



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-6060

METROACCESS COMPLAINT RESOLUTION REPORT – March 2015

Accessibility Advisory Committee Public Comment: March 2, 2015

No MetroAccess public comment submitted.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Public Comment: March 16, 2015

Customer #1

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she had been a MetroAccess customer since 2000. The customer stated she attempted to book a trip from Upper Marlboro to Fort Washington, Maryland, and she asked what kind of record of her trip history was maintained by MetroAccess. The customer stated she was told her trip history was not available prior to 2007.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson, MetroAccess Operations Manager – Operations Control Center, stated customer records are maintained and someone would meet with the customer after the meeting to discuss this matter further. Ms. Anderson stated in 2010, there was a decision made by the Board to reduce the WMATA service area. Ms. Anderson stated those customers who had traveled outside of the service area were grandfathered and continued to be allowed to travel to these locations. Ms. Jennifer Weber, MTM Quality Assurance, spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015. Ms. Weber confirmed the address the customer intended to travel to was outside of the MetroAccess service area; however, there is an address 0.1 miles away that fell within the service area. Ms. Weber informed the customer of the nearby address that could be utilized for travel on MetroAccess.

Customer #2

Comment/Complaint: The customer asked what percentage of MetroAccess operators had CPR certification. The customer asked what procedure operators should follow if a customer became ill on board the vehicle.

Resolution: Mr. Omar Browne, MetroAccess Operations Manager – Field Operations, stated operators are not CPR certified but are trained to call 9-1-1 and Dispatch for medical emergencies. Mr. Browne stated, as a policy, operators are not permitted to have personal electronic devices powered up while in service. Mr. Omari June, Director, Office of MetroAccess Service, stated that operators have the ability to call 9-1-1, and there is a very robust process dedicated to emergency situations. Mr. June stated in the event of an

emergency, the operator will contact 9-1-1, the Operations Control Center (OCC), and WMATA personnel immediately.

Customer #3

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated sometimes he would be picked up late and the operator would tell him that he was an “add-on.” The customer stated he was sometimes taken in the opposite direction when he was an “add-on.”

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated MetroAccess preferred to refer to “add-ons” as trip insertions. Trip insertions are sometimes necessary. Ms. Anderson stated MetroAccess has a robust scheduling process, however, sometimes unforeseen events take place on the date of service. Ms. Anderson stated other routes have to be located to accommodate customers’ trip windows and staff does their best to fit these trips onto new routes. Ms. Anderson stated this is a manual process, and she acknowledged that there were both good and bad trip insertions. Ms. Anderson stated she encouraged customers to report problematic experiences with trip insertions to allow opportunity to coach and counsel the staff involved. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 17, 2015 in an attempt to identify the particular dates referenced in the customer’s statement. An investigation was performed based on this information, and it was confirmed that the customer was both picked up late and missed his appointment time as a collaborative result of dispatch and operator actions. The investigation findings were shared with the appropriate management teams for coach and counsel, and Ms. Weber spoke with the customer again on March 18, 2015 to discuss the findings.

Customer #4

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated he was speaking on behalf of his mother who was also a MetroAccess customer. The customer stated his mother had a subscription trip, but she was frequently picked up late and often stayed on the vehicle for nearly three hours.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson thanked the customer for his comment. She stated someone would speak with him after the meeting, and a thorough investigation would be performed. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 17, 2015. The customer requested she call his mother directly. Due to personal issues Ms. Weber was asked to speak with the customer at a later date.

Customer #5

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated when scheduling by appointment time, the trips seemed to be two hours long regardless of the distance. The customer stated passengers were required to stay at the location for one hour no matter what and the trip home was typically another two hours. The customer stated the entire process took a minimum of five hours. The customer asked why the system would offer a trip option that was less than an hour if you had to be at the location for an hour.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated the system provided travel times based on the number of trips booked for the day. Ms. Anderson stated the system provides a pick up window to meet the appointment time request. MetroAccess policy requires customers to allow an hour between their arrival and departure times. Ms. Anderson stated this policy was implemented to ensure customers had enough time to take care of their business before the next trip took place. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015. The customer said she had a better understanding of the MetroAccess service after attending the meeting. Ms. Weber thanked the customer for her feedback and encouraged her to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Customer #6

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she needed clarification regarding the grandfathering clause. The customer asked if she needed to do something to ensure she received a call upon arrival.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated someone would speak with the customer following the meeting regarding the grandfathering clause. Ms. Anderson stated someone would investigate why she was not receiving calls when the vehicles arrived and staff would confirm if the phone number on file was correct. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015. The customer indicated she did not have any difficulty traveling to her requested destinations but was asking on other customers' behalf. The customer provided Ms. Weber with the phone number she wanted to have on file and Ms. Weber shared this information with the Eligibility Department for correction.

