WINTER 13

WHEELS

MAKING TRANSIT ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

YOUR RIDE IS HERE. Maryland Department of Transportation MTA Maryland

MEET THE MANAGER – TOYIN OGUNFOLAJU

I started with MTA Mobility in June of 2011. My role at that time included assisting in the implementation of the 2012 Mobility Service Enhancement Initiatives. This included the change to the Mobility Service Area map to adhere to ADA regulations, the introduction of Conditional Eligibility, the re-introduction of Travel Training and the No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy. Previously, I spent eight years working at one of the top law and government relations firms in Maryland. During my time there, I was exposed to the legislative, executive, and judicial elements of government. In that role, I advocated for our clients' interests to members of the Maryland General Assembly and to policy makers throughout Maryland. Currently, I'm pursuing a Master's of Public Administration degree at American University in D.C., with a focus on Development.

At the end of June 2012, I was appointed as the Manager of Mobility Services, which includes supervision over the Reservation Call Center, Customer Service and Certification Office. There are several challenges that we face in trying to provide transportation given the significant and continued increase in ridership. We've seen an 18 percent growth in August 2012 compared to August 2011. In the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and in conjunction with the policies of the MTA, our goal at Mobility is to preserve the service for those public transportation riders with disabilities that prevent them from navigating fixed-route service. We're working to increase staffing in the Call Center to reduce hold times and maximize efficiency. We're also investing in training and mentoring for all personnel, because we believe that good customer service should not be compromised.

One of the more fun parts of my position is the opportunity to reach out to the community and its leadership. Mobility welcomes any opportunity for productive discussion of issues and topics that affect our customers, and we were pleased to have had the chance to meet many of you during our recent outreach events. I look forward to helping service the needs of our customers as well as continuing to create a positive working environment that fosters growth and self worth.

MARYLAND ACCESS POINT WEBSITE

The Department of Aging maintains a website called Maryland Access Point that connects citizens to resources found all over the state with health, transportation and employment-related public services.

Maryland Access Point is a national initiative to create Aging and Disability Resource Centers as a single point of entry. To view the Maryland site that is maintained by the Maryland Department of Aging, visit **http://www.marylandaccesspoint.info**.

As the name implies, this is a single point through which consumers in the state are able to access the care they need. A single point of entry generally provides one place for information and referral and one place to find out and apply for services.

MOBILITY CALL CENTER REMINDERS

At MTA Mobility we value our customers and each phone call received. During the past year, the Call Center answered an average of 83,709 telephone calls monthly. Please remember to have all necessary information before calling us to assist in the correct entry of your reservation:

- Customer identification number
- Date of travel
- Provide appointment time or request ride by pick-up time including a.m. (morning) or p.m. (afternoon/evening)
- Exact street addresses for your pick-up and drop-off (including zip code)
- Entrance, i.e., front, side, rear
- Phone numbers for home and cell
- Travel companions
- Mobility aid(s) needed, i.e., cane, oxygen, service animal, walker or wheelchair

Additional helpful reminders:

- All rides are negotiated. You may receive a ride time as early as one hour before through one hour later than your requested time.
- Request a return ride if needed.
- When cancelling a ride, please let us know the reason for documentation purposes, i.e., sick, not going to location or unexpected emergency, etc.
- There is a 30-minute pick-up window starting from your scheduled ride time.
- Write down all pertinent information: Agent number, day and date of trip, scheduled ride times and when you called. Our telephone calls are recorded and we will verify information when needed. Reservations must be scheduled in advance, as early as seven days prior until 7 p.m. Mondays through Fridays the day before and until 5 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Same day rides cannot be granted.
- Our IVR phone system will call you the night before to remind you of your scheduled ride(s) for the next day. If there is a concern with your booking, please contact us as soon as possible.
- Customers may verify their scheduled rides through our Mobility Direct automated line by calling 410-764-8181, Option 5.

Call Center phone statistics represent a 12-month period from September 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012:

By Phone Line	Total Answered 12-Month Total	Monthly Average
Cancellation	89,466	7,459
Certification	18,820	2,353
Customer Service	8,719	727
Future Reservations	201,450	16,788
Late Line	237,624	19,802
Next Day	438,957	36,580
Total Calls	**995,036**	**83,709**

OUR RIDERS WRITE

More and more paratransit customers are using social media as a convenient tool to let us know how pleased they are with Mobility service. Here are a couple of recent notes we received on Facebook.

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From **Leslie Robin Neshama Kassal**: I am currently in the hospital, post spinal fusion, and I cannot imagine what everyone went through "The Day the Computer System" broke down. I also know, in my heart of hearts, that you all did everything humanly possible to deal with an impossible situation. I am blessed by your entire system, and life is all about the lessons we glean, day by day. After rehab, I cannot wait to use Mobility. You try to meet the needs of so many folks. You are my heroes!

