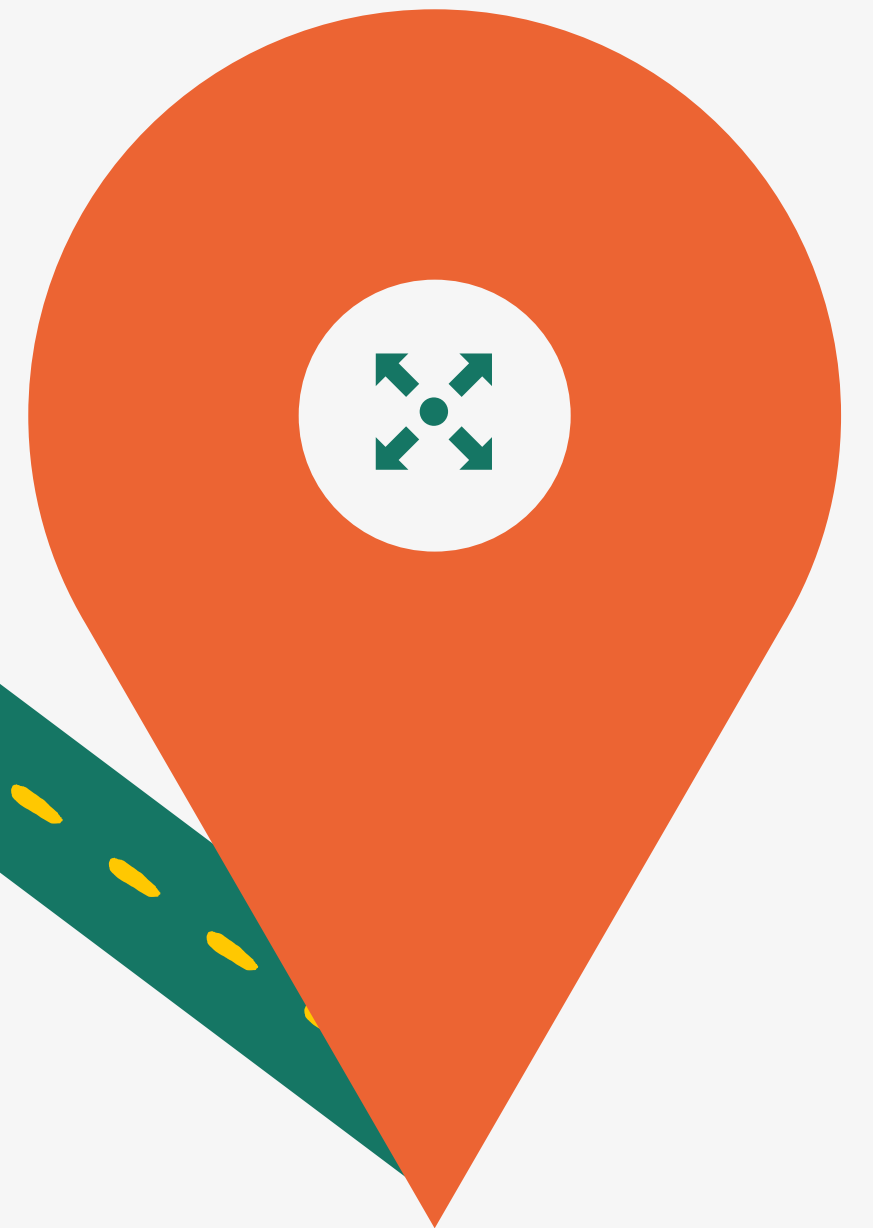




Community Choices Inc.

**Getting from A to B –
*Starting and Running a
Successful Transportation
Program***



TRANSPORTATION

A Major Barrier for People with I/DD

MOST FREQUENTLY CITED BARRIER


- Local Needs Assessments
- Surveys from ISCs
- CQL - recent article released

BURDEN ON FAMILIES

- Families end up being a defacto transportation service

CHALLENGE FOR PROVIDERS

- Community Life is limited because transportation is not available



You can't be part of the community if you can't get there!



