



Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Human Service Transportation Office Overview

November 2021



Overview of the Human Service Transportation Office (HST)



- **Mission:** To promote access to health and human services, employment and community life by managing a statewide transportation brokerage network for eligible consumers and by providing technical assistance and outreach strategies in support of local mobility and transportation coordination efforts especially for transportation disadvantaged Massachusetts residents.
- **At the HST office we believe that transportation is part of healthcare for each and every consumer and member. We are working to change the culture within our systems so that our drivers, schedulers and dispatchers understand that they are a part of every member's healthcare team. At our core, our aim is to ensure the safety of the consumer and enable the consumers access to health care and human services.**



Overview of the Human Service Transportation Office (HST)



■ Transportation Programs are managed for six EOHHS agencies:

- MassHealth
- Department of Developmental Services
- Department of Public Health (Early Intervention)
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
- Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
- Department of Mental Health



HST Brokers



- EOHHS contracts with two Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) that function as brokers to provide direct transportation services to EOHHS consumers in three distinct HST Areas (HST1-3), which encompass all cities and towns within the Commonwealth.
- Each HST broker administers transportation services through subcontracting with qualified transportation providers in their HST Area(s).
- Collectively the two RTAs subcontract with over 300 different transportation providers in the Commonwealth.

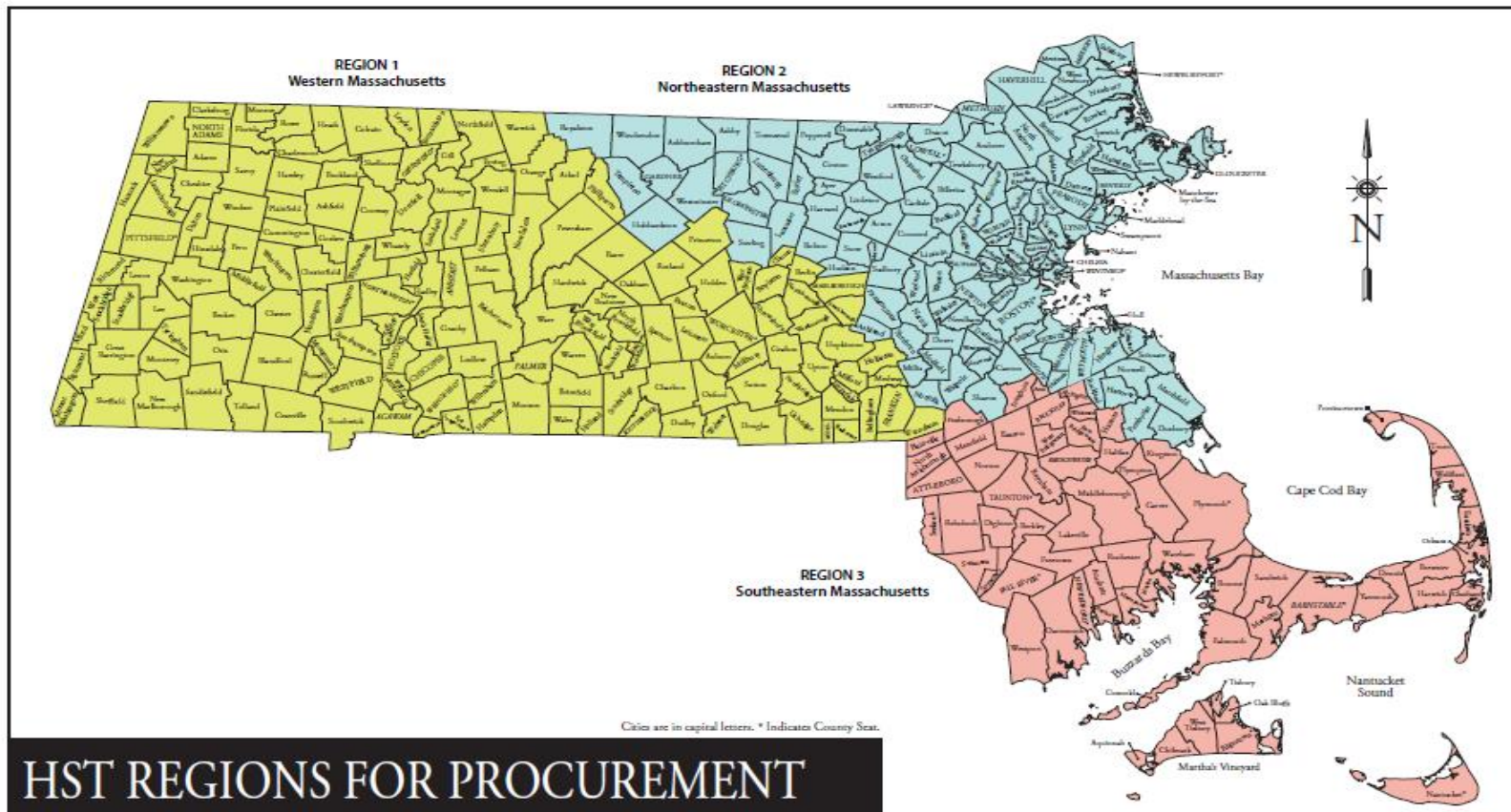


HST Regions



MART – Montachusett Regional Transit Authority – Regions 1 and 2

GATRA – Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority – Region 3





Brokerage Improvements as of 7/1/21

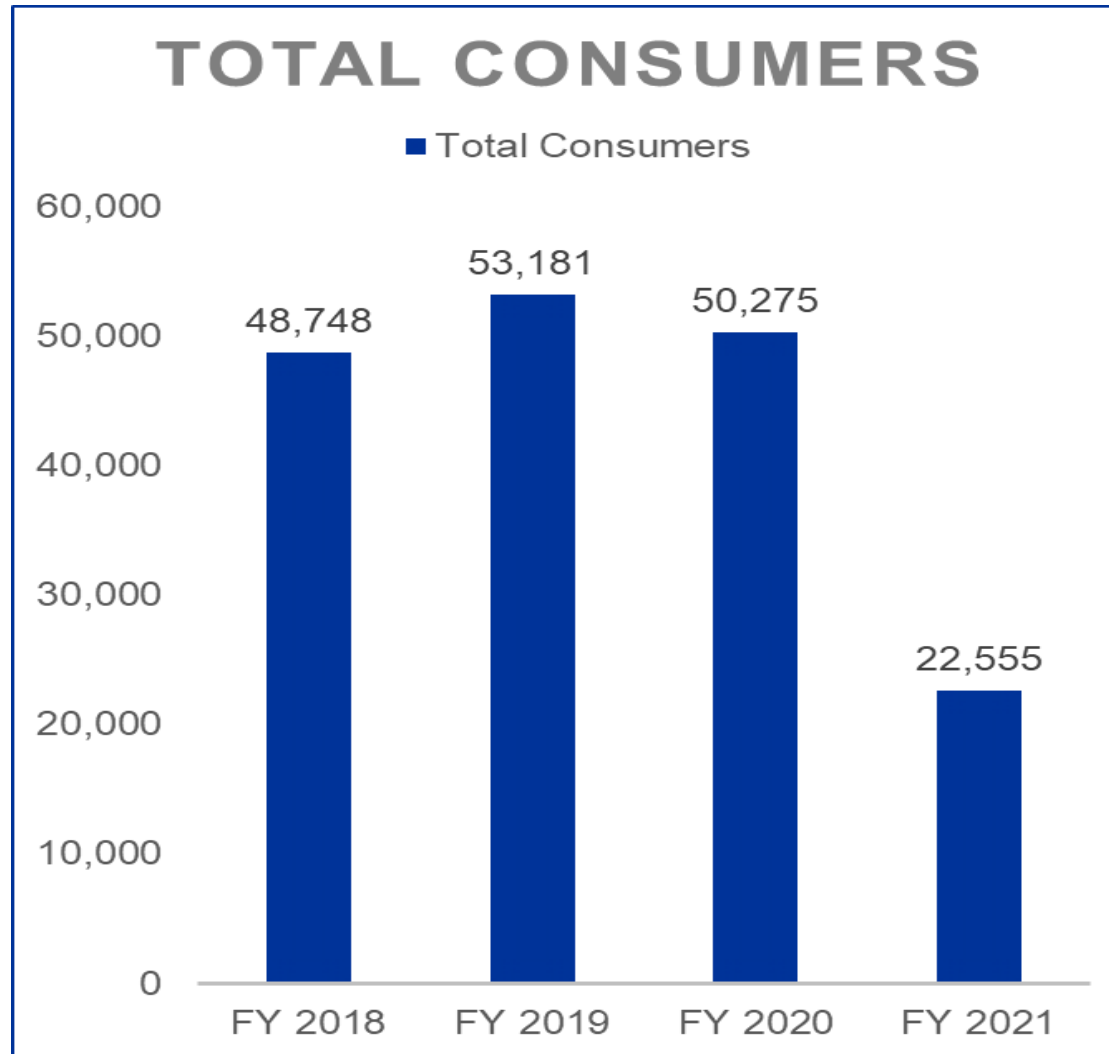


In response to consumer feedback, the new Brokerage contract includes:

