

## **Call-A-Ride Services (C.A.R.S.) Transportation Public Participation Plan**

**Purpose:** Public involvement serves to actively solicit ideas from residents and stakeholders in the transportation service area of Mifflin and Juniata Counties. The plan will provide meaningful ways for residents and stake holders to communication with C.A.R.S. Administration. Residents will have access to information as well as a mechanism to provide feedback.

### **Program Overview**

#### *Introduction*

C.A.R.S. is a shared ride paratransit transportation service available to the residents of Mifflin and Juniata Counties. Transportation is provided door-to door. Any residents of Mifflin and Juniata County may use C.A.R.S. by scheduling a trip by 12:00 noon the day prior to the needed trip. Trips are available Monday through Saturday and on most holidays. The cost of the trip is based on mileage from point of pick up to destination; and home again if needed.

Mifflin-Juniata Regional Services Corporation (M-J RSC) is the Parent and Single Member of the Call-A-Ride Services, Incorporated. Mifflin-Juniata Regional Services is governed by a Board of Directors, and in addition C.A.R.S. has a governing board that manages and monitors C.A.R.S. services and then reports the M-J RSC Board.

C.A.R.S. also holds a vendor contract with the Mifflin County Commissioners and the Juniata County Commissioners to provide Medical Assistance Transportation. Each county designates County Commissioner to hold seats on both the C.A.R.S. and the M-J RSC boards.

### **Title VI Act of Civil Rights of 1964**

#### *Civil Rights*

Section 601 of the Title VI Act of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states the following: “No person in the United States must, on the ground of sex, race, color, national origin, or religion be excluded from activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

The Civil Rights Act of 1987 clarified the broad, institution-wide application of the Title VI. Title VI covers all operations of covered entities with regard to whether specific portions of the covered program or activity are federally funded. Specifically Call-A-Ride Services, Inc. (C.A.R.S.) must comply with U.S Department of Justice (USDOJ) and U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) regulations. For reference, USDOJ Title VI regulations can be found at 28 CFR § 42.401 et seq., and 28 CFR § 50.3. USDOT Title VI implating regulations can be found at 49 CFR part 21.

Title 49 CFR Section 21.9(b) requires C.A.R.S. to “keep such records and submit to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and/or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA),

and operating administration of USDOT timely, complete, and accurate compliance reports at such times, and in such form and containing such information as (PennDOT and/or FTA) may determine to be necessary to enable (it) to ascertain whether C.A.R.S. has complied or is complying with this rule. C.A.R.S. must document compliance with USDOT's Title VI regulations by submitting a Title VI Program to PennDOT once every three years or as otherwise directed by PennDOT and/or FTA. This Title VI Program must be approved by C.A.R.S. governing body prior to submission to PennDOT.

### *Notifying Beneficiaries of Protection under title VI*

Title CFR Section 21.9(d) requires Call-A-Ride Services, Inc. (C.A.R.S.) provide information to the public regarding the recipient's obligations under USDOT's Title VI regulations and apprise members of the public of the protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI. At a minimum, C.A.R.S. must disseminate this information to the public by posting a Title VI notice on its website and in public areas of the agency's office, including at the reception desk, meeting rooms, etc. C.A.R.S. will also post Title VI notices on the transit vehicles. The Title VI Notice:

**Notifying the Public of Rights Under Title VI  
CALL-A-RIDE SERVICES, INC.**

- C.A.R.S. operates its programs and services without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, or religion in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with C.A.R.S.
- For more information on C.A.R.S. civil rights program, and the procedures to file a complaint, contact 800-348-2277; email ; or visit our administrative office at 249 W. Third Street, Lewistown, PA. 17044. For more information about C.A.R.S. visit [mymjrsc.com/cars](http://mymjrsc.com/cars)
- A complaint may be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration by filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor-RCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- If information is need in another language, contact 800-348-2277.

