



Special Needs Advisory Committee Teleconference Notice

Committee Members:

Sandra Albear	Raymond Bueche	Ericka Danczak
Mike Gonzalez	Sue Lau	Carolyn Inmon
Mallory Vega	Caroline Wahlstrom	Sandra Stang
Gloria Reyes	Rachel Lurya	John Ulrich
Cesar Hernandez	Ellen Schenk	Tom Krogstad
Bob Tiezzi	Tracy Bryars	Janice Almaraz
Mary Lou Shattuck	Paul Miller	Isaac López
Henry Michaels	Karyl Dupée	Brandi Kelly Contreras
Terry Coakley	Bhumit Shah	Sandy Rains
Morris "Jake" Schwartzberg	Wayne Heidle	

Teleconference Sites:

Orange County Transportation Authority - Headquarters
550 S. Main Street
Conference Room 07
Orange, CA

Guidance for Public Access to this Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) Meeting:

Governor Gavin Newsom enacted Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-29-20 authorizing a local legislative body to hold public meetings via teleconferencing and make public meetings accessible telephonically or electronically to all members of the public to promote social distancing due to the state and local State of Emergency resulting from the threat of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

In accordance with Executive Order N-29-20, and in order to ensure the safety of the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) SNAC Members and staff and for the purposes of limiting the risk of COVID-19, in-person public participation at public meetings of the OCTA will not be allowed during the time period covered by the above-referenced Executive Orders.

Instead, members of the public can listen to a live stream of the January 26, 2021 1p.m. Special Needs Advisory Committee meeting by clicking this [link](#).

Public comments may be submitted for the upcoming January 26, 2021 Special Needs Advisory Committee meeting by emailing them to publiccomments@octa.net. **If you wish to comment on a specific agenda item, please identify the committee name and item number in your email.** All public comments that are timely received will be part of the public record and distributed to the SNAC. Public comments will be made available to the public upon request. In order to ensure that staff has the ability to provide comments to the SNAC Members in a timely manner, please submit your public comments 30 minutes prior to the start time of the Committee meeting date.

Agenda Descriptions

The Agenda descriptions are intended to give notice to members of the public of a general summary of items of business to be transacted or discussed. Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact the OCTA at (714) 560-5611, no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.



Special Needs Advisory Committee

January 26, 2021

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Teleconference Meeting

Agenda

1. **Call to Order/Welcome** (5 min.)
 - Pledge of Allegiance
 - Approval of Minutes
 - Chair's Report

Sue Lau, *Chair*
Paul Miller, *Vice Chair*
2. **OC ACCESS Driver “Exceptional Service Awards”**

Postponed due to Coronavirus Impacts
3. **Coronavirus Update**

Maggie McJilton, *Human Resources and Organizational Development/(Interim) External Affairs*
4. **FY 2020-21 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Disabled Grant Program** (15 min.)

Jennifer Farinas, *Planning*
Nora Yeretjian, *External Affairs*
5. **OC ACCESS Paratransit and OC Flex Microtransit Services Update** (15 min.)

Jack Garate, *Paratransit Services*
6. **OC Bus Update** (10 min.)

Johnny Dunning, *Transit*
7. **OC Access Fleet Mix** (10 min.)

Victor Velasquez, *Finance*
8. **Reports** (5 min. each)
 - **OC ACCESS Operation**

Melissa Mungia, *Paratransit Services*
 - **OC ACCESS Eligibility / Mobility Management Service**

Gracie Davis, *Paratransit Services*
 - **Senior Mobility Program (SMP)**

Joanne Jacobsen, *Paratransit Services*
 - **Marketing & Customer Engagement**

Stella Lin, *External Affairs*
 - **Committee Liaison Update**

Jared Hill, *External Affairs*
9. **Committee Member Comments**
10. **Adjournment / Next Meeting:**

April 27, 2021

Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact OCTA at (714) 560-5451, no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility.

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Special Needs Advisory Committee
October 27, 2020
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Orange County Transportation Authority
550 S. Main Street, Orange, CA
Online Public Meeting

Committee Members Present

Bhumit Shah, Dayle MacIntosh Center

Brandi Kelly Contreras, City of Huntington Bch.