- **Complaints Process** – Resolve 95% of complaints within 3 business days, 100% within 10 business days, HST phone and email publicized for complaints
- **Call Wait Times** – Contract requires that all calls be answered in under 3 minutes
- **On-time performance and reliability** – GPS systems required on all Demand Response vehicles to provide on time data beginning in January.
- **Driver & Vehicle Safety Standards** – Quality & Assurance team within the HST office with 4 Compliance Officers triples the number of field visits

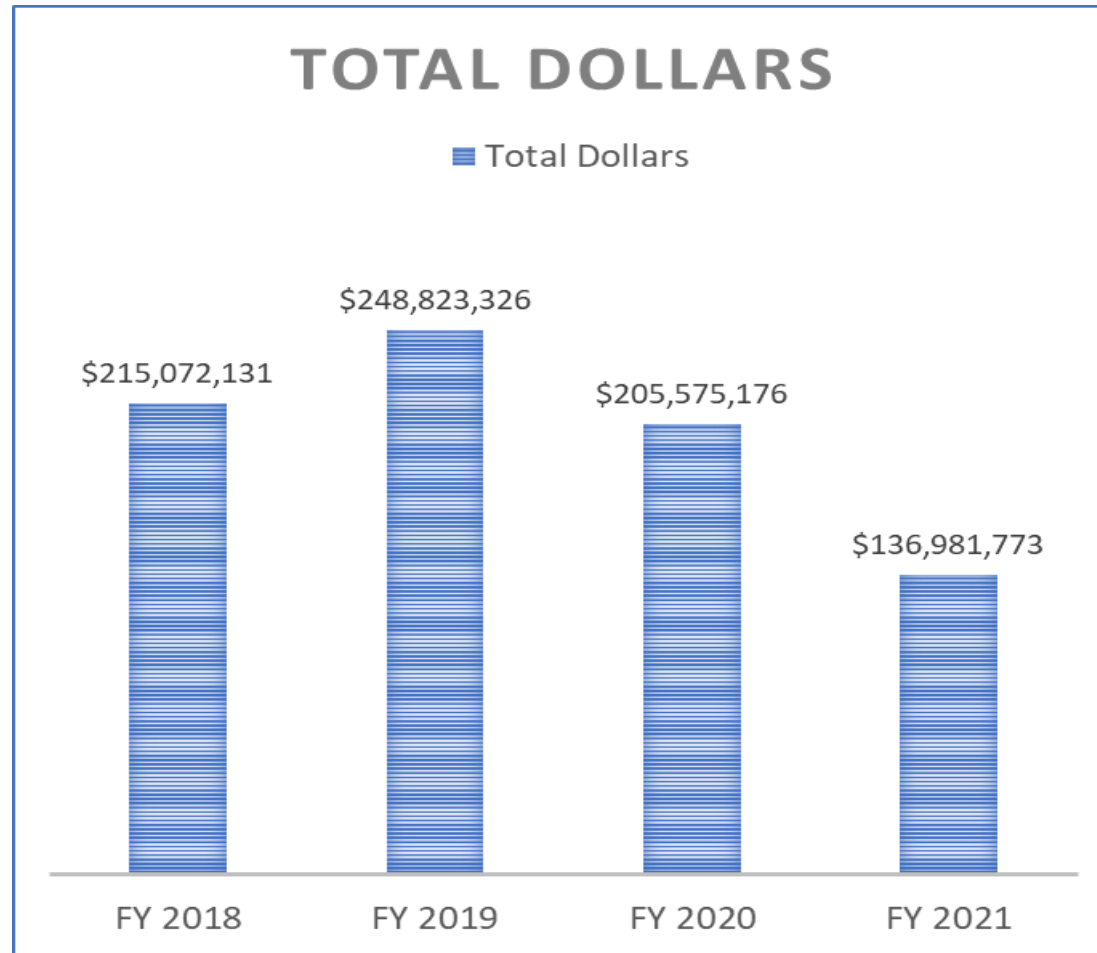


HST – Total Consumers Information



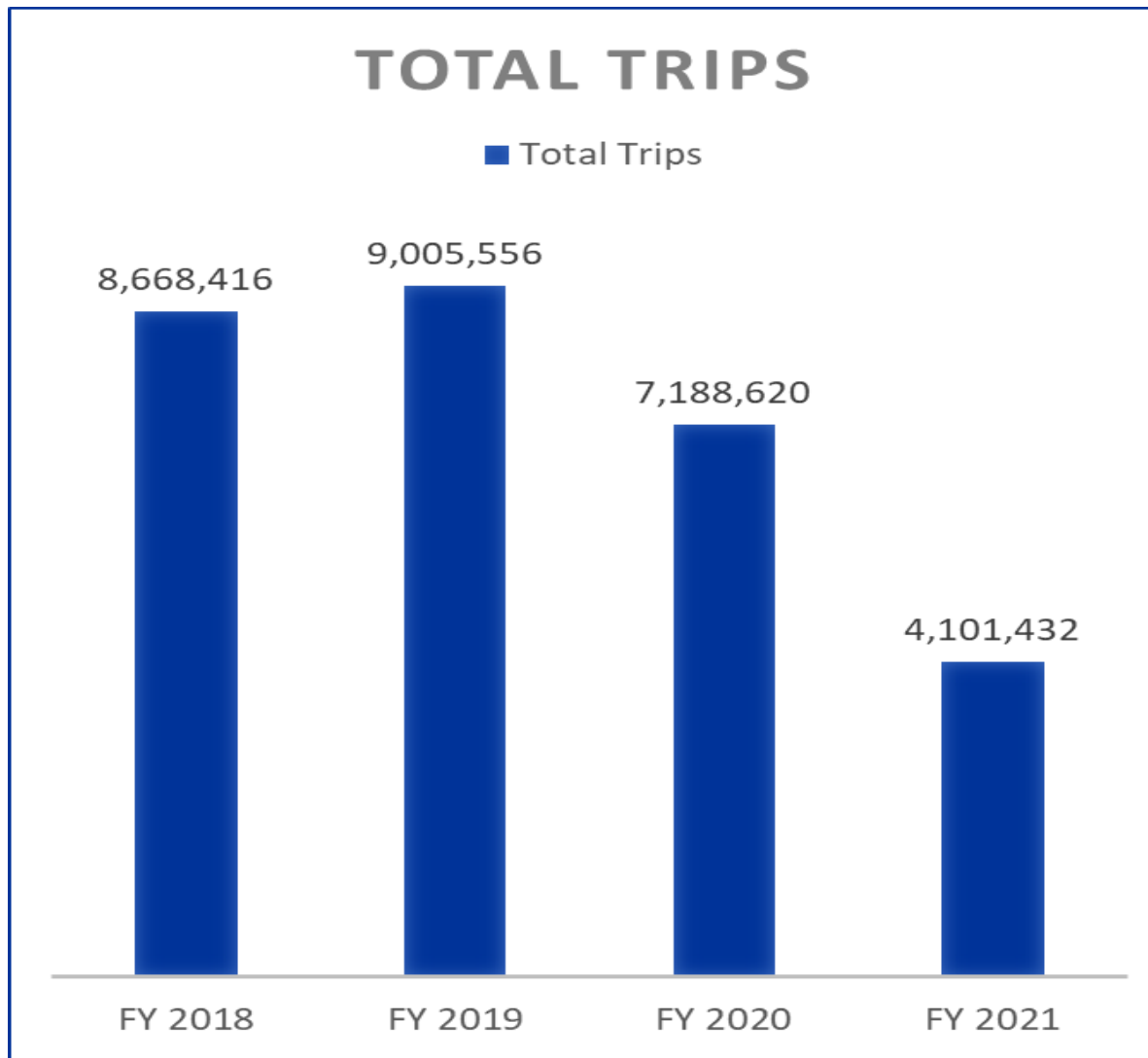


HST – Total Dollars Information





HST – Total Trips Information





HST – Average Cost per Trip Information





HST & Partner Agencies



- The HST Office values the partnerships that we have forged with our purchasing agencies, brokers, vendors and advocacy groups. We share the priority of getting our consumers to their medical and human service programs safely, with respect and on time. Recent examples include:
 - Bi-weekly meetings with the Boston Center for Independent Living to improve consumer facing information.
 - Broker orientation sessions for consumers prior to the implementation of advanced technologies
 - Bi-weekly meetings with DDS and Day Hab representatives as programs re-opened following pandemic closures.
 - Working with DPH to establish safe operating procedures to ensure the health and safety of consumers during the pandemic.



