# *Client Policy and User Guide*

Adopted Board of Directors
Resolution #2016/10/27-5

Modified
**MOTION (#2019/06/20-04)**
**MOTION (#2022/02/17-07)**
**MOTION (#2023/01/19/04)**
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## 1. Policy Objectives

TransporAction Pontiac, hereinafter referred to as TAP, is a non-profit organization mandated by the MRC Pontiac to provide paratransit and collective transportation on the MRC's territory. TAP objectives are to organize, provide, and maintain a rural paratransit and collective transportation service within the territory of the Pontiac MRC by fostering the mobility of its rural citizens and the sustainable development of its communities.

Transportation services are provided mainly by means of established minibus routes and by volunteer drivers.

This present policy has been prepared by TAP and replaces any previous policy incompatible with this present policy.

## 2. General Provisions

TAP recognizes the value and the importance of providing a quality service to the citizens of the MRC municipalities. To ensure offering optimal services and making the organization more and more effective and efficient, TAP has set this present policy applicable to the client/users of TAP transportation services.

Paratransit transport for the disabled served by TAP is a transportation service for persons who have been admitted according to the criteria contained in the Quebec department of Transport policy regarding paratransit transport.

Collective transport is a transportation service other than paratransit transport that is available to MRC citizens in accordance with needs and available resources.

TAP is subject to several laws, regulations, policies, and programs. This policy meets such requirements but in the event of divergence, the laws, regulations, policies and programs shall prevail.

## 3. Prerequisites

To be eligible for TAP services, the individual (client/user) must first complete the TAP information sheet and deliver any document required. The user must notify TAP of any change in his/her situation or physical condition that could affect eligibility.

At any time when requested, the client must provide to TAP with any document and information as required.

## 4. Dispatch and Transport Bookings

TAP is responsible for the dispatching and assignment of transport. The client may not request a different dispatch than that assigned by TAP.

Pairing shall be applied as effectively as possible, and the fees paid by the user remain the same. Clients may not request a pairing.

Users must reserve transportation 48 business hours prior the transportation event.

A requested transportation for Monday must be booked on or before the preceding Thursday before 4 p.m.

All reservations must be made by phone Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The authorized number of transports is limited to **three per week per user**, regardless of the reason for the request. TAP processes each request **based on driver availability**, and no service guarantee can be provided when resources are limited.

The cancellation of a transport request must be made **at least 24 hours in advance** with the TAP office. The user must comply with these conditions; otherwise, fees will be charged based on the distance traveled by the driver, with a **minimum of $15**.

When booking, the user must include all information necessary to perform the service including full name, date of required transport, exact addresses of departure and destination, number of stops, time of arrival at destination, estimated duration of appointment, if possible, use of a wheelchair, scooter, or other forms of aid or orthotic, and the presence authorized or unauthorized escort.

Users must always contact the TAP dispatch service to reserve or cancel transport. No transportation can be booked directly with the driver, the cancellation of a transport must be done directly with TAP and, if possible, with the driver.

No confirmation call is required for regular paratransit travel. Regular travel is a recurring trip, one that is made at least once a week, at a set time, with the same points of origin and destination, and for a minimum period of 3 months.

Notwithstanding the preceding, a user must notify, at least 24 hours in advance of any cancellation or modification of the scheduled regular travel, failing which, a fee will be charged.

On a holiday, regular travel is automatically cancelled unless TAP advises otherwise.

The client must call for each public transport required unless the transport is using residual paratransit spaces; in such case, no confirmation call is necessary for this regular transport.

Waiting for more than 4 hours TransporAction Pontiac, will charge a 2nd user fee if a second transportation is necessary due to not being able to carpool. <u>If the second transport is not made, the waiting time will be charged.</u>

## 5. Paratransit Service Conditions

Users who wish to benefit from TAP paratransit services must abide by the following conditions:

- Make reservations within the prescribed timeframes;
- Pay for transportation at departure in accordance with the TAP rate policy;
- Be ready to board the vehicle 10 minutes before the scheduled time, it being understood that the driver will not wait any longer than 5 minutes beyond the time indicated on the driver's waybill before leaving the premises; if the client is absent and has not previously communicated with dispatch, the return trip is automatically cancelled and the charges will be invoiced;