Caroline Wahlstrom, Placentia/Yorba Linda SD

Carolyn Inmon, Senior Citizens Advisory Council

Ericka Danzak, County of Orange Office on Aging

Henry Michaels, Elwyn California

Isaac López, Special Needs Advocate

Karyl Dupee, St. Jude Medical Center

Mary Lou Shattuck, Alzheimer's Family Services

Mike Gonzalez, City of Santa Ana Environmental
and Transportation Advisory Committee

Paul K. Miller, Cal State Fullerton

Raymond Bueche, Saddleback Valley USD

Sandra Stang, Housing & Transportation Committee

Sue Lau, Polio Survivors Plus AARP

Committee Members Absent

Bob Tiezzi, Intake Coordinator, OCARC

Cesar Hernandez, Express Transp. Solutions

Ellen Schenk, State of Calif. Dept. of Rehab

Gloria Reyes, ABRAZAR, Inc.

Janice Almaraz, Orange County Dept. of Education

Joe Rainey, City of Laguna Woods

John Ulrich, Laguna Niguel Senior Committee

Mallory Vega, Acacia Adult Day Services

Morris Schwartzberg, Spc Needs at Dana Hills HS

Rachel Lurya, Office of Supervisor Wagner

Sandra Albear, Braille Institute of America

Terry Coakley, Senior and Disability Advocate

Tom Krogstad, Senior and Special Needs Advocate

Tracy Bryars, St. Jude's Medical Center

Wayne Heidle, Marshall B. Ketchum University

1. Call to Order/Welcome

Chair Sue Lau called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) meeting. Chair Lau said this meeting is being held virtually and being recorded. Christina Byrne provided information on the meeting protocols and took the roll call.

• *Pledge of Allegiance*

Chair Sue Lau asked Vice Chair Paul Miller to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

• *Approval of Minutes*

Chair Sue Lau asked if there are any corrections to the July 28, 2020 Minutes and Attendance Report.

A motion was made by Brandi Kelly Contreras, seconded by Sandra Stang and carried unanimously to approve the July 28, 2020 minutes. Absent members abstained from the vote.

- *Chair's Report*

Chair Sue Lau there was no report.

2. OC ACCESS Driver “Exceptional Service Awards”

This item was postponed due to Coronavirus impacts.

3. Coronavirus Update

Jennifer Bergener started her presentation with a brief update on the Silverado and Blue Ridge wildfires. These two fires have collectively burned more than 15,000 acres and have impacted at least 12 structures. OCTA has a fixed-route bus base near the intersection of the I-5 and Sand Canyon. This base is located within the evacuation zone. OCTA has relocated 100 buses from the base to bus base locations in Anaheim and Garden Grove. OCTA was able to move the equipment without disruption to the fixed-route bus service in the county. She said in regard to the paratransit service, some service has been canceled into or from the areas within the evacuation zones. Jennifer said she is getting minute by minute updates and it looks like OCTA will be able to re-occupy the evacuated base soon. OCTA continues to update customers through social media and OCTA.net.

Jennifer Bergener said OCTA has had to adapt every part of OCTA business due to the pandemic. She provided an overview of the changes made in the spring to bus operations. In March, OCTA went to a Sunday service schedule for all fixed-route bus services to keep coach operators and the public safe. Jennifer said pre-pandemic fixed-route ridership had approximately 120,000 daily boardings. At the start of the pandemic lock down, it went down to 25,000 daily boardings. In June, OCTA began adding bus service back. Currently OCTA is offering a service level of approximately 60% of what it was pre-pandemic, and ridership is at about 50% of its pre-pandemic levels. OCTA had implemented several safety measures including rear-door boarding and installed hand sanitizing stations. Now that OCTA added shields to protect coach operators, resumed front-door boarding has resumed.. Hand sanitizing stations were moved to the front door and mask dispensers have been added to the buses. Social distancing is practiced on the buses with limiting the capacity on each bus.

Jennifer Bergener said on the capital side, OCTA has accelerated some freeway projects due to low traffic volumes. OCTA was able to extend evening closures into the daytime and implement more lane closures. She said specifically on the I-5 Central Improvement Project, OCTA was able to open carpool lanes four months ahead of schedule. She said on the I-405 Project, OCTA estimates more than 5,000 hours of additional work was done between mid-March and May - once traffic levels began to return to normal. Jennifer said the OC Streetcar Project was able to advance utility work due to the lower traffic volumes. Jennifer shared OCTA secured roughly \$160 million from the CARES Act. The vast majority of that money goes to operations. She said OCTA continues to closely monitor revenue. Measure M revenue has lost roughly \$37 million for the last fiscal year. OCTA also lost \$33

million in bus operations revenues and is carefully watching the budget and implementation of service. Jennifer talked about efforts involved in moving staff to remote work. OCTA's transition was nearly seamless. She said by staff working remotely, OCTA has benefited the environment. For the timeframe of March through mid-August, there was a reduction of 1.3 million vehicle miles traveled, a reduction of 47,000 gallons of gasoline used and a reduction of 900,000 lbs. of greenhouse gas emissions.

