

26 | the duration of travel times, transparency regarding
 27 | the quality of service provided, and a system for the
 28 | reporting of adverse incidents; requiring reports of
 29 | adverse incidents to be submitted to the commission;
 30 | requiring the commission to establish requirements for
 31 | the investigation of adverse incidents; requiring such
 32 | an investigation to commence within a certain
 33 | timeframe; providing requirements for procurement of
 34 | certain contracts with transportation service
 35 | providers for the provision of paratransit service to
 36 | persons with disabilities; requiring the department to
 37 | submit a report to the Governor and Legislature;
 38 | providing report requirements; authorizing the
 39 | department to conduct the report independently or by
 40 | contract; providing an effective date.

41 |

42 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

43 |

44 | Section 1. Subsection (16) is added to section 341.041,
 45 | Florida Statutes, to read:

46 | 341.041 Transit responsibilities of the department.—The
 47 | department shall, within the resources provided pursuant to
 48 | chapter 216:

49 | (16) Unless otherwise provided by state or federal law,
 50 | ensure that all grants and agreements between the department and

51 entities providing paratransit service include, at a minimum,
 52 the following provisions:

53 (a) Performance requirements for the delivery of services,
 54 including clear penalties for repeated or continuing violations.

55 (b) Minimum liability insurance requirements for all
 56 transportation services purchased, provided, or coordinated for
 57 the transportation disadvantaged, as defined in s. 427.011,
 58 through the contracted vendor or subcontractor thereof.

59 (c) Complaint and grievance processes for paratransit
 60 users, including a requirement that all reported complaints,
 61 grievances, and resolutions are reported to the department on a
 62 quarterly basis.

63 (d) A requirement that the provisions of paragraphs (a)-
 64 (c) must be included in any agreement between the entity
 65 receiving the grant or agreement from the department and such
 66 entity's contractors or subcontractors who provide paratransit
 67 service.

68 Section 2. Section 427.011, Florida Statutes, is amended
 69 to read:

70 427.011 Definitions.—For the purposes of ss. 427.011-
 71 427.02 ~~ss. 427.011-427.017~~:

72 (1)~~(3)~~ "Agency" means an official, officer, commission,
 73 authority, council, committee, department, division, bureau,
 74 board, section, or any other unit or entity of the state or of a

75 city, town, municipality, county, or other local governing body
 76 or a private nonprofit transportation service-providing agency.

77 ~~(2)-(5)~~ "Community transportation coordinator" means a
 78 transportation entity recommended by a metropolitan planning
 79 organization, or by the appropriate designated official planning
 80 agency as provided for in ss. 427.011-427.017 in an area outside
 81 the purview of a metropolitan planning organization, to ensure
 82 that coordinated transportation services are provided to the
 83 transportation disadvantaged population in a designated service
 84 area.

85 ~~(3)-(7)~~ "Coordinating board" means an advisory entity in
 86 each designated service area composed of representatives
 87 appointed by the metropolitan planning organization or
 88 designated official planning agency, to provide assistance to
 89 the community transportation coordinator relative to the
 90 coordination of transportation services.

91 ~~(4)-(11)~~ "Coordination" means the arrangement for the
 92 provision of transportation services to the transportation
 93 disadvantaged in a manner that is cost-effective, efficient, and
 94 reduces fragmentation and duplication of services.

95 (5) "Immediate family member" means a spouse, child,
 96 parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or first cousin of a
 97 person or the person's spouse or a person who resides in the
 98 primary residence of the person.

99 | ~~(6)-(2)~~ "Metropolitan planning organization" means the
 100 | organization responsible for carrying out transportation
 101 | planning and programming in accordance with the provisions of 23
 102 | U.S.C. s. 134, as provided in 23 U.S.C. s. 104(f)(3).

103 | ~~(7)-(12)~~ "Nonsponsored transportation disadvantaged
 104 | services" means transportation disadvantaged services that are
 105 | not sponsored or subsidized by any funding source other than the
 106 | Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund.

107 | ~~(8)-(9)~~ "Paratransit" means those elements of public
 108 | transit which provide service between specific origins and
 109 | destinations selected by the individual user with such service
 110 | being provided at a time that is agreed upon by the user and
 111 | provider of the service. Paratransit service is provided by
 112 | taxis, limousines, "dial-a-ride," buses, and other demand-
 113 | responsive operations that are characterized by their
 114 | nonscheduled, nonfixed route nature.