Context...

Community Choices

A Human Services Cooperative that provides supports in the areas of:

CONNECT

- Social Opportunities
- 1:1 Social Coaching
- Family Support & Education
- Member Parties & Events

EMPLOYMENT

- Workforce Empowerment Program for first time job seekers and job readiness skills
- 1:1 Customized Employment Services - Discovery, Job Development, & Coaching

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & LIVING

- HBS Self-Direction Assistance
- Resource Coordination
- Skill Building
- Housing Searches

103
Members

150 Family
Members

18 Staff

Champaign County

Champaign County is 27 x 36 mi and includes both:

SEMI-URBAN

Champaign-Urbana has population of around 240,000. It's a diverse community, home to the University of Illinois flagship campus.

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural towns in Champaign County have populations ranging from 200 to 1500.

Low Engagement

Transportation had never been a part of Community Choices services, despite our fully community-based services

After the height of the COVID pandemic, we were experiencing a number of barriers to success with our services.

Less engagement with 1:1 Services

We were seeing participants frequently missing meetings, interviews, or not following through on their

Less Participation in Events

We did not have any transportation services built into our programs, so participants needed to a ride or use the bus

Staff were frustrated with the lower response to their efforts

We were finding it difficult to move forward on people's goals because there was a general apathy for change and community involvement

VOLUNERABILITY

Participants reported feeling unsafe riding th bus, worried that they would be taken advantage of or get lost in an unknown part of the community.

For those who were able to afford Uber/Lyft, they were uncomfortable being alone with an unknown driver.



INCONVENIENT

The Champaign-Urbana Community has an excellent mass transit system and some options for rural routes. But participants still felt that it was inconvenient and time consuming.



EXPENSIVE

Participants could not afford the cost of using Uber/Lyft for rides regularly.



Understanding the Need

As transportation became a bigger issue in the disability services field, we wanted to better understand the barriers to our services and what held people back from using existing transportation options. We surveyed $\frac{2}{3}$ of our Membership

Designing the Structure

DOOR to DOOR RIDES

Participants can get rides to and from locations of their choosing.

Rides are allowed for nearly all purposes. Exceptions only for:

- Events sponsored by other disability specific organizations

COMMUNICATION

- Ride Reservation Confirmations
- Ride Reminders
- Drop Off Confirmations with a Contact Person

ARRIVAL REMINDERS

- Call, Text, or Knock on Door

RIDE ALLOWANCE

INITIALLY: 8 Rides per Month
increased to 12 rides in the first few months

YEAR 2: Increased to ~~10~~ 16 Rides per month

HOURS

MONDAY - FRIDAY

- 8AM - 8PM

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

- Requests must be submitted by 12pm the day before

SERVICE AREA

Rides can pick up and drop off anywhere in Champaign County.

This is due to our funding being specific to residents and tax levies within our county

KNOWN DRIVERS

Driver schedules are consistent and communicated to riders ahead of their appointments.

Drivers use their own cars, so the user experience is very similar to Uber

Implementation



Understanding Need

- Survey
- Info Session
- Focus Group



Piloting the Process

- 1 Week
- 12 Volunteer Individual Families
- Existing Staff Worked as Drivers



Accessing Funding

- Champaign County 377 Board
- Transportation was a Priority Funding Area
- Funding Application: Feb -
Program start: Jul

Intentional Limitations

LIMITED RIDES

- We don't want to be everything to anyone.
 - Not intended to meet every transportation need.
 - Focus on providing and ADDITIONAL resource
 - This also helped create equity between members

We believe that people with I/DD should have access to all the resources in the community, not just those that are specific to people with disabilities.



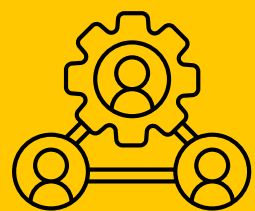
SUPPORT TO LEARN ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- We provide support to:
 - Learn the Bus System & Ride Shares
 - Access tools that support safety and comfort while using community resources

We want our members and their families to feel comfortable and confident using a range of services! This provides additional options and back-up supports - which is something WE ALL NEED.