Committee Member Comments:

Henry Michaels asked whether the 60% service level is for fixed-route service or paratransit. Jennifer Bergener said that is 60% of fixed-route service.

Henry Michaels asked about the sanitizing of the buses. When the committee last met, the buses were being sanitized in the evenings. He asked if they are now being sanitized throughout the day. Jennifer Bergener said the bus is thoroughly sanitized in the evenings and whenever they are brought back to the base during the day. Buses can be wiped down throughout the day if necessary.

Henry Michaels said at his facility the families are concerned about riding public transit due to the sanitization and would like to hear they are being sanitized on a more regular basis throughout the day.

Chair Sue Lau said on the fixed-route buses the hand sanitizing stations are not refilled throughout the day and she suggests they be refilled on the longer-haul buses. Jennifer Bergner said there is no good way to refill the dispensers mid-run, but OCTA is working to have a second set of dispensers on-board. She said the coach operators report back to the base on these issues.

Chair Sue Lau said sometimes riders do not wear their masks over their mouth and nose once seated on the bus and she wonders about enforcement. She suggested an announcement on the buses to remind riders to wear their masks once on-board. Jennifer Bergener said she would look into this.

4. ADA Eligibility Information Update

Gracie Davis said prior to the pandemic, OCTA was doing 100% in-person assessments and interviews. She said during the pandemic, a new certification contractor started. She said currently there is a temporary assessment process which includes phone interviews. Gracie presented eligibility statistics. She said it is now time to recruit members for the appeals process. Currently Chair Sue Lau, Vice Chair Paul Miller, and Brandi Kelly Contreras serve on this group. Gracie said this presentation will conclude with Item 5 by Efren Guzman Magaleno.

Committee Member Comments:

Paul Miller asked if there have been any appeals in the last month. Gracie Davis said OCTA just received one appeal yesterday and that is the first one since March.

Chair Sue Lau asked how many individuals she is looking for. Gracie Davis said she is looking for three more individuals. She said this committee will meet virtually and there is no set time.

Raymond Bueche said he would be interested in serving on the appeals committee. Bhumit Shaw said he would also participate.

5. Travel Training Program Update

Efren Guzman Magdaleno presented the Travel Training Program. He said at the beginning of the pandemic the team researched doing virtual travel training. Now OCTA is doing virtual workshops which includes COVID updates, safety, and trip planning information. These workshops are conducted via Zoom and OCTA makes the workshops interactive. Efren said OCTA worked with partners to come-up with a new hybrid travel training. This includes online training and in-field shadowing with social distancing protocols. The individuals ride the bus alone with the trainers getting them on the bus, then the trainer travels in their personal vehicle and follows the bus, and the trainer meets the individual at the end point. Efren thanked Dayle MacIntosh for their assistance. Efren also announced the next workshop dates and that staff is arranging the times.

Committee Member Comments:

Vice Chair Paul Miller thanked OCTA for collaborating with the Dayle MacIntosh Center. Paul said one of the OCTA Directors recently appointed Bhumit Shaw of Dayle MacIntosh Center to the committee.

Raymond Bueche asked if there could be a presentation to one of the classes in his school district. Efren Guzman Magdaleno said yes, OCTA would be happy to set this up.

6. Diversity Outreach and Inclusion Update

Ted Nguyen presented an update on OCTA's Diversity Outreach and Inclusion. Ted talked about the diversity in Orange County with Asian-Americans being the fastest growing group in the county. He said Orange County has a large number of diverse media outlets. He said next to Vietnam, Orange County has the largest Vietnamese outlet in the world. OCTA participates in many cultural events with interactive engagement activities. Ted talked about the multilingual COVID materials that OCTA has developed and the communications with multicultural groups. OCTA surveyed hard-to-reach audiences. Ted went through the survey results. OCTA created a stakeholder group that makes recommendations to OCTA and provides information to/from constituents. OCTA also works with LGBTQ+ and faith-based communities and engages in meaningful conversations.