### *Title VI Complaint Procedure*

To comply with the reporting requirements established in 49 CFR Section 21.9(b), Call-A-Ride Services, Inc. (C.A.R.S.) developed procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints filed against it and makes the procedures for filing a complaint available to members of the public. C.A.R.S. developed a Title VI complaint form, and the form and procedure for filing a complaint is available on the C.A.R.S. website. C.A.R.S. developed the following complaint procedures, which is available to the public on the agency's website and in other conspicuous places.

CALL-A-RIDE SERVICES, INC.

Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against based on sex, race, color, national origin or religion by C.A.R.S. may file a Title VI complaint by completing and submitting the C.A.R.S. complaint form. C.A.R.S. investigates complaints received no more than 30 days after the alleged notification of the incident. C.A.R.S. will process complaints that are complete.

Once the complaint is received, C.A.R.S. will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing him/her whether the complaint will be investigated by our offices.

C.A.R.S. has 30 days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, C.A.R.S. may contact the complainant. The complainant has 30 days from the date of the letter to send requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 30 days, C.A.R.S. can administratively close the case.

After the investigator review the complaint, she/he will issue one of two letters to the complainant: a closure letter or a letter of finding (LOF). A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title VI violation and that the case will be closed. An LOF summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains wither any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, she/he had 15 days after the date of the letter or the LOF to do so.

A person may also fila a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration, at FTA office of Civil Rights, 12300 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

### *Title VI Complaint Form*

Call-A-Ride Services, Inc. (C.A.R.S.) makes available a Title VI Complaint Form for use by the public who wish to file a Title VI complaint. The complaint form is available on the C.A.R.S. website. C.A.R.S.'s Title VI Complaint Form specifies the classes protected by Title VI; sex, race, color, national origin or religion and allows the complainant to select one or more of those protected classes and the basis/bases for discrimination. The Title VI Complaint Form is a vital document and is found on the following page.

**TITLE VI CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT FORM**

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” Please call for our policy or visit our website at [www.rabbittransit.org](http://www.rabbittransit.org). If you feel you have been discriminated against in transit services, please print and complete the following form, sign (signature in Section 4 required) and return to:

Call-A-Ride Services, Inc.  
 ATTN: Cindy Sunderland  
 249 W. Third Street  
 Lewistown, PA 17044  
 Telephone: 1-800-348-2277  
 Email: [cars@mymjrsc.com](mailto:cars@mymjrsc.com)  
 Fax: 866-349-0859

**SECTION 1**

Name	
Street Address	City
State:	Zip-code
Telephone:	Email:

**SECTION 2**

Are you filling this complaint on your on behalf?	Yes [ ]	No [ ]
If you answered “No” to the question above please describe your relationship to the person making the complaint.		
Have you received permission of the person making the complaint to file this complaint on your behalf?	Yes [ ]	No [ ]

**SECTION 3**

I Believe the discrimination I experiences was based on (check all that apply):  
 Race [ ] Sex [ ] Color [ ] Religion [ ] National Origin [ ]

Date of Alleged Discrimination	Month:	Day:	Year:
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Explain as clearly as possible what happened and why you believe you were discriminated against. Describe all persons who were involved. Include the name and contact information the person(s) who discriminated against you (if known) as well as names and contact information of any witnesses (if known). If more space is needed please use the back of this form.

**SECTION 4**

Have you previously filed a complaint with the agency	Yes [ ]	No [ ]
Have you previously filed a complaint with any other Federal, State, or local agency, or with any Federal or State court?	Yes [ ]	No [ ]
If yes, check all that apply.	Federal Agency [ ]	Federal Court [ ]
	State Agency [ ]	State Court [ ]
	Local Agency [ ]	
Please provide information about a contact person where the complaint was filed	Name:	
	Title:	
	Agency:	
	Phone Number:	

**SECTION 5**

Print Name
Signature
Date

### *Recording and Reporting Title VI Investigations, Complaints, and Lawsuits*

To comply with the reporting requirement Call-A-Ride Services, Inc. (C.A.R.S.) prepares and maintains a list of any of the following that allege discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin or religion: active investigations conducted by entities other than FTA; lawsuits; and complaints naming the recipient. This list includes the date of the investigation, lawsuits or complaints, and actions taken by the recipient in response, or final findings related to the investigation, lawsuits or complaints. This list is updated and including in the Title VI program submitted to PennDOT every three years.