- Immediately inform TAP when the transport is more than 15 minutes late and respect the hours of service when transport is available;

- Wait at the front door when the client lives in a residential building, reception centre, or other such facility;

- Ensure, when a transport is requested, that the entrance door of the residence is released, that the access road and the parking lot are free of any obstruction, and maintained in a manner appropriate to the movement of any person with limited mobility or in a wheelchair, failing which the driver may refuse to provide the transport;

- If access to the residence consists of more than three steps, be able to climb them on their own or be assisted by someone other than the driver;

- Ensure ramps and access equipment comply with the standards prescribed the Quebec Building Code;

- Ensure that the three-wheel or four-wheel scooter or other type of wheelchair needed by the user is no more than 30 inches (76 cm) wide, a maximum of 48 inches (122 cm) long and equipped with four tie points;

- Ensure that child seats meet all safety rules and are adapted to the size and weight of the child with the capability to supply and secure the seat to the automotive equipment.

- Be accompanied or ensure that a person other than the drive is present to assist with embarkation and disembarkation at departure and destination sites if the parent or companion does not have the physical ability required to perform any transportation related duties;

- The only animals admitted on board the transport vehicles are guide dogs or service dogs. The user must first send to the Corporation a certificate confirming that the dog has been trained by a recognized school in Quebec or elsewhere to serve as a guide dog or as a service dog with a disabled person and that such training included a transportation component. The user must always have authority over the dog to ensure its proper behaviour. It is forbidden for such a dog to accompany its master while the user is on the lift;

- Pay, on board the Corporation's transportation service vehicle, the exact amount otherwise, no money will be given to the user if the exact amount is not tendered.

- Have only four bags of groceries, shopping, or luggage in his or her possession as long as he/she is able to board and unpack the vehicle alone without the driver's assistance. The user must have full control at all times during the journey;

- Make sure all effects are in his/her possession because at no time will the driver turn back.

- Inform the driver of any special precautions required by the user's condition, as well as particulars of access to places of embarkation and disembarkation;

- Be courteous to the driver and other passengers and avoid distracting the driver so that he/she can focus his/her full attention on driving safely;

- Ensure the good working order of the wheelchair and that it is equipped with a seat belt, otherwise the user must use the belt of the carrier;

- Do not attempt to board or disembark the vehicle alone if the user's condition normally requires assistance to do so;

- Must be attached to the carrier vehicle using the lap belt and the shoulder safety belt, as applicable;

- Carefully guide the three-wheel or four-wheel scooter or the wheelchair when boarding and disembarking, and be accompanied if the user has two wheelchairs; TAP does not carry an unoccupied wheelchair without the presence of its owner;

- When boarding at commercial centres or other public buildings, be at the same location where disembarkation took place.

- Do not be intoxicated, under the influence of drugs or narcotics, or behave in a manner that could threaten the safety of the other passengers or of the driver.

## 6. Collective Transport Conditions

Clients who wish to benefit from TAP's public transport services must respect the following conditions:

- Book a reservation within the prescribed timeframes;

- Pay for the transport upon departure in accordance with the TAP rate policy;

- Be ready to board the vehicle 10 minutes before the scheduled time, it being understood that the driver will not wait any longer than 5 minutes beyond the time indicated on the driver's waybill before leaving the premises; if the client is absent and has not previously communicated with dispatch, the return trip is automatically cancelled and the charges will be invoiced;

- Immediately inform TAP when the transport is more than 15 minutes late and respect the hours of service when transport is available;

- Wait at the front door when the client lives in a residential tower, reception centre, or other such building;

- Ensure, when a transport is requested, that the entrance door of the residence is released, that the access road and the parking lot are free of any obstruction, and maintained in a manner appropriate to the movement of persons;

- Ensure that child seats meet all safety regulations and are adapted to the size and weight of the child and capable of providing and securing the seat in the vehicle.

- The exact amount must be paid, on board minibuses or to the TAP transport service volunteer driver, otherwise no money will be given to the client if the exact amount is not tendered.

- Have only four bags of groceries, shopping, or luggage in his or her possession as long as he/she is able to board and unpack the vehicle alone without the driver's assistance. The user must have full control at all times during the journey;

- Make sure all effects are in his/her possession because at no time will the driver turn back.