7. Planning Studies Update

Marissa Espino presented two planning studies. First, she provided background on the South Orange County Multimodal Transportation Study (SOCMTS) which will

help create a long-term vision of transportation in the future. She said specifically OCTA is working on updating the 2008 South Orange County Major Investment Study (SOCMIS). Marissa provided an update on the projects in the 2008 study. She said the current study is looking out to the year 2024. Marissa talked about the study's goals, transportation issues, and deficiencies. She said the next steps include the initial screening of alternatives and concepts and going to the OCTA Board in February 2021. Marissa talked about the current survey for this study and public engagement.

Marissa Espino also provided information on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Freeways Study. She said this study is focused on the I-5 from Fullerton to Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo area and the SR-55 from Santa Ana to Hoag Hospital area. Marissa provided the schedule. Currently OCTA is in the Alternatives Development Stage. These alternatives are online and there is a survey for these alternatives on FreewayBusSurvey.com.

Committee Member Comments:

Chair Sue Lau thanked OCTA for organizing two Webinars on these planning studies.

8. Coordinated Public Transportation Human Services Plan

Kevin Khouri presented the 2020 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan. Kevin provided background on the plan, its objectives, and goals. This plan looks at gaps in the transportation system as it pertains to underserved communities. He talked about each of the goals in detail and the public outreach for the plan.

9. OC ACCESS Policy Update

Jack Garate said there are two policy updates. The first policy has to do with fare evasion. He said before the impacts of Covid-19, OCTA averaged over \$970 monthly incidences of fare evasion. Staff has made efforts to talk with riders about the situation, but most return to the habit of not paying after the conversation. Starting in January 2021, OCTA will inform riders by letter each month of the amount due to OCTA and inform individuals their evasion of the fare may lead to a suspension of service. He outlined a rolling suspension policy with a 7-day suspension after the second incident, a 14-day suspension after the third incident, a 21-day suspension after the fourth incident, a 28-day suspension after the fifth incident, and any incident after that within a rolling 12-month period. He said this is in alignment with the no-show policy.

The next policy is regarding a courtesy policy OCTA has that is not mandated by the ADA. This policy is a service request to not leave someone alone. OCTA will not be honoring this request going forward. All individuals who have used this service request will have a 60-day grace period. He said by providing this service, other customers experience delayed service when the coach operator has to wait.

Committee Member Comments:

Brandi Kelly Contreras asked what happens to the passenger when the coach operator leaves them. Jack Garate said paratransit service is an extension of the fixed-route service. The paratransit service is not intended for the coach operators to provide care. A Personal Care Assistant (PCA) is better suited to take care of individuals and OCTA will let individuals know that in the 60-day grace period letter. Brandi said when she was an ACCESS driver, she would call a law enforcement officer to meet the individuals if they are unattended. Jack said the ADA does not require a PCA, but drivers are not able to offer care. He said it will be a challenge at the beginning. Jack said law enforcement has run into the same issue as OCTA. They are not trained to handle these individuals' issues; therefore, they no longer take on this role. Brandi is worried that OCTA might be held accountable for the individual if something happens to them. Jack said drivers are not allowed to know a person's actual disability, so they may not know how to care for them. He said it is not without compassion that OCTA is considering this change. OCTA is hoping the individuals will be able to get the appropriate help via a PCA. Brandi suggested maybe a suspension of service if no one is meeting the individual. Jack said because this is not an ADA mandated service, OCTA can not do a suspension of service. The ADA does not mandate this because drivers do not have the level of knowledge or the ability to handle individuals' needs and therefore are putting OCTA at a greater risk. He said he will be happy to talk to Brandi more in-depth.

Chair Sue Lau asked when the policies will take effect. Jack Garate said with the fare evasion policy it will take effect January 2021. He said regarding the courtesy policy of not leaving individuals unattended, OCTA is still working on this policy, but there will be a 60-day grace period. Chair Lau asked what will be done by the driver if they notice someone who should not be left alone. Jack said every driver will see things differently, so this still needs to be finalized. He said if door-to-door service is requested, OCTA will still provide it – drivers will not just leave someone on the curb. Drivers will wait for a short period of time to see if someone comes for the passenger, then emergency contacts will be called. Unfortunately, this all causes disruption to the system. Chair Lau asked if there can be more than one emergency phone number and is there a way to make sure the phone number is a verified number. Jack said OCTA does not have that ability. He said OCTA will try to use all means available to make contact in an emergency situation. It is ultimately up to the person requesting the service to provide the correct information.