115 | ~~(9)-(8)~~ "Purchasing agency" means a department or agency
 116 | whose head is an ex officio, nonvoting adviser to the
 117 | commission, or an agency that purchases transportation services
 118 | for the transportation disadvantaged.

119 | (10) "Request for service" means a request made to a
 120 | transportation service provider by a person with a disability,
 121 | or by such person's immediate family member, for paratransit
 122 | service.

123 (11)~~(1)~~ "Transportation disadvantaged" means those persons
 124 who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or
 125 age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase
 126 transportation and are, therefore, dependent upon others to
 127 obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping,
 128 social activities, or other life-sustaining activities, or
 129 children who are handicapped or high-risk or at-risk as defined
 130 in s. 411.202.

131 (12)~~(10)~~ "Transportation disadvantaged funds" means any
 132 local government, state, or available federal funds that are for
 133 the transportation of the transportation disadvantaged. Such
 134 funds may include, but are not limited to, funds for planning,
 135 Medicaid transportation, administration, operation, procurement,
 136 and maintenance of vehicles or equipment and capital
 137 investments. Transportation disadvantaged funds do not include
 138 funds for the transportation of children to public schools.

139 (13)~~(4)~~ "Transportation improvement program" means a
 140 staged multiyear program of transportation improvements,
 141 including an annual element, which is developed by a
 142 metropolitan planning organization or designated official
 143 planning agency.

144 (14)~~(6)~~ "Transportation operator" means one or more
 145 public, private for-profit, or private nonprofit entities
 146 engaged by the community transportation coordinator to provide

147 service to transportation disadvantaged persons pursuant to a
 148 coordinated system service plan.

149 (15) "Transportation service provider" means an
 150 organization or entity that contracts with a local government to
 151 provide paratransit service to persons with disabilities.

152 Section 3. Section 427.012, Florida Statutes, is amended
 153 to read:

154 427.012 The Commission for the Transportation
 155 Disadvantaged.—There is created the Commission for the
 156 Transportation Disadvantaged in the Department of
 157 Transportation.

158 (1) The commission shall consist of 11 ~~seven~~ members, all
 159 of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, in accordance with
 160 the requirements of s. 20.052.

161 (2) The commission shall be comprised of the following
 162 members:

163 (a) The Secretary of Transportation or his or her
 164 designee.

165 (b) The director of the Agency for Persons with
 166 Disabilities or his or her designee.

167 (c) The Secretary of Elderly Affairs or his or her
 168 designee.

169 (d) The director of the Division of Blind Services.

170 (e) Two county managers or administrators, one from a
171 rural county and one from a county with a population of more
172 than 150,000 according to the last state census.

173 (f) Five members who have experience in transportation,
174 workforce development, transit services, management, insurance,
175 or service of persons with disabilities or who have a disability
176 and use transportation for the transportation disadvantaged.

177 (3) A member appointed under paragraph (2) (e) or paragraph
178 (2) (f) shall serve a 4-year term and may be reappointed for one
179 additional 4-year term. A member appointed under paragraph
180 (2) (e) or paragraph (2) (f) whose term has expired shall continue
181 to serve on the commission until such time as a replacement is
182 appointed.

183 (4) Each member must be a resident of the state.

184 ~~(a) Five of the members must have significant experience~~
185 ~~in the operation of a business, and it is the intent of the~~
186 ~~Legislature that, when making an appointment, the Governor~~
187 ~~select persons who reflect the broad diversity of the business~~
188 ~~community in this state, as well as the racial, ethnic,~~
189 ~~geographical, and gender diversity of the population of this~~
190 ~~state.~~

191 ~~(b) Two of the members must have a disability and use the~~
192 ~~transportation disadvantaged system.~~

193 ~~(c) Each member shall represent the needs of the~~
194 ~~transportation disadvantaged throughout the state. A member may~~

195 ~~not subordinate the needs of the transportation disadvantaged in~~
196 ~~general in order to favor the needs of others residing in a~~
197 ~~specific location in the state.~~

198 ~~(d) Each member shall be appointed to a term of 4 years. A~~
199 ~~member may be reappointed for one additional 4-year term.~~

200 ~~(e) Each member must be a resident of the state and a~~
201 ~~registered voter.~~