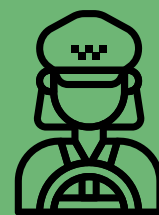
Staff Roles



COORDINATOR

Responsible for:

- Managing incoming ride requests
- Managing and updating the daily ride schedule including assigning drivers
- Providing coaching support for bus and ride share use
- Acting as a back up driver when needed
- Completing documentation including tracking ride usage.



DRIVERS (x4)

Responsible for:

- Picking up riders according to the schedule
- Being available during their scheduled shift
- Communicating arrival and confirming drop off with riders and contact people
- Using and maintaining their own vehicles

DRIVER NOTE:

Compensation:

- Drivers are still paid for their full shift, EVEN IF they do not have scheduled rides
- Mileage is paid at the Federal rate

How does it work?

1

Request a Ride

Requests can be made by:

- Calling Our Coordinator
- Texting our Coordinator
- Emailing
- Using our Online Request Form

Coordinator Checks the Calendar and Confirms

When the ride is on the schedule, the coordinator reaches out to confirm:

- Date/Time
- Pickup/Drop Off
- Contact person/Confirmation

2

3

Add it to the Calendar

The ride is then logged on the Master Google Calendar

- In each event, the pick up and drop off location are linked
- The person and any contact info is included

4

Drivers Assignment & Routes

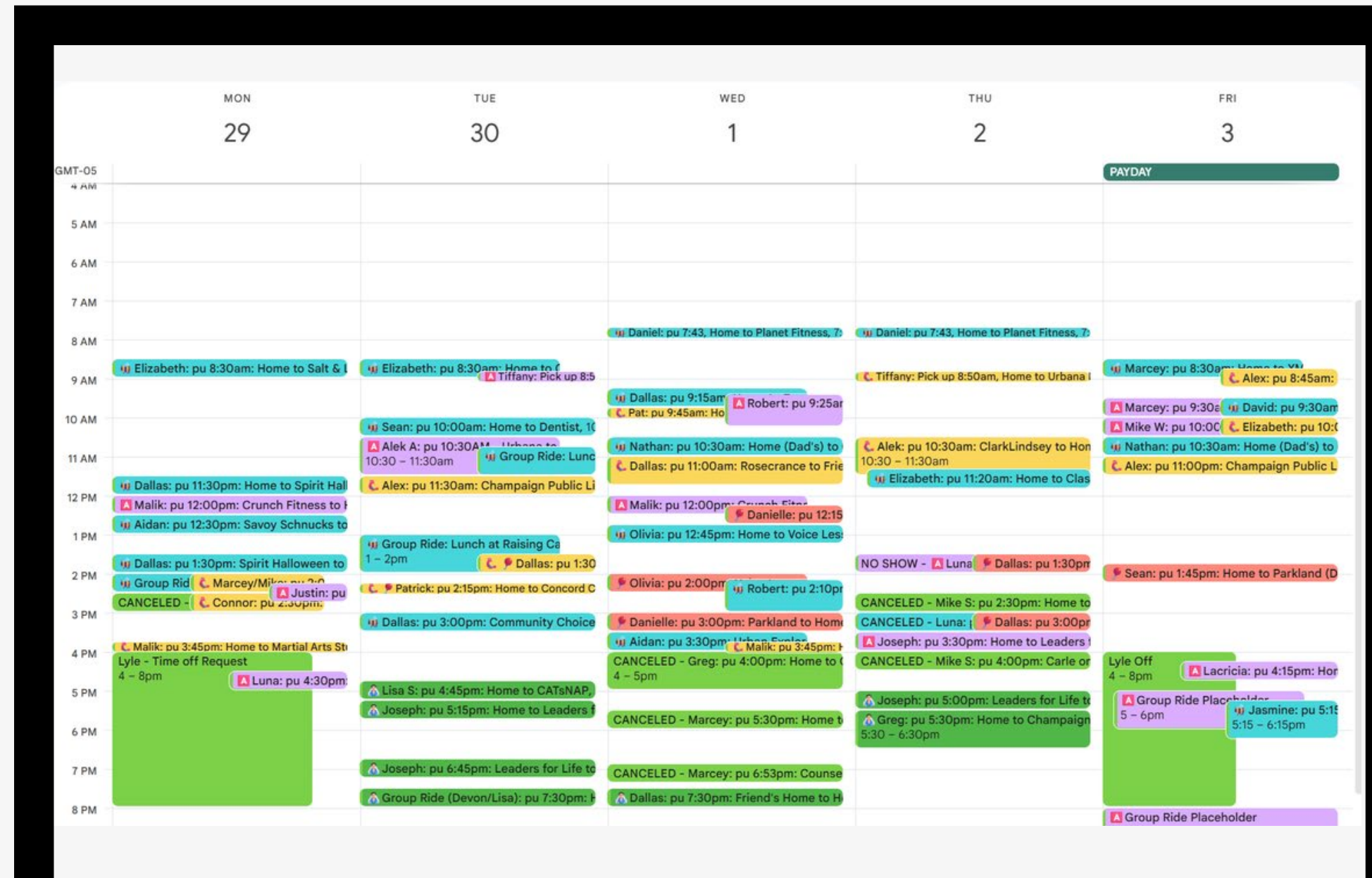
The Drivers Access the Calendar to see

- Their rides
- Links to google maps
- Any support info and contact needs

What does it look like?

WEEK AT A GLANCE

- Drivers are Color Coded
- Rides include the **person** and the **pick up time** in the title for quick understanding



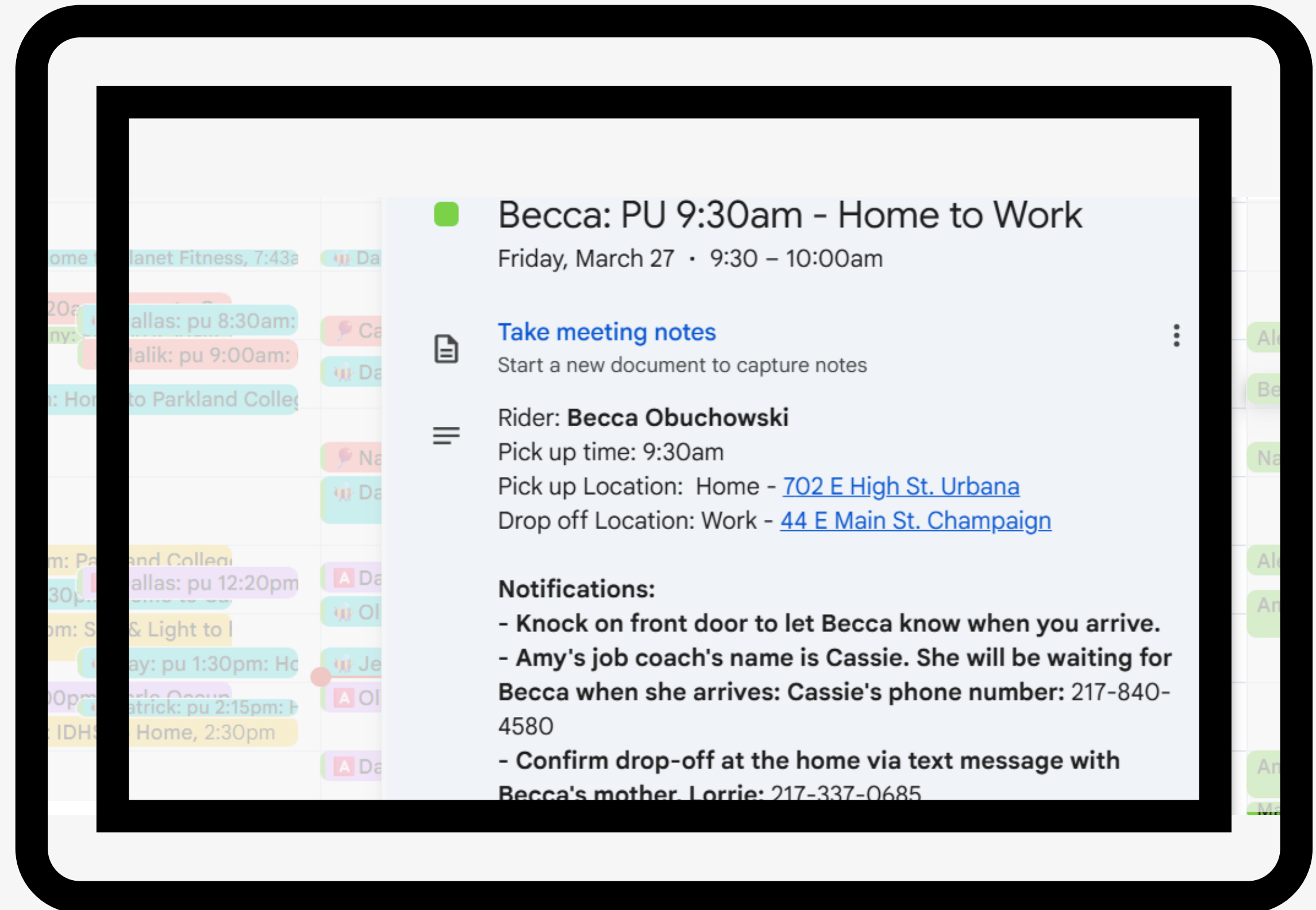
In detail...

