

#### CHAPTER 13 OVERVIEW

- ✓ Outlines the importance of **training in job performance and membership in professional organizations.**
- ✓ Discusses **vital communication skills.**
- ✓ Reviews the keys to effective **vehicle dispatching.**
- ✓ Details **lobbying restrictions.**

#### A. Training and Membership

All transit agencies should strive to provide their employees with high quality training. Training gives agency personnel information about the organization and its operations. It may also be used to instruct employees on how to more effectively perform their duties and manage conflict.

Due to the special mission of Kansas transit agencies in transporting the elderly and the disabled, agency employees should be instructed and kept up to date on issues that affect the services they provide to their passengers. Passenger oriented training focuses primarily on sensitivity and safety issues. Sensitivity training stresses better ways for personnel to interact with disabled persons. Often, employees need to be reminded of respectful ways to address and refer to others. On the other hand, drivers and other agency employees require instruction on dealing with physically and verbally abusive passengers so that they can diffuse tense situations before they escalate. An agency may also choose to provide personnel with safety training. For example, seminars on driving in various weather conditions and life saving techniques will ensure that drivers are prepared for any challenge facing them. The agency should also provide employee oriented training to its staff.

Employee oriented training might include mental health programs dedicated to the avoidance of drug and alcohol use. KDOT provides some training to providers via Janet Blue, the Kansas Drug and Alcohol Program Manager. Various training manuals for such seminars, such as publications,

# Chapter 13

## Training and Technical Assistance

computer software and video presentations, are available through the Rural Technology Assistance Program (RTAP). For more information about the resources available through RTAP, contact Pat Weaver at 800/248-0650 (in Kansas) or 785/864-5658.

Other professional organizations of interest to transit providers include: Kansas Public Transit Association (KPTA) and Community Transit Association of America (CTAA). KPTA is the state organization dedicated solely to public transit providers in Kansas. Any transit provider may become of a member of this organization. For more information, call (913)492-9092 or consult the organization's website at [www.kstransit.com/member.htm](http://www.kstransit.com/member.htm). CTAA is a national organization with a purpose similar to KPTA. Membership in CTAA entitles transit providers to a number of benefits including discounts on publications and training programs, updates on proposed federal activities that will affect transit providers and voting privileges within the organization. Application for membership in CTAA may be filed on-line at [www.ctaa.org/cgi-bin/join.cgi](http://www.ctaa.org/cgi-bin/join.cgi).

### **B. Communication and the Role of the CTD**

The primary duty of the CTD is coordination between participating transit agencies, the CTD Council and KDOT. A CTD can work to ensure that all vehicles in the transit area are being used to full capacity. The CTD can communicate its needs to the CTD Council, a body composed of representatives from CTDs throughout the State. While individual transit agencies and CTDs may communicate directly with KDOT, a proposal by the CTD Council will receive high regard by KDOT as it is the representative of all transit providers.

### **C. Vehicle Dispatching**

There are several different models of vehicle dispatching which may be used. The basic system is one in which each individual agency retains complete control of dispatching its vehicles. The other end of the spectrum is a lead agency or broker that acts as the central dispatcher for the system. In a system in which the agency retains dispatching control, coordination among providers can occur through trip sharing

# Chapter 13

## Training and Technical Assistance

or vehicle sharing. Under these agreements providers call each other to find rides for passengers they are unable to serve.

The other end of the organizational continuum is the construction of a centralized dispatching system that may be run by the CTD or contracted out to a broker. Under this system, all rides scheduled for providers in the system are established through the centralized system. The central dispatcher becomes the contact point for riders requesting rides or agencies making requests for clients. The central agency then becomes responsible for verifying client eligibility. This process should be an established policy of the organization. A doctor certification or agency certification may be required before an individual is added to the central dispatching database. Once this process has been completed, the dispatcher will then schedule the individual for rides.

The central dispatching organization is also responsible for billing member agencies. Rides for individuals are tracked down through tickets, vouchers, or other verification methods. Each month the member agencies are billed for the trips provided. The cost of administering the central dispatching system may also be allocated among the providers and added to the bill. This system may be the most efficient for coordinated transportation since the public contracts one agency for service. This organization has complete information about the service area and restrictions of each provider. Riders can be efficiently matched with a provider to provide transportation.

### **D. Ridership Policies**

Agencies should construct ridership policies that inform riders, as well as drivers, of the agency's rules and regulations. These policies should include the following information: who can ride, the area of service, changes in scheduling, cancellation policies, etc. Sample policies are given as attachments to this chapter.

### **E. Restrictions on Lobbying—Regulations and Certifications**

KDOT must have on file signed lobbying certificates of assurance from all transit providers who receive federal assistance for \$100,000 or more stating that they will not use Federal funds to pay for any lobby activities. Providers must include lobbying certification in procurement documentation when necessary. Any contractors or subcontractors using Federally appropriated funds must sign certificates of lobby assurance. When reviewing applications for federal funds, KDOT checks for appropriate certification. Also, during site inspections, KDOT or the appropriate contract provider inspects for lobbying compliance. All appropriate certification from providers, contractors, and subcontractors must be kept in the project file for compliance assurance.

#### **CHECKLIST**

- Does your agency provide personnel with safety and sensitivity training? 13-1
- Are you a member of RTAP, CTAA, or KPTA? 13-2
- Does your CTD foster communication between providers, other CTDs and KDOT? 13-2
- Does your agency have policies governing ridership? 13-3
- Do you abide by state restrictions on lobbying activities? 13-4