

Chaos Rules New Para Transit Scheme

The “approved guidelines” for the RFP (Request for Proposal) state that we have access to same day service when available and that there are no trip restrictions (other than the one hour radius from your starting point which can be excused upon request).

The information package we actually got in the mail is a vague no information 2 page “overview” with a further 4 pages outlining ODSP eligibility (Ontario Disability Support Plan).

Under provincial law and part of the RFP is the minimum standard for same day service. This means we will be able to call the service provider within a few hours of a trip and book it for a specific time. This gives us the “freedom” to decide that we want to go to the show a few hours before the show starts instead of 24 hours before it starts or to decide to visit friends in the morning and book the trip for the afternoon. (This is not the same as on-demand service which is regular taxi service where you would travel immediately.)

The “guidelines” used for the RFP and subsequent Para transit service have codes of conduct for passengers and drivers yet these were not included in the information package.

Trip restrictions are prohibited by provincial law and confirmed by the County Solicitor as a violation of our human rights.

Yet the only examples for using the transportation scheme in the “overview” letter are for “work, medical or school.” This makes it sound like we can’t go to religious activities, social or recreational activities, out to dinner, out to Tim’s, to the show, Sanderson Centre or the casino.

We can!

When we call the 1-800 number for information on the new scheme we get the franchise office in Alberta who know nothing about the new transportation scheme. Calling the local number gets us an answering machine, not a dispatcher. There is no one to contact to get any information on the transition to the new scheme.

We need to start booking regular trips to community centres, work, medical appointments, religious and social activities so that the transition is seamless come September 1.

Why can’t we get accurate information on the transportation scheme? Why can’t we start booking our regularly scheduled trips?

Is this how Para transit in the County will be eliminated as of September 1 rather than December 31?