

**Consumer, Families, Guardians**  
**Developmental Disabilities Coalition of Dane County, Inc.**  
**Tips for Speaking at the ParaTransit Public Hearing**

**A public hearing on proposed reductions in City of Madison ParaTransit Services will be held on Wednesday, October 11 at 6:00 p.m. at the Madison Public Library, 201 West Mifflin Street, Room 302**

You are an expert on what is happening with your own life and the lives of your family. You know how important transportation is. Madison Transit and Parking Commission (TPC) members want to know how their actions will affect you.

Telling your story at the public hearing will help convey the reality of your life, the importance of transportation, the effect of cuts in transportation, and your appreciation of how the system has worked, historically.

1. At the hearing, each speaker will have five minutes to speak.
2. Use specific examples to make your points. **Remember, you are the expert when it comes to your life and how important transportation is to you. Your personal experience should be the focus of your message. You are not expected to be an expert on public policy or have the solution to difficult issues.**
3. Make an outline (see *Quick Facts* and *Sample Ideas for Telling Your Story*) to help focus the content of your message. **Too much information will confuse and dilute your message.**
4. Be calm and respectful. If you are asked a question and don't know the answer, simply say so and offer to get back to whomever asked the question with the answer.
5. Thank the Members of the TPC for their time and consideration. Always be respectful in your words and actions.

**Proposed Madison Metro Paratransit Services Changes**

- In 2018, people with developmental disabilities in Dane County will be obligated to go into Family Care or IRIS. These programs privatize the services that have in the past been overseen by Dane County. The implementation of privatized services may also disrupt longstanding partnerships between the City of Madison and Dane County.
- Madison Metro Officials, Dane County, and the City of Madison have worked hard to do what they can to minimize the negative changes to Paratransit.
- **But, the system changes have negative effects; the proposed changes are:**
  - **Elimination of “leave attended rides,” where a driver accompanies the rider until he/she is safely with support staff or family.**
  - **Makes all rides “curb-to-curb” meaning a rider is dropped off at the curb.**
  - **Service to assist people “door-to-door” will have to be approved on a person-by-person basis.**
  - **Eliminates convenience tickets. All fares will have to be paid in cash or with an “agency ticket.”**

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**Sample Talking Points: ParaTransit Hearing**

- My name is (name) and I live in (Madison neighborhood). I (or my son/brother/daughter/sister/etc.) receive (vocational/residential) services.
- I am concerned about the reductions in paratransit services because...Give a personal reason here, for example:
  - I/my son/daughter uses paratransit to....
  - With these reductions, I am worried my son/daughter/I won't be able to...
    - keep his/her/my current job
    - Continue to live in his/her/my apartment or home
    - Continue to enjoy the community activities in which I/he/she am currently involved
- I appreciate that Madison Metro has worked hard to keep the reductions at a minimum. **But I urge the City Council and the Mayor to restore these cuts. My/my son's/my daughter's access to a full life is at risk and the City's investment in these services is critically important.**
- Thank you for listening, thank you for your commitment over the years to working in partnership with the County and people with disabilities. Thank you for continuing to work with us, during and after the mandated transition to Family Care/IRIS.

**Questions about the Proposed Changes to Paratransit Services? Concerns?**

**Please contact Melissa Mulliken, DD Coalition Advocacy Coordinator, at**  
**[melissa@mmulliken.com](mailto:melissa@mmulliken.com) or 608/206-1818**