Customer #7

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she would like dispatchers to be more honest and transparent. The customer said dispatchers would say the vehicles were two miles away, but 15 minutes would go by, and she would call back and be told the same thing.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated when customers call into Where's My Ride (WMR), the agents provide real time information. Ms. Anderson stated that information could change rapidly, particularly in the DC Metropolitan Area. Ms. Anderson stated if it appears as though you are calling multiple times and receiving the same information, a customer should request to speak with a supervisor. Ms. Jennifer Weber followed up with the customer on March 18, 2015. The customer said she experienced problems with dispatcher transparency as recently as Wednesday, March 11, 2015. Ms. Weber reviewed the trip information with the customer and determined the operator was delayed at the stop preceding the customer's. This was the reason the dispatch agents informed the customer the vehicle should be arriving shortly. The customer was encouraged to contact Ms. Weber with any further questions or concerns.

Customer #8

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she did not understand the grandfathering clause. The customer stated she lived in Bowie, Maryland but was not able to travel to nearby locations. The customer stated arriving after her appointment time sometimes resulted in her being left alone and this was a safety concern due to her visual impairment. The customer asked if there was a policy pertaining to this concern. The customer stated several operators told her they were unable to wait with her or transport her to another location.

Resolution: Mr. Omar Browne stated operators were required to adhere to their manifest. Mr. Browne encouraged the customer to notify a supervisor in the OCC if she felt unsafe. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015; Ms. Weber and the customer confirmed the location to which the customer hoped to travel which fell outside of the MetroAccess service area. Ms. Weber shared additional details regarding the grandfathering clause. The customer was unable to recall the exact date of the missed appointment referenced in her complaint. The customer was encouraged to contact Ms. Weber with any further questions or concerns.

Customer #9

Comment/Complaint: The customer requested clarification regarding the grandfathering clause. The customer stated she was trying to travel from College Park to Bowie, Maryland.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated someone would meet with the customer after the meeting to obtain further details about the trip the customer was attempting to book. Ms. Jennifer Weber contacted the customer on March 18, 2015 to identify the coordinates of where she was hoping to travel. The address fell outside of the service area, but Ms. Weber and the customer discussed how to determine if an address is within the MetroAccess service area. Ms. Weber provided the customer with her contact information.

Customer #10

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated on March 14, 2015, she and her PCA waited on the vehicle for 35 minutes while the operator waited for another customer. The customer stated they were only five minutes away from her destination.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated the 35 minute dwell time should not have occurred, and someone would investigate and follow up with the customer. During the investigation it was confirmed that the operator dwelled at another passenger's pick up address for an extended period of time. This matter was brought to the attention of the operator's management team as well as dispatch management for coaching and counseling. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015 to discuss the findings and apologize for the inconvenience.

Customer #11

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she was supposed to be picked up at Wing 7 of USDA, but the vehicle frequently arrived after the door was locked. The customer stated this occurred on the Tuesday immediately following the December AAC MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting (12/22/2014). The customer stated she had to walk three blocks to the other entrance of USDA to meet the vehicle after already waiting for an hour. The customer pointed out how this would be even more problematic for an individual who had a mobility issue. The customer indicated she received a call back from a complaint regarding this matter, and the investigator response did not adequately address the issues she brought forth.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated she knew USDA had several entrances used by MetroAccess customers. Ms. Anderson stated they would review the geocoding for the location and could possibly designate a separate location code for the customer. Ms. Anderson stated a detailed review would be performed. A review of the call made to the customer regarding the complaint investigation took place, and the employee was coached and counseled by management. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015 to let her know the issue had been addressed with the employee. Ms. Weber let the customer know that the staff was actively working to address the problem with operators meeting her at the appropriate pick up location from her work. Ms. Weber shared her contact information with the customer to report any further incidents pertaining to this issue.

