

## Policies regarding Contagious Disease Disclosure

Information compiled June 11, 2007

**The Question:** What have you done, or what would you do, if you found out, either by self-disclosure or by doctor report, that a potential passenger has a contagious disease (riding paratransit or fixed route)?

If you have a policy that addresses this issue, please attach it. If you don't have a policy, but have encountered this issue, please tell what you did.

**C-Tran** says... [Click here](#) to see our Quarantine Protocol.

**CUBS** says... We have not encountered this problem.

**Everett Transit** says... We have not encountered this issue. However, our reaction to such a situation would be dependent upon the disease, how contagious it is, the potential for harm (are we talking a cold, childhood disease, HIV, the black death, etc.), and what protective measures can be taken (mask, gloves, bubble suit, etc.). Probably the best measure to take is to educate and train Operators about infectious diseases, blood borne pathogens and how to handle them.

**Grays Harbor Transit** says... We have never experienced this type of situation that we are aware of. We do not have a written policy that could deal with this situation.

**Island Transit** says...

With the HIPPA laws, we cannot disclose any medical conditions, employee or passenger. We train everyone for First Aid/Cpr and Bloodborne Pathogens. It is our policy to treat each individual as if they have a contagious disease if we administer first aid to them. We have a personal protection kit in each Operator's trip bag. The kit contains a face mask, gloves, biohazard bag, and vionex wipes.

**Kitsap Transit** says... When passengers 'self-disclose' having a contagious disease, or if a doctor's report disclosed that a passenger had a contagious disease and should not be using public transportation, the information will be treated on a case by case basis. Generally, such passengers will be denied service, disease dependent.

Passengers with un-bandaged or inadequately bandaged wounds, sores or oozing scabs, including severe bloody rashes that constitute a blood borne pathogen dilemma will not be transported.

Kitsap Transit will contact the Kitsap County Health District (KCHD) for guidelines on dealing with passengers with contagious diseases during normal working hours, and via 911 (Cencom) if after

hours. Passengers may be accommodated or transportation may be arranged in a manner that protects the public and our bus drivers.

All transit passengers fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) privacy rules mandates the protection and privacy of all health information. HIPPA specifically addresses the authorized use and disclosure of "individually-identifiable" health information. It is important that any doctor's report of a potential contagion be verified.

Additionally, it is important that bus drivers, dispatchers and supervisors not attempt to diagnose passenger illnesses and diseases, nor refuse transportation based on hearsay, etc.

We recently experienced a similar situation whereby dispatch received a call from someone claiming to be a doctor and said a woman that was waiting for our bus at a marked bus stop reportedly had a contagious disease. We radioed the driver to not allow her to board the bus. We immediately attempted to locate the doctor in the county but were unable to do so. The call turned out to be a hoax. The woman was transported to her destination within an hour.

Transit agencies run the risk of a lawsuit for denying service to passengers under the aforementioned circumstances unless steps are taken to verify doctor's reports, contacting the local health department for recommendations, and are in full compliance with ADA and HIPPA laws.

The KCHD indicated that in the event of a pandemic outbreak, we all will be doing things differently!

**Pacific Transit** says... We do not have a policy and if however we had this situation we would contact the County health department for advice and assistance.

**Pullman Transit** says... We did encounter a situation of this nature a while back. We were notified that a person that was probably a former passenger had developed T.B. All of the employees (especially the drivers) were given the opportunity and strongly encouraged to get tested and picked up the cost of the testing.

**Skagit Transit** says... We provide all employees with Bio-Spill training. Each employee must also complete annual refresher training on how to protect themselves and others when any bodily fluid is present at any scene. In addition, when we are made aware of a particular passenger that may have a potential infectious disease we post on our drivers mandatory reading board a "Reminder" on proper cleaning of bio-spills and how to protect themselves. We do not tell any driver what any passenger has even if we know so we can stay in compliance with the HIPPA law. This is a procedure we follow, not a policy.

**Valley Transit** says... We do not have written policy concerning contagious diseases. We did have one situation where a person had TB and was riding the buses. We contacted the Health Department and they were able to intervene and keep this person from riding the bus while they were in treatment.