



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Division of Transit & Rail
2829 W. Howard Place
Denver, CO 80204-2305

DATE: August 14, 2020
TO: Transit & Rail Advisory Committee
FROM: David Krutsinger, Director - Division of Transit and Rail
Michael Timlin, Senior Manager Mobility Operations
Kyle French, Bus Operations Manager
RE: Bustang - Short Term Pandemic Protocols

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide more information regarding CDOT and Bustang's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to provide information on CDOT's Short Term Pandemic Protocol, a collection of guidelines that can be utilized by partner agencies throughout the state.

Action

Informational only, no action is required.

Background

The Bustang interregional bus service resumed operations on June 28th, 2020. In order to resume service, CDOT, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) partnered together to create an operational plan that outlined the regulations and requirements of the Bustang service to resume service safely.

In addition to this Safe Transport Plan, CDOT has partnered with consulting firm HDR to create a set of protocols and procedures for transit agencies statewide to be able to reference for their own operational safety during times of pandemic. This report is in a draft status, and covers the most pressing topics that agencies need to take into consideration while operating in accordance to guidelines from local, state, and federal agencies.

Details

The Short Term Pandemic Protocols covers and gives details about vital topics, and describes what steps Bustang has taken to meet or exceed the recommendations of each topic, outlined as followed;

Overview - This section contains the introduction and background of the document, outlines any regulatory framework being referenced, and provides a comprehensive breakdown of all local, state, and federal requirements as related to public transit.

Decontamination - This section contains strict guidelines on cleaning versus disinfecting, and provides rules about both; including what needs to be, when to, and how to clean or disinfect vehicles and facilities. This section also provides guidance regarding cleaning agents and technologies and procurement of products.

Hygiene - This section provides guidelines for operators and passengers for expected hand and personal hygiene, including frequent hand washing, avoiding high touch surfaces, and covering coughs and sneezes.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - This section provides guidelines for determining proper PPE for employees, defining the various types of PPE, and creates a methodology for providing PPE to employees. This section also covers OSHA requirements for employer provided PPE, specifically for transit agencies, and provides a standard operating procedure for laundering, maintaining, and storing employee PPE items.

Testing, Screening, and Reporting - This section provides an outline to develop screening and testing procedures for staff. This section also outlines CDPHE recommendations for employee screening and self-screening, as well as recommendations to implement a reporting system to track cases.

Social Distancing - This section details recommendations from the CDPHE and the FTA regarding the physical separation of greater than six feet between transit operators and passengers on vehicles, between passengers on vehicles, and between passengers and the public at transit stops, while boarding, alighting, and ticketing. This section also details the CDPHE requirements for capacity limitations onboard transit vehicles.

Engineering Controls - This section gives recommendations for short term engineering advances, including improvements to on-vehicle ventilation, vapor and physical barriers between passengers and operators, and improvements of no-touch fare processing.

Communications with Stakeholders - This section creates a communications standard for agencies to follow, including what, how, and when to communicate information to shareholders. This section also includes strategies to not only enforce the pandemic protocols, but to support the front line employees that are responsible for enforcing the protocols with passengers.

Bus Operations - This section provides guidelines for service development and modification, including scheduling and route adjustments, as well as changes in capacity limits as enforced by the CDPHE.

Human Resources - This section outlines the federal and state safety and health regulations that employers and transit agencies have to follow, as well as summarizes the best practices for human resources during pandemic times. This section also provides guidance on adhering with the legal standards of Title VI, the ADA, and the FMLA during pandemic times.

Other Considerations - This section provides guidelines on ensuring employee safety and security, and provides more avenues for emergency management monitoring as well as separate federal funding sources.

In addition to the above provisions for our Short Term protocols, HDR is also working with CDOT to create a set of Long Term protocols, a set of guidelines to be utilized to better the use of public transportation to move beyond the burden of operating under a pandemic. The Long Term protocol draft, so far, has four main sections, outlined as follows;

Overview - This section will contain a proper background, scope, and structure to the document. It will cover the importance of pandemic planning and reiterate key takeaways from the Short Term document. It will also contain information on how the document should be interpreted, referenced, and otherwise used.

Planning - This section will cover the best practices for levels of service restoration, post pandemic, and will also include solutions for continuous emergency management monitoring. This section will also include future considerations for human resources and communications.

Technology and Engineering Controls - This section will detail options for long term oriented engineering and technology changes which can be used to improve transit pandemic precautions. This will also be a section that highlights related agencies and examples from peer agencies.

Partnerships - This section will include suggestions for creating and maintaining partnerships with local agencies, local governments, and micro mobility providers, in the interests of increasing ridership.

For more information, and to understand how Bustang continues to meet or exceed state recommendations and guidelines, please see the attached Short Term Pandemic Protocol Overview and Response.

Next Steps

- Continue to monitor state, local, and federal pandemic responses and guidelines.
- Continue to monitor ridership, adjusting service levels and schedules as needed.
- Involve local agencies in moving from the draft document to a published final document, and provide guidance as needed.
- Continue work on the Long Term Pandemic Protocol.

Attachments

Short Term Pandemic Protocol Presentation