202 ~~(f) At any given time, at least one member must be at~~
203 ~~least 65 years of age.~~

204 ~~(g) The Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of~~
205 ~~Children and Families, the Secretary of Economic Opportunity,~~
206 ~~the executive director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs,~~
207 ~~the Secretary of Elderly Affairs, the Secretary of Health Care~~
208 ~~Administration, the director of the Agency for Persons with~~
209 ~~Disabilities, and a county manager or administrator who is~~
210 ~~appointed by the Governor, or a senior management level~~
211 ~~representative of each, shall serve as ex officio, nonvoting~~
212 ~~advisors to the commission.~~

213 ~~(h) A member may not, within the 5 years immediately~~
214 ~~before his or her appointment, or during his or her term on the~~
215 ~~commission, have or have had a financial relationship with, or~~
216 ~~represent or have represented as a lobbyist as defined in s.~~
217 ~~11.045, the following:~~

- 218 ~~1. A transportation operator;~~
219 ~~2. A community transportation coordinator;~~

- 220 ~~3. A metropolitan planning organization;~~
- 221 ~~4. A designated official planning agency;~~
- 222 ~~5. A purchaser agency;~~
- 223 ~~6. A local coordinating board;~~
- 224 ~~7. A broker of transportation; or~~
- 225 ~~8. A provider of transportation services.~~

226 ~~(5)-(2)~~ The chair of the commission ~~chairperson~~ shall be
 227 appointed by the Governor, and the vice chair ~~chairperson~~ of the
 228 commission shall be elected annually from the membership of the
 229 commission.

230 ~~(6)-(3)~~ Members of the commission shall serve without
 231 compensation but shall be allowed per diem and travel expenses,
 232 as provided in s. 112.061.

233 ~~(7)-(4)~~ The commission shall meet at least quarterly, or
 234 more frequently at the call of the chair ~~chairperson~~. Six ~~Four~~
 235 members of the commission constitute a quorum, and a majority
 236 vote of the members present is necessary for any action taken by
 237 the commission. A commission member's participation in a meeting
 238 via telephone, real-time videoconferencing, or similar real-time
 239 telephonic, electronic, or video communication counts toward a
 240 quorum, and such member may vote as if physically present.

241 ~~(8)-(5)~~ The Governor may remove any member of the
 242 commission for cause.

243 ~~(6)~~ ~~Each candidate for appointment to the commission must,~~
 244 ~~before accepting the appointment, undergo background screening~~

245 | ~~under s. 435.04 by filing with the Department of Transportation~~
246 | ~~a complete set of fingerprints taken by an authorized law~~
247 | ~~enforcement agency. The fingerprints must be submitted to the~~
248 | ~~Department of Law Enforcement for state processing, and that~~
249 | ~~department shall submit the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau~~
250 | ~~of Investigation for federal processing. The Department of~~
251 | ~~Transportation shall screen the background results and inform~~
252 | ~~the commission of any candidate who does not meet level 2~~
253 | ~~screening standards. A candidate who has not met level 2~~
254 | ~~screening standards may not be appointed to the commission. The~~
255 | ~~cost of the background screening may be borne by the Department~~
256 | ~~of Transportation or the candidate.~~

257 | (9)~~(7)~~ The commission shall appoint an executive director
258 | who shall serve under the direction, supervision, and control of
259 | the commission. The executive director, with the consent of the
260 | commission, shall employ such personnel as may be necessary to
261 | perform adequately the functions of the commission within
262 | budgetary limitations. Employees of the commission are exempt
263 | from the Career Service System.

264 | ~~(8) The commission shall appoint a technical working group~~
265 | ~~that includes representatives of private paratransit providers.~~
266 | ~~The technical working group shall advise the commission on~~
267 | ~~issues of importance to the state, including information,~~
268 | ~~advice, and direction regarding the coordination of services for~~
269 | ~~the transportation disadvantaged. The commission may appoint~~

270 ~~other technical working groups whose members may include~~
271 ~~representatives of community transportation coordinators;~~
272 ~~metropolitan planning organizations; regional planning councils;~~
273 ~~experts in insurance, marketing, economic development, or~~
274 ~~financial planning; and persons who use transportation for the~~
275 ~~transportation disadvantaged, or their relatives, parents,~~
276 ~~guardians, or service professionals who tend to their needs.~~

277 (10)~~(9)~~ The commission is assigned to the office of the
278 secretary of the Department of Transportation for administrative
279 and fiscal accountability purposes, but it shall otherwise
280 function independently of the control, supervision, and
281 direction of the department.

