

# Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force

Meeting Minutes  
February 14, 2022  
2:00 - 3:30 pm

Date of meeting: Monday, February 14, 2022

Start time: 2:00 pm

End time: 3:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating remotely		Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	<b>Alda Rego</b> (chair) – EOHHS ( <i>designee of Elizabeth Denniston</i> )	A	X
2	<b>Tom Cahir</b> – Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (RTA)	X	X
3	<b>Sean Cristofori</b> – Center of Hope Foundation	X	X
4	<b>Mindy Domb</b> – MA House of Representatives	X	X
5	<b>Bruno Fisher</b> – Montachusett RTA	X	X
6	<b>Frank Gay</b> – Greater Attleboro-Taunton RTA (GATRA)	X	X
7	<b>Millie Hernandez</b> – Individual with lived experience	X	X
8	<b>Chris Hoeh</b> – Disability Law Center	X	X
9	<b>Joe Krajewski</b> – Community Connections	X	X
10	<b>Catherine Mick</b> – Commonwealth Medicine	X	X
11	<b>Susan Moran</b> – MA Senate	X	X
12	<b>Mathew Muratore</b> – MA House of Representatives	X	X
13	<b>Patrick O'Connor</b> – MA Senate	-	-
14	<b>Jessica Podesva</b> – Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL)	X	X
15	<b>Stephen Salwak</b> – South Shore Community Action Council	X	X
16	<b>Leo Sarkissian</b> – The Arc of Massachusetts	A	X
17	<b>Meredith Slesinger</b> – MassDOT	X	X
18	<b>Sharna Small Borsellino</b> – Human Services Transportation (HST)	X	X

\* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

## Proceedings

Alda Rego, Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance, called the meeting of the Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force to order at 2:00 pm. She welcomed members and explained that she would be chairing the Task Force meeting while Undersecretary Denniston is away on maternity leave. She noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

**Vote to approve minutes from the 11/3/2021 meeting:** Assistant Secretary Rego requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Task Force's previous meeting on November 3, 2021. Senator Moran introduced the motion, which was seconded by Administrator Fisher and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Task Force members briefly introduced themselves and their respective affiliations during the vote.

Assistant Secretary Rego reviewed the meeting's agenda as well as the Task Force's charge. She invited members to share their goals and expectations for the Task Force.

- Director Sarkissian stated that the Task Force should work towards prioritizing shorter drive times and flexibility for HST consumers.
- Senator Moran proposed that the work of the Task Force should encourage a renewed customer service focus, with the goal of expanding ridership and creating efficiencies.
- Representative Domb proposed that the Task Force organize public hearings to gather feedback from HST consumers, families, and members of the healthcare community whose patients utilize HST services.
- Administrator Slesinger stated that the Task Force should ensure it is measuring progress over time and working towards data-driven decisions.
- Mr. Hoeh stressed that safety and reliability should remain the goal of HST services and he noted that he saw vast improvements to HST services after robust feedback from the previous RFI process. He added that his hope is for HST to continue seeking improvements, listen to consumer feedback, and ensure accountability from brokers and vendors. He encouraged HST to undertake outreach efforts to former HST consumers and promote recent system improvements implemented under the new contract.
- Mr. Krajewski noted that he hopes the Task Force will take into consideration the perspective of providers and the challenges they may be facing with regard to vehicles and staffing, to ensure that transportation services remain efficient and effective.
- Ms. Mick stated that the Task Force review the existing subcontractor provisions and standards to ensure that safety, quality, and consumer experience remain the focus. She added her support for public listening sessions to gather feedback from stakeholders on the effectiveness of the new contract and service delivery models implemented in July 2021.
- Ms. Podesva voiced her support for public listening sessions, particularly a hybrid format of in-person and virtual to encourage greater participation. She stated that HST services make up a critical part of the larger healthcare system and added that consumers have highlighted that the process for applying for services and certifying eligibility has been cumbersome and could be streamlined. She requested a clarification on the eligibility criteria for individuals who use HST services, particularly if they are unable to use public transportation.
- Administrator Gay stated that public transit remains a useful resource for consumers and added his support for organizing listening sessions, particularly on Cape Cod.
- Director Small Borsellino proposed that the Task Force review MassHealth transportation regulations and ensure that vendors view transportation as a part of every member's healthcare.
- Administrator Cahir noted that a comparison of service costs from the previous contract would be helpful for ensuring that an adequate level of service is maintained for consumers.

Director Small Borsellino provided an overview of the HST broker reprocurement, which was implemented to improve consumer experiences and the quality of transportation services, based on extensive stakeholder engagement and listening sessions to gather feedback from consumers and providers across the Commonwealth. For additional details, refer to Director Small Borsellino's presentation posted to the Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

In response to a question from Senator Moran regarding measuring and monitoring improvements to the HST system, Director Small Borsellino explained that the HST office has maintained a dedicated Mass.gov page for monthly reports, which include detailed HST metrics, including number of trips provided, call center response times, and on-time performance metrics (<https://www.mass.gov/lists/human-service-transportation-reports>).

Administrators Fisher and Gay provided a detailed overview of the recent broker technology improvements and call center investments that MART and GATRA have implemented within the past year. These improvements included a new consumer smartphone application for booking and managing trips and submitting feedback; an enhanced member portal, which allows consumers to book and manage rides through any web browser; a new facility portal to improve the process for facilities to book and manage rides on behalf of their clients; and the creation of QRYde supplier and driver applications for vendors. For additional details, refer to the MART and GATRA Brokerage Technology Improvements presentation posted to the Non-Emergency Human Service Transportation Task Force's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Assistant Secretary Rego stated that additional Task Force meetings will be scheduled for April, June, September, and November 2022, with the Task Force's final report submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2022.

In response to suggestions from Task Force members, Assistant Secretary Rego and Director Small Borsellino noted that additional information on the process for determining transportation eligibility and an overview of the consumer complaints process would be provided at the Task Force's April meeting.

**Vote to adjourn:**

Assistant Secretary Rego requested a motion to adjourn. Senator Moran introduced the motion, which was seconded by Representative Muratore and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.