 0 applicants have been referred to travel training as a result of the determinations process.

**Interpreting the Results** First, there is a shift from unlimited access to paratransit service to limited access based on the applicant's ability to use the fixed route for at least some trips. This seems to indicate that the IPA process allows for a more accurate review of the person's ability to use the fixed route for some trips.

Second, the number of persons who completely opt out of the process is significant. Based on feedback from these applicants, the reasons for opting out include 1) no longer needed Metro Paratransit services, 2) not well enough to participate or travel, or 3) someone else filled out the application for the applicant and they had no intention of using the service.

As stated in the pilot program proposal, *goals* of In-Person Assessments are:

- ✓ Determine travel ability of individual applicant
- ✓ Determine the mode(s) of service that are most appropriate for the individual
- ✓ Identify specific conditions when trips can be made on fixed-route or paratransit

Based on the results, these goals were attained.

The stated *purpose* of the pilot program was: To determine the practicality and effectiveness of an in-person assessment process for Metro's ADA paratransit eligibility determinations.

*Practicality* – Evaluation materials were easy to obtain and use. Customers were easily advised of the pilot process and it was well received. Dialysis clinics were particularly enthused. Most assessments took about 30 minutes or less. Customers appreciated the opportunity to meet staff, discuss their situations, and review what to expect from Metro services. The Villager Mall was easy for customers to identify and interior was well-signed for way-finding.

Less practical aspects were the demands on staff time. The pilot was staffed 2 days per week for 8 weeks using the program manager and the schedule coordinator. Several days, not one person came for an assessment even though a minimum of 20 requests to appear were sent weekly. IPAs required more time to complete than a paper-only review. No administrative /data entry time was saved by the IPA process. The location for the IPAs was off-site from Metro, so it was difficult to re-purpose idle time or verify information in our customer database.

*Effectiveness* – Metro was able to make more accurate determinations in terms of more conditional type eligibilities, identified more candidates for travel training, more temporary type determinations, and many people self-selected (opted) out of the process.

Less effective was the drop-in basis for people to appear and the remote location. Going forward, it would be a more productive use of staff to schedule specific appointment time for people to appear. The trade off is less flexibility for the applicant. Many people were familiar with the Villager Mall location making them more confident about getting there, however staff didn't have access to materials and databases. Future in-person assessments need to be equipped with access to materials and resources.

*Potential Cost Savings* This is difficult to extrapolate. We know that for 2012, the average number of trips per person was 155. This year's cost per trip is estimated at \$32.25. The number of forecasted trips for the 54 pilot participants that were determined unconditionally eligible maybe about 50 per year. At that rate, annual savings would be projected at \$87,075 from fewer paratransit rides provided. This amount doesn't account for the trips potentially taken by applicants that have opted out.

**Recommendations** Based on the pilot program results, Metro will pursue resources to implement an in-person paratransit eligibility-determinations process.