282 (11)~~(10)~~ The commission shall develop a budget pursuant to
283 chapter 216. The budget is not subject to change by the
284 department staff after it has been approved by the commission,
285 but it shall be transmitted to the Governor, as head of the
286 department, along with the budget of the department.

287 Section 4. Section 427.013, Florida Statutes, is amended
288 to read:

289 427.013 The Commission for the Transportation
290 Disadvantaged; purpose and responsibilities.—The purpose of the
291 commission is to accomplish the coordination of transportation
292 services provided to the transportation disadvantaged. The goal
293 of this coordination is to assure the cost-effective provision
294 of transportation by qualified community transportation

295 coordinators or transportation operators for the transportation
 296 disadvantaged without any bias or presumption in favor of
 297 multioperator systems or not-for-profit transportation operators
 298 over single operator systems or for-profit transportation
 299 operators. In carrying out this purpose, the commission shall:

300 (1) Compile all available information on the
 301 transportation operations for and needs of the transportation
 302 disadvantaged in the state. This must include any data provided
 303 by agencies.

304 (2) Establish and maintain statewide objectives for
 305 providing transportation services for the transportation
 306 disadvantaged.

307 (3) Develop policies and procedures for the coordination
 308 of local government, federal, and state funding for the
 309 transportation disadvantaged.

310 ~~(4) Identify barriers prohibiting the coordination and~~
 311 ~~accessibility of transportation services to the transportation~~
 312 ~~disadvantaged and aggressively pursue the elimination of these~~
 313 ~~barriers.~~

314 (4)-(5) Serve as a clearinghouse for information about
 315 transportation disadvantaged services, training, funding
 316 sources, innovations, and coordination efforts and provide best
 317 practices and latest technology innovations.

318 (5)-(6) Assist communities in developing transportation
 319 systems designed to serve the transportation disadvantaged.

320 (6)-(7) Unless otherwise provided by state or federal law,
 321 ensure that all contracts, procedures, guidelines, and
 322 directives issued by the commission, participating state agency,
 323 or community transportation coordinator ~~purchasing agencies~~ are
 324 conducive to the coordination of transportation services.

325 (7) Develop by rule standards for community transportation
 326 coordinators and any transportation operator or coordination
 327 contractor from whom service is purchased or arranged by the
 328 community transportation coordinator covering coordination,
 329 operation, safety, insurance, eligibility for service, costs,
 330 and utilization of transportation disadvantaged services. These
 331 standards and rules must include, but are not limited to:

332 (a) Minimum performance standards for the delivery of
 333 services. These standards must be included in community
 334 transportation coordinator contracts and transportation operator
 335 contracts, with clear penalties for repeated or continuing
 336 violations. Any subcontract must also include similar
 337 provisions.

338 (b) Minimum liability insurance requirements for all
 339 transportation services purchased, provided, or coordinated for
 340 the transportation disadvantaged through the contracted vendor
 341 or subcontractor thereof.

342 (c) Required complaint and grievance processes, including
 343 a requirement that all reported complaints, grievances, and
 344 resolutions are reported to the commission on a quarterly basis.

345 These standards must be included in coordinator contracts and
346 transportation operator contracts, including any subcontract,
347 with clear penalties for repeated or continuing violations.

348 (8)(a) Ensure that purchasing agencies purchase all trips
349 within the coordinated system, unless they have fulfilled the
350 requirements of s. 427.0135(3) and use a more cost-effective
351 alternative provider that meets comparable quality and
352 standards.

353 (b) Unless the purchasing agency has negotiated with the
354 commission pursuant to the requirements of s. 427.0135(3),
355 provide, by rule, criteria and procedures for purchasing
356 agencies to use if they wish to use an alternative provider.
357 Agencies must demonstrate that the proposed alternative provider
358 can provide a trip of comparable quality and standards for the
359 clients at a lower cost than that provided within the
360 coordinated system, or that the coordinated system cannot
361 accommodate the agency's clients.