Investigation	Date	Summary	Status	Action(s) Taken
1.				
2.				
3.				

### **Public Participation Plan**

Federal law dictates that any increase in fares or major reduction in services must allow for a local process to solicit and consider public comment prior to implementation of the fare increase or service change. The following process will be used by Call-A-Ride Services, Inc. (C.A.R.S.) to solicit public comment for any fare increase or significant service level changes that staff and/or the C.A.R.S. Board of Directors consider significant.

Service levels that public comment will be sought include:

- Changes in fares
- Changes in service frequency including reduction in hours of service and days of operation
- Reductions in service, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the C.A.R.S. Board of Directors, to sites providing public benefit-related functions, such as health care facilities and senior citizen complexes

Notification of changes in services will be shared with the public through a variety of media including public service announcements in print (Lewistown Sentinel and Juniata Sentinel) and radio (WMRF and WJUN), Organization website (mymjrsc.com) and Facebook post (Mifflin-Juniata Regional Services). Posts of pending changes will also be made available on the transport vehicles and the C.A.R.S office reception area. The notices will be posted at a minimum of 30 days prior to the public meeting.

Notices distributed will include:

- The nature of the proposed changes
- Date, time and Place of in person public comment opportunity(s)
- Date written comments are due and address where written comments to be sent

Public comment will be accepted at a formal public hearing. The public hearing may be held in conjunction with a regular or special meeting of the C.A.R.S. Board of Directors, or it may be held separately. The public hearing will be chaired the C.A.R.S. Board President or his/her designee.

Notice of the Public Meeting will be given through legal notice to the Lewistown Sentinel and the Juniata Sentinel as well as Organization website (mymjrsc.com) and Facebook post (Mifflin-Juniata Regional Services) at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Posts of pending changes will also be made available on the transport vehicles and the C.A.R.S office reception area.

The public hearing will be held at a convenient time and place. Transportation via C.A.R.S will be made available for those needing public transportation. Locations will be accessible to persons with disabilities. If alternative methods of hearing the meeting will be made (language translation and signing) provided a request for such is made 10 week days prior to the public hearing.

Anyone wishing to provide comment at the public meeting will have the opportunity to do so. Anyone unable to attend the meeting may submit their comments in advance in writing per instructions provided in the notice. All written comments (mail or email) will be reviewed by the C.A.R.S. Board of Directors. All comments shared in person at the public meeting will be recorded in the minutes.

A summary of the comments will be provided to the C.A.R.S. Board of Directors for their review and consideration along with the C.A.R.S. Director's and the M-J RSC Executive Director's recommendation for actions. The decision of the C.A.R.S. Board of Directors will be forwarded to the M-J RSC Board (as the single member of the C.A.R.S Board of Directors for ratification.

Final decisions on fare increases and service reductions will be made by the C.A.R.S Board Of Directors at a meeting open to the public.

#### **Access for Those with Limited Language Accessibility**

Mifflin and Juniata County service areas do not have a diverse population. Slightly over 97% of the population in Mifflin County is white and 1.5 percent of the population is Hispanic or Latino. In Juniata County, approximately 95 percent of the population is white, and 3.25 percent are Hispanic or Latino. In both counties a majority of those identifying with Hispanic or Latino heritage/race are English speaking. However, C.A.R.S is sensitive to the need for providing assistance to any resident of the two counties that are not English speaking or have difficulty with the English Language.

Juniata County has a Latino Community Welcome Center and information will be provided in Spanish for posting at this site as a direct outreach to the Juniata communities Spanish Speaking Population, this will include any public notices seeking public comment.

C.A.R.S will provide language translation services as needed and/or requested either by using phone translation service or by in person contracted translator (if one is available) for any limited English language capability.