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

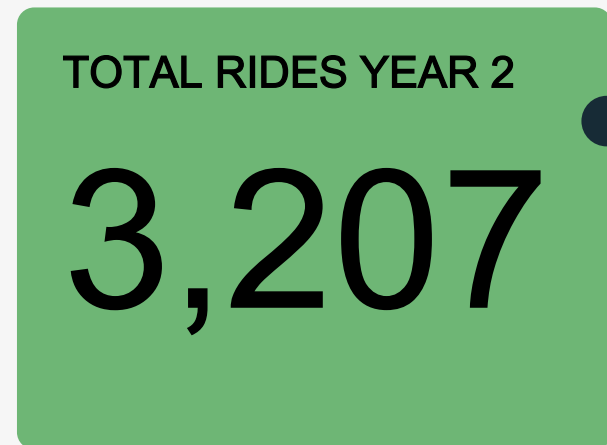
- Person & Contact info
- How they want to be contacted
- Pick up & Drop Off Locations - LINKED to the google map
- If the person needs a drop off confirmation with a parent or support person

DRIVER VIEW

- Events are easy to access for drivers with the google calendar app

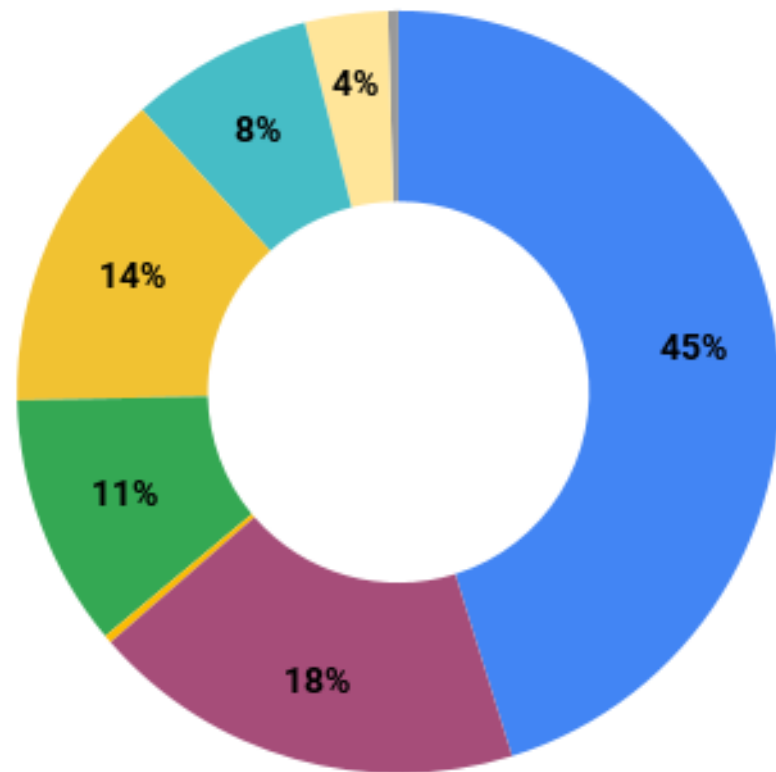


How is the program used?

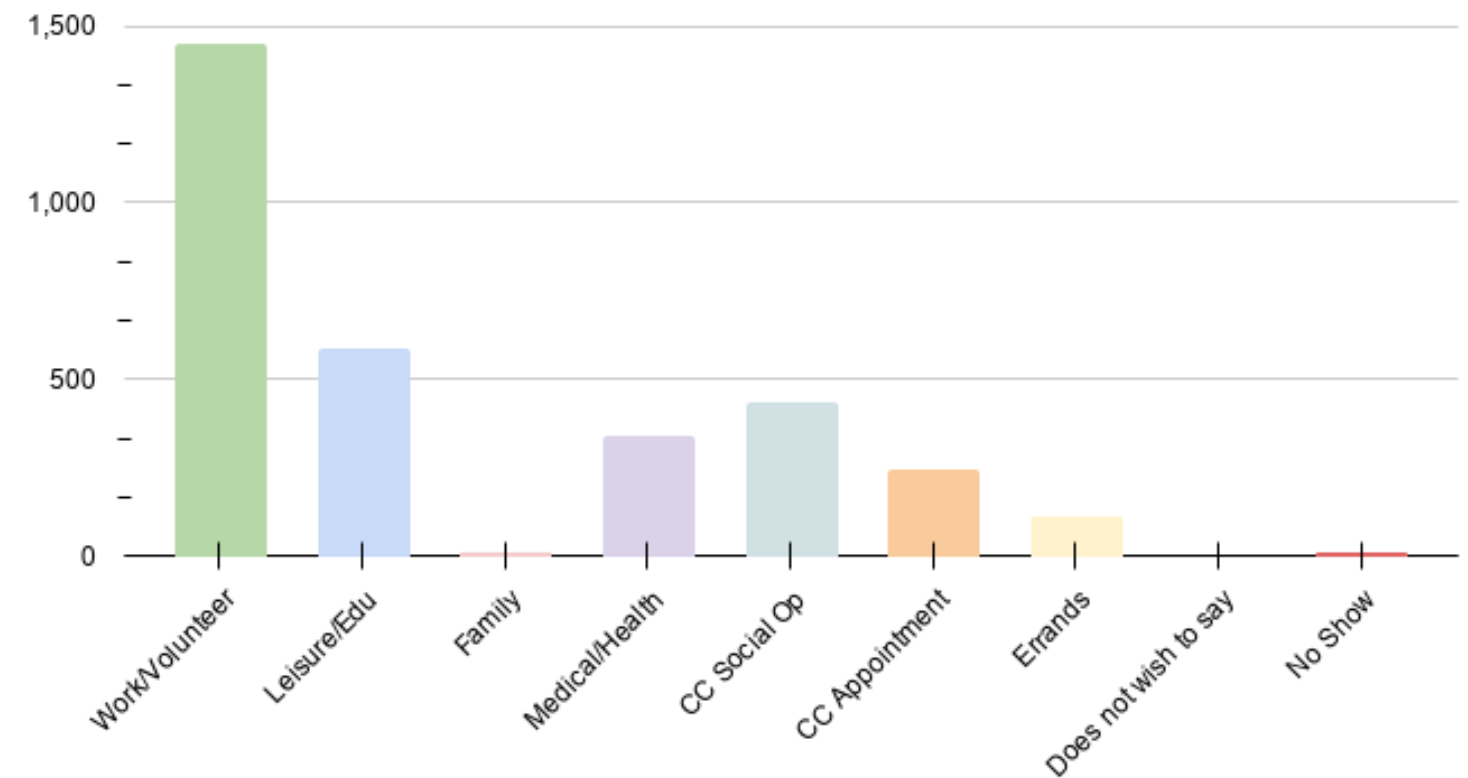


Rides by Type Percentage

- Work/Volunteer
- Leisure/Edu
- Family
- Medical/Health
- CC Social Op
- CC Appointment
- Errands
- No Show



FY25 RIDE BREAKDOWN



What was the impact?