- Inform the driver of any special precautions required by the user's condition, as well as particulars of access to places of embarkation and disembarkation;

- Be courteous to the driver and other passengers and avoid distracting the driver so that he/she can focus his/her full attention on driving safely;

- Do not attempt to board or disembark the vehicle if the client's condition normally requires assistance to do so;

- Use the seat safety belt when on board the vehicle;

- When boarding at commercial centres or other public buildings, be at the same location where disembarkation took place.

- Do not be intoxicated, under the influence of drugs or narcotics, or behave in a manner that could threaten the safety of the other passengers or of the driver.

## 7. Paratransit – Eligibility

To qualify for the TAP paratransit service, an individual must:

a) Be a permanent resident in one of the municipalities in the coverage area, or admitted in another territory;

b) Meet the criteria set out in the Paratransit Eligibility Policy of the Quebec department of Transport;

c) Submit an application for admission to TAP, using the regulatory forms;

d) Be accepted by the Admissions Committee;

e) Respect the policies, regulations, codes and other regulations of TAP or the government or other institution.

## 8. Paratransit – Admissions Committee

The Admissions Committee must:

a) Meet once every three months, or as required, to review new applications and review applications whose permits have expired;

b) Render a unanimous decision and communicate it to the applicant in writing;

c) Once rendered, a decision may be reconsidered only if new facts warrant it.

However, if a person does not agree with the decision made by the Admissions Committee, it may request in writing from the Review Office of the Ministère des Transports du Québec to review the decision.

## 9. Paratransit – Types of Admission

For the paratransit component, the types of admission issued by the Admissions Committee are as follows:

a) Permanent admission (unlimited period), which is generally granted when the Committee can envisage only the use of paratransit for trips, even with apprenticeship or familiarization;

b) Temporary provisional admission (between 6 and 18 months), which is generally granted when the Admission Committee is unable to grant permanent admission status because it is awaiting the results of a program for rehabilitation, mobility orientation, or learning to use means of transportation other than paratransit;

On the expiry date of the temporary licence, the Committee will review the file based on the assessment of the user's abilities and will grant a permanent, temporary, seasonal, or partial admission or refuse admission;

c) Seasonal admission, which is generally granted when the user can use the paratransit transport during the winter only (December 1st to April 30th) because the limitations encountered during the rest of the years do not justify paratransit use.

d) Partial admission, which is generally granted when a person is unable to make specific trips;

Individuals with disabilities who are admitted to special transport services in their respective regions and who reside or temporarily visit the territory served by TAP can benefit from the local paratransit service with their admission card issued by the carrier on their territory and, depending on the availability of service, by meeting the obligations of this present policy.

## 10. Paratransit – Accompaniment

When considering an application for admission, the eligibility committee determines whether the user is entitled to be accompanied while travelling, the types of accompaniment are as follows:

a) Compulsory accompaniment, which is granted if the user requires medical assistance during the journey. The person accompanying such user, travels free of charge.

b) Optional accompaniment, which is provided to a user with a motor or organic impairment. However, TAP will allow accompaniment only if there is an available space in the vehicle. Such authorized companion on an optional basis must always pay his/her way;

c) Accompaniment for parental responsibilities, which is granted to an admitted user who can travel with his/her child or children under 14 years of age in order to meet his/her parental responsibilities. The individual accompanying such user, travels free of charge.

## 11. Collective Transport - Eligibility

To be eligible for collective transport, a person must:

a) Be a permanent resident on the territory of one of the municipalities in the coverage area;

b) Upon the first transportation request, the client will provide detailed information verbally which will be kept confidential in the file.

c) Comply with all policies, rules, codes and other regulations of TAP or government or other institution.

## 12. Transportation – Reasons for Travel

Paratransit and collective transport within the TAP coverage area is offered for all reasons listed in the TAP Rate Policy, subject to availability and priority, if necessary.

## 13. Policy Compliance

Should a user violate one or more of the provisions of this policy, an investigation will be initiated by senior management who will apply all appropriate measures under the circumstances that could go as far as, and including, the expulsion of a user from TAP services.

## 14. Complaints

The user may at any time file a complaint, comment, request or praise in accordance with the policy regarding the filing, review, and treatment of comments, requests and praise.

## 15. Entry into Force

This present policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of TransporAction Pontiac on 27 October 2016.