

# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

Policy Name	Resolution	Effective Date	Last Revision Date
Public Participation	24-02-06	8/19/15	2/21/24

**NOTE:** The Delaware County Transit Board (AKA: DCTB) is the governing body of Delaware County's Public Transit System established by the Delaware County Commissioners under the authority of Ohio Revised Code section 306.01 and 306.02. Delaware County Transit (AKA: DCT) is the common name given to the public transit system. This policy is established and set forth under the authority of the Delaware County Transit Board. DCT and DCTB may be used interchangeably in this policy or used separately to distinguish responsibilities.

## Policy Statement

The Delaware County Transit (DCT) sets forth the following public involvement policy for the purpose of soliciting and receiving public input on public transportation plans and services. The Delaware County Transit (DCT) through the public involvement process seeks to allow all interested individuals the opportunity to comment on and to be actively engaged in the provision of transit.

## Intent

The public involvement guideline will be used for service and fare changes as outlined below:

- Fare changes that affect all categories of ridership (i.e., student, regular, senior, and disabled)
- Major increases or decreases in service. DCT defines a Major Service Change as a change in any service that changes the number of service hours operated on any service by 25% or more.
- Changes in service area of the transit system

The public involvement guideline will also be used for review of the Title VI program and the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program.

## Process:

1. When a Title VI Program review, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise review or a change in service is considered as outlined above, DCT will place a notice in the local newspaper, post notices in all transit vehicles and also post on the DCT website at [www.delcotransit.com](http://www.delcotransit.com).
2. The notice will briefly describe the proposed changes or purpose of the review and will advise of the upcoming date(s) and time(s) for a public meeting for the purpose of soliciting comments. The notice will also include the address of the meeting and where public comments can be sent and a reasonable time period for receiving public comments.
3. A public hearing is held as announced in the published notice.
4. All comments received will be considered in the final decision-making process. While the final plan may not be necessarily changed based on the public participation process, significant consideration is given to comments made by the public and the proposed changes may very well be affected.

5. All the information, including proposed changes, public announcements, comments received, public hearing minutes, will be documented for reference and review as needed.

### **Participation Plan Guidelines**

1. The public hearing notice for service and fare changes will be advertised 45 days before the scheduled change is to be implemented. Advertisements will appear at a minimum in the local newspaper, on DCT's website, and in all vehicles. Customers can provide public comment by phoning or mailing in comments to the administrative offices.
2. When a Public Hearing is required, staff will be in attendance to discuss the proposed changes and to receive comments. Staff may also travel on vehicles for the purpose of receiving comments from customers.
3. Public hearings will typically be held at 11:00 am and 6:00 pm.
4. In the event that there are significant comments against the proposed change, DCT management will revisit the changes. A second round of public hearings may be required.

### **Participation Plan as it pertains to Limited English Proficiency:**

#### **General Methods**

- Mobility managers, who answer DCT's phone scheduling lines, use a tracking system to log the number of requests by those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who request translation service, which languages are being requested and how the call was handled. Please see Appendix A.
- DCT will contact a language line service for callers requesting information that have Limited English Proficiency as needed.
- DCT will survey its' partner agencies, such as DJFS and SourcePoint, and the agency's Transit Advisory Committee yearly to help assess where LEP populations may exist and to help determine what transit needs the population they specify may have.
- DCT will review the LEP plan annually, in the last quarter of the year. Staff, including drivers, office staff, schedulers, dispatchers and mobility management staff will be trained on the LEP policy and procedures to ensure that any individuals with Limited English Proficiency attempting to utilize the transit agency will be served.

**Published Materials:** In the past DCT has translated and distributed its User Guide (now Ride Guide), which outlines policies, procedures and how to ride, into Spanish, as that was the greatest demographic shown in the last census. DCT will have new materials translated in other languages if a need is presented on survey responses and demographic data.

## **Participation Plan as it pertains to Minority and Low-Income Individuals:**

### **Communication:**

- DCT displays rights of Title VI notice to passengers on both our website [www.delcotransit.com](http://www.delcotransit.com) and in our Ride Guides.
- DCT posts Title VI notices on buses and in bus shelters.
- DCT utilizes its partner agencies who serve low-income individuals to help distribute information regarding DCT services and service changes. For example, Department of Job and Family Services, People In Need of Delaware County, Community Action and Helpline of Delaware all display DCT route information, Ride Guides and flyer regarding pending changes.

### **Evaluating current service level:**

- DCT staff will survey riders one time to determine ethnicity and income level.
- DCT staff will then send surveys regularly to new riders thru DCT's Ride Guide which is mailed to all new Demand Response passengers.
- DCT Staff will survey Fixed Route riders in March and again in September to determine their ethnicity and income level.
- The survey response information will be compared with census data of the target populations to ensure service is available equally.
- DCT has had basic county maps with locations of minority populations prepared. DCT staff will compare these to service areas for planning of future services to ensure that no minority population is inadvertently not served.

### **COMMITTEES**

The DCTB currently has a Transit Advisory Committee that assists DCT with providing community information. The TAC is comprised of members of the community representing passengers, local agencies that serve people with transportation needs, businesses and citizens at large. Please see Appendix B for the table showing the race of TAC members as compared to the county population.

DCT will continue to seek out and encourage members of various races to participate in the TAC and/or any future advisory committees

## Appendix A

### DCT MOBILITY MANAGEMENT INTERACTION WITH LEP INDIVIDUALS LOG

<b>DATE</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>How Resolved</b>
2/26/2015	Limited English--possibly Chinese--Green Rt Times	Fixed Route	Unsure if resolved--continued to repeat to try and understand questions
2/27/2015	Limited English--possibly Chinese--Green Rt Times	Fixed Route	Finally able to understand where confusion was--think resolved
3/2/2015	Limited English--possibly Eastern Indian--carry on policy	Fixed Route	Driver attempted to explain rules on how much can be brought on bus in 1 trip
11/9/2016	Limited English	Demand Response	Family helps her comprehend & understand bus service
11/29/2016	No English	Demand Response	Daughter calls in to schedule & get bus information-Son rides with her to apts. for interpretation purposes (not due to a disability)
6/14/2016	Limited English-Chinese?	Demand Response	
11/11/2016	Arabic speaking-does not speak English-	Demand Response	no issue-speak to daughter
4/12/2017	Chinese-can speak English but broken	Demand Response	no issue to resolve
5/16/2016	Spanish- can speak English-but broken-taking English classes	Demand Response	no issue to resolve
4/28/2017	Does not speak English-daughter in law translates	has not ridden	no issue to resolve
4/28/2017	Does not speak English-sister translates	has not ridden	no issue to resolve
5/8/2017	Arabic speaking-speaks little English	Demand Response	no issue to resolve
6/30/2017	Does not speak or understand English well - Hindi	Demand Response	no issue to resolve

# Appendix B

<b>BODY</b>	<b>CAUCASIAN</b>	<b>MULTIPLE RACES OR OTHER</b>	<b>AFRICAN AMERICAN</b>	<b>ASIAN AMERICAN</b>	<b>NATIVE AMERICAN</b>
Population	80.1%	7.7%	3.6%	8.5%	.1%
TAC	87.5%		12.5%		

\*Population percentages from 2020 American Community Survey