362 ~~(9) Unless the purchasing agency has negotiated with the~~
363 ~~commission pursuant to the requirements of s. 427.0135(3),~~
364 ~~develop by rule standards for community transportation~~
365 ~~coordinators and any transportation operator or coordination~~
366 ~~contractor from whom service is purchased or arranged by the~~
367 ~~community transportation coordinator covering coordination,~~
368 ~~operation, safety, insurance, eligibility for service, costs,~~
369 ~~and utilization of transportation disadvantaged services. These~~

370 ~~standards and rules must include, but are not limited to:~~
371 ~~(a) Minimum performance standards for the delivery of~~
372 ~~services. These standards must be included in coordinator~~
373 ~~contracts and transportation operator contracts with clear~~
374 ~~penalties for repeated or continuing violations.~~
375 ~~(b) Minimum liability insurance requirements for all~~
376 ~~transportation services purchased, provided, or coordinated for~~
377 ~~the transportation disadvantaged through the community~~
378 ~~transportation coordinator.~~
379 (9)~~(10)~~ Adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54
380 to implement the provisions of ss. 427.011-427.017.
381 (10)~~(11)~~ Approve the appointment of all community
382 transportation coordinators.
383 (11)~~(12)~~ Have the authority to apply for and accept funds,
384 grants, gifts, and services from the Federal Government, state
385 government, local governments, or private funding sources.
386 Applications by the commission for local government funds shall
387 be coordinated through the appropriate coordinating board. Funds
388 acquired or accepted under this subsection shall be administered
389 by the commission and shall be used to carry out the
390 commission's responsibilities.
391 (12)~~(13)~~ Make an annual report to the Governor, the
392 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
393 Representatives by January 1 of each year. The report must
394 include:

395 (a) A consolidated report of each state agency's actual
 396 expenditures, together with the actual expenditures of each
 397 local government and directly federally funded agency and the
 398 amounts collected by each official planning agency.

399 (b) Updates to a strategic plan addressing challenges and
 400 opportunities in serving the transportation disadvantaged to
 401 ensure that the most cost-effective and efficient method of
 402 providing transportation to the transportation disadvantaged is
 403 programmed for development.

404 ~~(14) Consolidate, for each state agency, the amounts of~~
 405 ~~each agency's actual expenditures, together with the actual~~
 406 ~~expenditures of each local government and directly federally~~
 407 ~~funded agency and the amounts collected by each official~~
 408 ~~planning agency.~~

409 ~~(15) Prepare a statewide 5-year transportation~~
 410 ~~disadvantaged plan which addresses the transportation problems~~
 411 ~~and needs of the transportation disadvantaged, which is fully~~
 412 ~~coordinated with local transit plans, compatible with local~~
 413 ~~government comprehensive plans, and which ensures that the most~~
 414 ~~cost-effective and efficient method of providing transportation~~
 415 ~~to the disadvantaged is programmed for development.~~

416 (13)~~(16)~~ Review and approve memorandums of agreement for
 417 the provision of coordinated transportation services.

418 (14)~~(17)~~ Review, monitor, and coordinate all
 419 transportation disadvantaged local government, state, and

420 federal fund requests and plans for conformance with commission
421 policy, without delaying the application process. Such funds
422 shall be available only to those entities participating in an
423 approved coordinated transportation system or entities which
424 have received a commission-approved waiver to obtain all or part
425 of their transportation through another means. This process
426 shall identify procedures for coordinating with the state's
427 intergovernmental coordination and review procedures and s.
428 216.212(1) and any other appropriate grant review process.

429 ~~(15)-(18)~~ Maintain ~~Develop~~ an interagency uniform
430 contracting and billing and accounting system that shall be used
431 by all community transportation coordinators and their
432 transportation operators.

433 ~~(16)-(19)~~ Develop and maintain a transportation
434 disadvantaged manual for use by community transportation
435 coordinators and transportation operators.

436 (17) Develop a need-based quality assurance and management
437 review program to monitor, based upon approved commission
438 standards, services contracted for by an agency and those
439 provided by a community transportation operator pursuant to s.
440 427.0155. This must include a biennial audit of each contract
441 maintained or approved by the commission.

442 ~~(20) Design and develop transportation disadvantaged~~
443 ~~training programs.~~

444 ~~(21) Coordinate all transportation disadvantaged programs~~

445 ~~with appropriate state, local, and federal agencies and public~~
 446 ~~transit agencies to ensure compatibility with existing~~
 447 ~~transportation systems.~~

448 (18)~~(22)~~ Designate the official planning agency in areas
 449 outside of the purview of a metropolitan planning organization.