Roles and Accountabilities – HST Office



HST Office

- Negotiates Broker Services Contract, management fee, and direct service rates
- Establishes standards to ensure member/consumer safety
- Monitors broker performance through field inspections and service quality metrics
- Addresses day to day issues with agencies, programs, and consumers
- Collects and analyzes Broker performance data
- Monitors cost effectiveness
- Works with Brokers and agencies to improve the member/consumer experience



Roles and Accountabilities – Broker



Broker

- Procure contracts with transportation providers
- Processes Transportation Requests in accordance with consumer's needs and conduct consumer surveys
- Manages the entire service delivery network within its HST Service Area;
- Verifies the eligibility of all MassHealth members;
- Responsible for the satisfactory performance of each of its subcontractors
- Facilitate access to available public transit (if applicable)
- Maintains communications capability Monday through Friday from 7AM – 6PM to receive and respond to telephone requests from the agencies or consumers



Roles and Accountabilities – Subcontractor/Vendor



Subcontractor/ Vendor

- Provides the appropriate level of assistance to members/consumers accordance with transportation requests and meeting Service Provider Performance Standards established by the HST office
- Submits insurance, billing and attendance to the Broker
- Conducts CORI and background checks on all drivers
- Arranges for fingerprinting of drivers who transport DDS consumers
- Is never to leave a consumer stranded



Roles and Accountabilities – Purchasing Agency



Purchasing Agency

- Determines member eligibility for transportation services
- Reviews and pays monthly bills for direct transportation costs to the Brokers
- Communicates operations concerns to the HST office
- DDS approves trip costs for consumers and routing



MassHealth Transportation



- **The HST Office Brokers two types of Non-Emergency Medical transportation for eligible MassHealth members:**
 - ***Demand-Response PT-1 Transportation:** transportation provided to eligible MassHealth members to MassHealth covered services such as routine medical appointments and ongoing, life-sustaining medical treatment.
 - ***Program-Based Transportation:** Transportation to and from a specific destination, such as the site of a day habilitation or clubhouse program, on a regularly scheduled basis.
- *RTA Brokers are required to award all trips and routes to the lowest priced and qualified bidder. Program based routes are competitively procured every five years by the RTA Brokers.*



Demand Response PT-1 Transportation



Demand-Response PT-1 transportation is authorized with a PT-1 form, completed and submitted by the MassHealth member's provider and sent to Maximus (MassHealth's Customer Service Center) for adjudication.

- PT-1 forms are filled out and submitted on-line by MassHealth medical providers
- PT-1 forms may be used to authorize multiple trips to a particular location within a period of up to six (6) months for acute illness; and up to year for chronic illness.
- PT-1 forms should be submitted at least three (3) business days before the date transportation is to occur.



Demand Response PT-1 Transportation (continued)



- **PT-1 transportation is only authorized to transport eligible members to and from MassHealth covered services.**
- **Members provided PT-1 transportation may be transported with other members, unless the provider submitting the forms attests that a member's medical condition requires that the member not share a vehicle. Providers must identify the medical or behavioral condition requiring a non-shared ride.**
- **If the destination is more than 25 miles away from a member's residence, the provider must justify why the member must go to that location as opposed to a closer one.**



Accomplishments



- **During the Pandemic HST Transportation persevered**
 - **Provided continuous service during the pandemic**
 - **All rides requested were fulfilled**
 - **Resumption of day programs and the ramp up of transportation which had been shut down for months**
 - **Surveyed Day Program consumers throughout on service quality and driver adherence to COVID procedures**
 - **Complaints were being processed in a timely manner**
 - **Increased volume of field visits and reviews conducted by both HST Compliance Officers and the brokers**



Challenges and Ongoing Improvements



- **Workforce challenges – loss of vendors, vehicles, drivers and call center staff during the pandemic**
- **Adoption of website and web portal – we together with our brokers have work to do to ensure it is accessible and user friendly, and sufficiently publicized to the population.**
- **Making progress around data and metrics as the technology is further developed.**
- **Seeing marked improvement in call wait times as of October 15th when MART supplemented their call center with an outside vendor. Call wait times are now under 3 minutes.**



Questions



Questions?