Customer #12

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she thought Dispatch should call customers as soon as vehicles arrived, and that would likely reduce the number of No Shows. The customer stated Dispatch supervisors Ms. Miller and Mr. Alfred needed more training. The customer stated Ms. Miller hung up on her, and Mr. Alfred refused to assist, resulting in a young man being left in the cold. The customer stated she would ask employees if she was a trip insert, and they would say she was not, but later another employee would tell her that she was. The customer suggested a button to call 9-1-1 be placed on MetroAccess vehicles because dispatchers did not always immediately respond to operators. The customer stated she had been trying to change her address on file, and vehicles were still being sent to her previous address. The customer stated she was picked up by vehicles that took her out of the way even though another vehicle was nearby without any customers on board.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated someone would speak with the customer to obtain details. Ms. Anderson encouraged the customer to provide specific dates if available. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015; the customer provided Ms. Weber with the date in which the vehicle was sent to her previous address. Ms. Weber shared this information with the Eligibility Department for correction to the customer's permanent file. The customer was unable to provide Ms. Weber with the specific dates associated with the allegations pertaining to Dispatch agent behavior and routing concerns, but Ms. Weber shared her contact information with the customer in case she was able to identify the dates at a later time.

Customer #13

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she booked her trips by appointment time so she would not arrive late for class. The customer stated she should not be penalized for late cancellation when her ride was late or when there was inclement weather.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated late cancellations were excused when MetroAccess arrived outside of the customer's trip window, and late cancellations were also excused on days with severe inclement weather. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 31, 2015, the customer did not have any specific dates that she wished to have investigated. Ms. Weber then provided further clarification into the No Show Late/Cancel Policy. Ms. Weber provided the customer with her contact information to address any additional questions.

Customer #14

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated he was a dialysis patient, and he would be taken out of the way through Southeast DC on the way home from his treatment. The customer stated this was unethical treatment of customers, and there were other transportation companies that treated people better. The customer stated another customer, Mr. Allen, was caught in the door of his facility, and the operator said he could not assist. The customer stated he reported this issue but received a call back from Quality Assurance indicating that the investigation had the customer listed as the involved party rather than Mr. Allen. During a follow up conversation with Ms. Jennifer Weber, the customer clarified that he had filed a complaint on behalf of Mr. Allen, but the complaint was incorrectly documented and associated with the customer's operator rather than Mr. Allen's.

Resolution: An investigation was conducted to review the routing of the customer's trips; there were dates identified when the customer was taken out of the way before returning to his home, and this was both the result of improper trip insertions and the operator deviating from the order of the trip manifest. This issue was brought to the attention of management to ensure coaching and counseling occurred with the involved employees. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2014. Ms. Weber discussed the investigation findings with the customer. During this conversation, Ms. Weber documented the customer's original complaint on behalf of Mr. Allen to ensure the correct operator was held accountable.

Customer #15

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated she lived in the southern region of Maryland, but she did not receive MetroAccess on the weekends. The customer stated there needed to be more service in that area and allowing customers to travel on the weekend would help money flow throughout the community.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson stated the AAC has taken up this issue of the grandfather clause. Ms. Jennifer Weber contacted the customer on March 18, 2015 to discuss travel options for the customer within the MetroAccess service area. The customer provided several locations in which she hoped to travel; while some of the locations fell outside of the service area, Ms. Weber was able to identify nearby alternatives for the customer to travel to in lieu of the addresses that were outside the service area. Ms. Weber provided the customer with her contact information to address any additional questions.

Customer #16

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated he had been treated like a criminal by the Customer Service Department. The customer stated he had been involved in two accidents while on board MetroAccess vehicles and had yet to hear back from anyone. The customer stated he needed to get leg braces. The customer stated the customer service provided by MetroAccess was horrible. The customer asked why it cost more to travel to this meeting as opposed to other locations to which he traveled. The customer stated he was told the meeting started at 4:30 PM rather than 4:00 PM.

Resolution: Mr. Omar Browne spoke with the customer regarding the accidents immediately following the meeting. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer immediately following the meeting, and he was unable to recall when he was provided the incorrect time for the meeting. The customer's trip fares were reviewed to determine why the cost to travel to the meeting was more than the customer was used to paying. MetroAccess fares are double the fixed-route equivalent, not to exceed \$6.50. The customer's previous trips were charged the correct fare per the MetroAccess fare policy. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on March 18, 2015 to discuss the fare policy.