10 Reports

- *ACCESS Operations*

Jack Garate said ridership on ACCESS remains about 79% below pre-pandemic levels while Same-Day Taxi is only 23% of pre-pandemic levels. ACCESS fell as low as 91% below pre-pandemic levels and Same-Day Taxi fell to about 50-60% below pre-pandemic levels. The OC ACCESS vehicles have hand sanitizer available and are cleaned every evening. The Same-Day Taxi vehicles use sanitizers on high touch points between each use and vehicles go through sanitization every 3 days. All drivers are required to use face coverings while providing service. Jack said the latest newsletter will be out in the next few weeks and will provide all sanitizing information. He said the contract was extended for one year with CabCo for the Same-Day Taxi Service and the contract with Capital was extended until the end of August 2021. The EZ-Wallet pilot program is continuing, and more information will be given at the next meeting.

- *Senior Mobility Program (SMP)*

Joanne Jacobsen said the pandemic has hit the SMP hard. All senior centers within Orange County have been closed since mid-March. 22 programs are still offering service for essential trips, eight programs are providing meals for nutrition programs, and five programs are completely shut down. Joanne said several issues have come up. A transportation provider closed on May 31, 2020 leaving several cities with one month to fill that void. OCTA provided a temporary exception to the SMP Guidelines to let the cities find a provider without going through a competitive bid process. This exception goes through May 2021.

The guidelines were also modified temporarily for meal delivery services in lieu of trips to senior centers for nutrition. Another modification to guidelines involved the payment to the agencies for SMP services. The OCTA Board approved the withholding of bi-monthly funding to agencies not providing service. Agencies receive funds bi-monthly and have three years to use the funds. Once the agencies restart service, they will begin receiving funds once again and the three-year clock will start ticking. Joanne went over trip data. She said pre-pandemic, 275,000 trips were provided to seniors. In the last fiscal year that ended in June 2020, 199,000 trips were provided. Joanne said funding to the agencies also went down as well.

- *Marketing & Customer Engagement*

Stella Lin said marketing has pivoted to Covid-19 guidelines. Recently buses have switched back to using the front-door boarding. OCTA has also partnered with social service agencies to provide free masks for mutual customers. OCTA also partnered with the Orange County Health Office for special masks available at the OCTA store.

Committee Member Comments:

Chair Sue Lau asked when the OCTA Store is open. Stella Lin said it is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- **Committee Liaison Update**

Christina Byrne said she will update the committee if the next SNAC meeting will be virtual. Jared Hill will be asking for feedback on how Zoom and the virtual meeting worked. He will also provide a link to the information Marissa Espino shared during her presentation.

11. Committee Member Comments

Vice Chair Paul Miller said, “Go Dodgers” and remember to vote.

12. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned. The next scheduled meeting date is January 26, 2021.

**Special Needs Advisory Committee
Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Attendance Record**

● = Present ⊙ = Absent E = Excused Absence

Member	7/28/20	10/27/20	1/26/21	4/2/21
Bhumit Shah	NA	●		
Bob Tiezzi	⊙	⊙		
Brandi Kelly Contreras	●	●		
Caroline Wahlstrom	⊙	●		
Carolyn Inmon	●	●		
Cesar Hernandez	⊙	⊙		
Ellen Schenk	⊙	⊙		
Ericka Danczak	●	●		
Gloria Reyes	⊙	⊙		
Henry Michaels	●	●		
Isaac López	●	●		
Janice Almaraz	⊙	⊙		
John Ulrich	⊙	⊙		
Karyl Dupée	⊙	●		
Mallory Vega	●	⊙		
Mary Lou Shattuck	●	●		
Mike Gonzalez	●	●		
Morris "Jake" Schwartzberg	⊙	⊙		
Paul Miller	●	●		
Rachel Lurya	⊙	⊙		
Raymond Bueche	●	●		
Sandra Albear	●	⊙		
Sandra Stang	●	●		
Sandy Rains	NA	NA		
Sue Lau	●	●		
Terry Coakley	⊙	⊙		
Tom Krogstad	⊙	⊙		
Wayne Heidle	●	⊙		