450 ~~(23) Develop need-based criteria that must be used by all~~
 451 ~~community transportation coordinators to prioritize the delivery~~
 452 ~~of nonsponsored transportation disadvantaged services that are~~
 453 ~~purchased with Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund moneys.~~

454 ~~(24) Establish a review procedure to compare the rates~~
 455 ~~proposed by alternate transportation operators with the rates~~
 456 ~~charged by a community transportation coordinator to determine~~
 457 ~~which rate is more cost-effective.~~

458 ~~(25) Conduct a cost-comparison study of single-~~
 459 ~~coordinator, multicoordinator, and brokered community~~
 460 ~~transportation coordinator networks to ensure that the most~~
 461 ~~cost-effective and efficient method of providing transportation~~
 462 ~~to the transportation disadvantaged is programmed for~~
 463 ~~development.~~

464 ~~(26) Develop a quality assurance and management review~~
 465 ~~program to monitor, based upon approved commission standards,~~
 466 ~~services contracted for by an agency, and those provided by a~~
 467 ~~community transportation operator pursuant to s. 427.0155.~~

468 (19)~~(27)~~ Ensure that local community transportation
 469 coordinators work cooperatively with local workforce development

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470 boards established in chapter 445 to provide assistance in the
471 development of innovative transportation services for
472 individuals seeking or seeking to maintain employment who may be
473 served by other state programs ~~participants in the welfare~~
474 ~~transition program.~~

475 ~~(28) In consultation with the Agency for Health Care~~
476 ~~Administration and the Department of Transportation, develop an~~
477 ~~allocation methodology that equitably distributes all~~
478 ~~transportation funds under the control of the commission to~~
479 ~~compensate counties, community transportation coordinators, and~~
480 ~~other entities providing transportation disadvantaged services.~~
481 ~~The methodology shall separately account for Medicaid~~
482 ~~beneficiaries. The methodology shall consider such factors as~~
483 ~~the actual costs of each transportation disadvantaged trip based~~
484 ~~on prior-year information, efficiencies that a provider might~~
485 ~~adopt to reduce costs, results of the rate and cost comparisons~~
486 ~~conducted under subsections (24) and (25), as well as cost~~
487 ~~efficiencies of trips when compared to the local cost of~~
488 ~~transporting the general public. This subsection does not~~
489 ~~supersede the authority of the Agency for Health Care~~
490 ~~Administration to distribute Medicaid funds.~~

491 ~~(29) Incur expenses for the purchase of advertisements,~~
492 ~~marketing services, and promotional items.~~

493 Section 5. Subsection (4) of section 427.0159, Florida
494 Statutes, is amended to read:

495 427.0159 Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund.—
 496 (4) A purchasing agency may deposit funds into the
 497 Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund for the commission to
 498 implement, manage, and administer the purchasing agency's
 499 transportation disadvantaged funds, as defined in s. 427.011 ~~s.~~
 500 ~~427.011(10)~~.

501 Section 6. Section 427.02, Florida Statutes, is created to
 502 read:

503 427.02 Transportation services for persons with
 504 disabilities.—

505 (1) For contracts entered into or renewed with a
 506 transportation service provider on or after October 1, 2024, a
 507 transportation service provider must:

508 (a) Provide training to each driver of a motor vehicle
 509 used to provide paratransit service to persons with disabilities
 510 which, at a minimum, meets requirements established by the
 511 Agency for Persons with Disabilities for training and
 512 professional development of staff providing direct services to
 513 clients of the agency.

514 (b) Offer Internet-based, application-based, and
 515 smartphone-based ride booking and vehicle tracking services.
 516 Each of these services must be provided in accessible formats.

517 (c) Regularly maintain and upgrade all technology-based
 518 services.

519 (d) Offer both pre-booking and on-demand service to
520 paratransit service users.

521 (2) For contracts entered into or renewed with a
522 transportation service provider on or after October 1, 2024, a
523 transportation service provider, in collaboration with the local
524 government with which the provider contracts, shall establish:

525 (a) Reasonable time periods between a request for service
526 and the arrival of the transportation service provider at the
527 location specified in the request, taking into account the
528 number of persons requesting paratransit service on the same
529 date, the distance between locations, usual or expected traffic
530 conditions during the provision of paratransit service, and any
531 other factor deemed necessary by the provider or the local
532 government. If a transportation service provider exhibits a
533 pattern of late arrivals based on such established reasonable
534 time periods, the local government may authorize another
535 provider to provide such paratransit service, including the
536 acceptance of any prepaid vouchers for future paratransit
537 service, notwithstanding the terms of the contract with the
538 original provider.