“My son feels very independent being able to use the transportation program to get home after his volunteer job. He is always proud of himself when I get home later and ask about his day that he was able to get home with support.”

“The rides were for work only and this is the most reliable transportation my son has received in the 10 years he has been at his job. Driver is always on time picking up my son and getting him to work on time.”

“The transportation program has helped my son be much more independent in all aspects of his social activities. He is also more confident and interested in other options for transportation independence. He recently agreed to explore using the MTD Paratransit bus as he sees others use at times.”

What did we measure?

IMPACT ON:

EMOTIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE

- STRESS LEVEL/WELLBEING
- FEELING IN CONTROL
- FEELING RESPECTED AND EQUAL



**83% - better
w/ service**

IMPACT ON:

COMMUNITY ACCESS

- ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN LIFE WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS
- ABILITY TO MAINTAIN JOB
- ABILITY TO PURSUE INTERESTS



**85% - better
w/ service**

IMPACT ON:

CONFIDENCE IN COMMUNITY TRAVEL

- BEING IN THE COMMUNITY
- TRAVELING IN THE COMMUNITY
- USING TECHNOLOGY TO AROUND TRANSPORT



**82% - better
w/ service**

IMPACT ON:

GENERAL QUALITY OF LIFE

- GENERAL QUALITY OF LIFE



**88% - better
w/ service**

Administrative Elements

INSURANCE

We worked with our insurance company add additional coverage to our policy.

Drivers are also required to maintain a certain level of coverage.

POLICY & TRAINING

Unlike our other staff, Drivers must complete a DMV background check to be eligible for the position. Certain offenses make them ineligible.

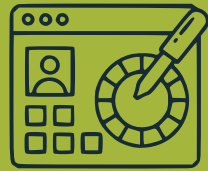
Drivers also complete a Safe Drivers Course prior to starting.

STAFF SCHEDULING

Key to the success and sustainability of this program is our driver scheduling policy.

Drivers are paid their entire schedule shift, even if they have no rides schedule. They know their schedules the day before.

FUTURE PLANS & LIMITATIONS



LOGISTICS SOFTWARE

Mapping and Scheduling at Capacity

In the search for tech that will:

- Automated Mapping & Scheduling
- Automatic communications
- User interface/App for planning and coordination



TRANSPORTATION COACHING

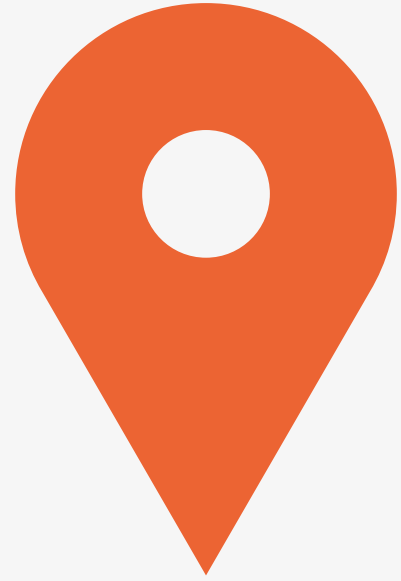
Participants have been slow to use our coaching supports for community resources.

We'll be introducing orientations and targeted coaching for people with extensive transport needs.

VEHICLE ACCESSIBILITY

We currently don't have any accessible vehicles. This is a barrier we haven't been able to address yet.





THANK YOU! Questions?

For more information, please don't hesitate to reach out!

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