• • •

Also from **Leslie**: I just returned home from Timonium on a Mobility ride. My driver was so competent and safety-oriented, not to mention kind and concerned, that I needed, and wanted, to send MTA Mobility my kudos.

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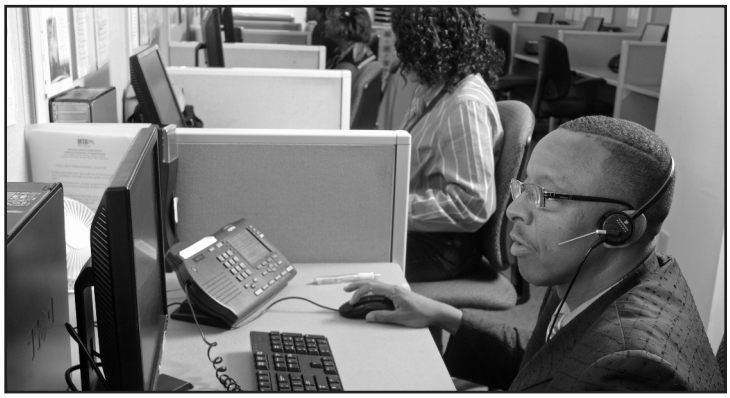
From **Margaret Lee**: Thank you for meeting with me on March 20 about my concerns and the concerns I have polled from Mobility customers. Let me say here and speak for all who require this service: a BIG "Thank you!"



TRAVEL TRAINING

The Image Center for People with Disabilities, under contract with MTA Mobility, offers comprehensive travel training on an individual basis and in small classroom settings. Any individual or organization that would like to learn to ride MTA fixed route (Bus, Metro Subway and Light Rail) is welcome to request training by calling the Image Center at 443-275-9395.This service is free and includes learning the following skills and more:

- **Map and schedule reading**
- **Landmark identification**
- **Traveling to and from bus stops and stations**
- **Paying fares**
- **Using chair lifts**
- **Trip planning**
- **Boarding and de-boarding**
- **Emergency procedures**

Most importantly, you will gain the confidence to travel independently when and where you want to!

ACCESSIBLE TAXIS AND SEDANS

MTA Mobility has been encouraging Taxi and Sedan companies participating in our Taxi Access II/Taxi Access II Limited and Taxi Center Card services to enhance their fleets to include accessible vehicles. There are currently 13 vehicles available to our services through several provider company participants.

To view the current list of taxi and sedan companies with accessible vehicles, see the list below or go to **www.taxiaccess.org** and click on "Taxi and Sedan Companies." Companies that offer accessible vehicles will note this directly under their days and hours of operation.

It is recommended that you arrange for an accessible vehicle when calling for your Taxi Access ride **at least two hours** before your required pick-up time.

TAXI ACCESS CAB AND SEDAN COMPANIES

PARTICIPATING CAB COMPANIES

A. A. County Cab
410-787-8800 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in Anne Arundel County

New Green Cab (Arrow)
410-261-0000 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in Baltimore City
1 wheelchair accessible taxi

Checker Cab of A.A. County
410-789-2300 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Glen Burnie, Curtis Bay, Brooklyn and Cherry Hill

County Cab
410-338-0000 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in west Baltimore County

Diamond Cab
410-947-3333 and 410-233-6000
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in west Baltimore City

Diamond Cab of A.A. County
410-400-6000 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Glen Burnie, Hanover, Linthicum Heights, Pasadena, Halethorpe

Diamond Cab of Annapolis
410-573-0184 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Annapolis, Pasadena, Riva, Severna Park

Jimmy's Cab
410-296-7200 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in east Baltimore County

Valley Cab
410-486-4000 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in northwest Baltimore County

Yellow-Checker Cab
410-685-1212 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in Baltimore City
10 wheelchair accessible taxis

PARTICIPATING SEDAN COMPANIES

24/7 Sedan
410-686-2666 or 410-686-0003
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in southeast Baltimore City and County

Green Sedan, Inc.
410-633-6666 | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Rides originating in southeast Baltimore City and County

Roney's Transportation
410-404-5677 / Mon.-Sat. 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Rides originating in northwest Baltimore City and County
2 wheelchair accessible sedans

IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO SAVE

Taxi Access II Customer Service	**410-664-2030**
Taxi Access II Certification Office	**410-764-8181**
Mobility General Information	**410-764-8181**
Mobility Certification Office	**410-764-8181**
Mobility Reservation Line	**410-764-8181**
MTA General Information	**410-539-5000**
Toll-free	**1-866-RIDE-MTA (743-3682)**
MTA Directory Assistance	**1-888-218-2267**
Maryland Relay	**7-1-1**
Taxi Access II Website	**www.taxiaccess.org**
MTA Website	**www.mta.maryland.gov**

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MTA Maryland

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