539 (b) Best practices for limiting the duration of travel
540 times for persons receiving paratransit service. To avoid
541 unreasonably long travel times, the provider and the local
542 government shall consider the level of service offered to
543 persons without disabilities by a public entity operating a

544 fixed route as compared to the level of paratransit service
545 offered by the transportation service provider in accordance
546 with 49 C.F.R. s. 37.121.

547 (c) Transparency regarding the quality of paratransit
548 service provided by the transportation service provider,
549 including, but not limited to, data relating to the timeliness
550 of paratransit service provided and the handling of complaints.

551 (d) An efficient system for the reporting of adverse
552 incidents occurring during the provision of paratransit service
553 to persons with disabilities. Such system may include the
554 assignment of a quick-response code to each motor vehicle used
555 to provide such service for the purpose of reporting adverse
556 incidents with a smartphone or other mobile device. Reports of
557 adverse incidents received by the local government or the
558 transportation service provider shall be submitted on a
559 quarterly basis to the Commission for the Transportation
560 Disadvantaged.

561 (3) The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged
562 shall establish requirements for the investigation of adverse
563 incidents reported pursuant to paragraph (2)(d), including
564 periodic review of ongoing investigations and documentation of
565 final outcomes thereof. The investigation of a reported adverse
566 incident must commence within 48 hours after receipt of the
567 report by the commission.

568 (4) Contracts entered into or renewed on or after October
569 1, 2024, with transportation service providers for the provision
570 of paratransit service to persons with disabilities must be
571 competitively procured pursuant to s. 287.057. The procurement
572 must use competitive sealed bids, competitive sealed proposals,
573 or competitive sealed replies. The contract may not be awarded
574 using an exceptional purchase provision provided for in s.
575 287.057(3).

576 Section 7. (1) By January 1, 2025, the Department of
577 Transportation must provide to the Governor, the President of
578 the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a
579 comprehensive report on the services provided by the Commission
580 for the Transportation Disadvantaged which includes, at a
581 minimum, the following:

582 (a) A review of services rendered by community
583 transportation coordinators or transportation operators
584 coordinated by the commission, specifically outlining:

- 585 1. Timeliness of services.
- 586 2. Quality of services.
- 587 3. Training programs for drivers and customer service
588 representatives.
- 589 4. Timeliness of the resolution of complaints.
- 590 5. Adherence to performance measures by service providers.

591 (b) A review of transportation delivery models
592 administered by contract by the commission and a review of
593 potential alternative methods.

594 (c) The role of paratransit service as used by providers
595 of services for the transportation disadvantaged and the
596 differences between paratransit service and the services
597 provided by the commission. In its review, the department must
598 also consider how the use of paratransit service can be
599 leveraged to improve services coordinated by the commission.

600 (d) The role of health care transportation services as
601 used by the users of services for the transportation
602 disadvantaged and how the coordination of services can be
603 leveraged to improve services administered by the commission.

604 (e) Breakdowns of funding provided by the commission on a
605 contractual level. The report must also include a breakdown of
606 how the funds are used by delivery model, including both fixed
607 route, on-demand, hybrid models, and through an innovation grant
608 outlined in the General Appropriations Act.

609 (f) A review of the eligibility criteria by each
610 coordinating entity, including any relevant demographic
611 information by coordinating entity.

612 (g) A review of the challenges and potential opportunities
613 to better support rural counties in administering such programs.

614 (h) Recommendations on efficiencies and challenges that
615 may result from adopting an alternative format of delivering

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616 commission services to improve services for individuals seeking
617 to thrive in community-based settings, including in a workplace
618 setting, who currently receive services provided by the
619 commission.

620 (i) Any additional recommendations relating to areas of
621 review required by paragraphs (a)-(g).

622 (2) The definitions in s. 427.011, Florida Statutes, apply
623 to subsection (1) unless the context clearly indicates
624 otherwise.

625 (3) The department may conduct the report required under
626 subsection (1) independently or by contract.

627 Section 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.