



Audit of the
Agreement Between Broward County
and Transportation America for
Paratransit Transportation Services

Office of the County Auditor

Audit Report

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Report No. 26-10
March 14, 2026



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR

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May 14, 2026

Honorable Mayor and Board of County Commissioners

Pursuant to the fiscal year 2025 Annual Audit Plan, we conducted an audit of the agreement between Broward County and Super Nice STS, Inc. doing business as Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services.

Our audit objectives were to determine whether the agreement with Transportation America is administered and performed in accordance with contract terms and conditions, county policies and procedures, and state statutes, and to determine whether the Transportation Options (TOPS) program is adequately coordinated and is operationally effective.

We conclude that, except as noted in this report, the agreement with Transportation America is administered and performed in accordance with contract terms and conditions, county policies and procedures, and state statutes. We conclude that, except as noted in this report, the Transportation Options (TOPS) program is adequately coordinated and is operationally effective. Opportunities for Improvement are included in the report.

We conducted this audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the review to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance provided by the Paratransit team within the Operations Division of the Transportation Department.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Melton".

Bob Melton
County Auditor

Broward County Board of County Commissioners

Mark D. Bogen • Alexandra P. Davis • Lamar P. Fisher • Beam Furr • Steve Geller • Robert McKinzie • Nan H. Rich • Hazelle P. Rogers • Michael Udine
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Honorable Mayor and Board of County Commissioners
May 14, 2026
Page 2

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Scope and Methodology.....	1
Overall Conclusion.....	2
Background.....	2
OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT.....	8
1. Driver Criminal Background Screenings and Monitoring Procedures Require Enhancement to Comply with Contract Requirements.....	8
2. Complaint Handling Procedures Require Enhancement.....	10
3. Vehicle Maintenance Alert Monitoring Requires Enhancement.....	12
4. Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Vehicle Inspection Documentation Require Enhancement.....	13
5. Training Documentation is Not Adequate to Demonstrate Compliance with Contract Requirements.....	14
6. Transportation America Consistently Fails to Achieve the On-Time Performance Standard of 92% of Completed Trips.....	16
7. Management Should Continue to Monitor and Analyze Missed Trip Statistics to Identify Potential Areas for Improvement.....	17
8. Door-to-Door Service Requirements May Require Enhancement for the Visually Impaired.....	18
MANAGEMENT’S RESPONSE.....	20

INTRODUCTION

Scope and Methodology

The County Auditor's Office conducts audits of Broward County's entities, programs, activities, and contractors to provide the Board of County Commissioners, Broward County's residents, County management, and other stakeholders, unbiased, timely, and relevant information for use in promoting government accountability and stewardship and improving government operations.

Pursuant to the fiscal year 2025 Annual Audit Plan, we conducted an audit of the agreement between Broward County and Super Nice STS, Inc. doing business as Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services. Our audit objectives were to determine whether:

1. The agreement with Transportation America is administered and performed in accordance with contract terms and conditions, county policies and procedures, and state statutes.
2. The Transportation OPTionS (TOPS) program is adequately coordinated and is operationally effective.
3. Opportunities for Improvement exist.

To determine whether the agreement with Transportation America is administered and performed in accordance with contract terms and conditions, county policies and procedures, and state statutes, we reviewed the agreement between Broward County and Transportation America, Paratransit policies and procedures, Florida statutes and standards established by the State of Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, Florida Administrative Code 14.90, driver training programs and eligibility requirements, trip data and a sample of complaints. Recalculated invoice data, payments, insurance, and performance disincentives. We performed physical observations of Paratransit service vehicles and vehicle inspection and maintenance records.

To determine whether the Transportation OPTionS (TOPS) program is adequately coordinated and is operationally effective we reviewed a sample program applications against eligibility requirements, warning and suspension procedures, annual safety inspection and security review documentation, observed service procedures during a ride along, perform onsite visits to observe Transportation America operations and fleet inventory, and performed data analytics to evaluate vendor performance against contracted performance requirements.

We conducted this audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. The standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Our audit included such tests of records and other auditing procedures deemed necessary. The audit period was from October 1, 2024, through January 31, 2026. However, transactions, processes, and situations reviewed were not limited by the audit period.

Overall Conclusion

We conclude that, except as noted in this report, the agreement with Transportation America is administered and performed in accordance with contract terms and conditions, county policies and procedures, and state statutes. We conclude that, except as noted in this report, the Transportation OptionS (TOPS) program is adequately coordinated and is operationally effective. Opportunities for Improvement are included in the report.

Background

Transportation OptionS Program

Broward County's Paratransit's Section (Paratransit) administers the Transportation OptionS (TOPS) program which provides shared-rides for persons with physical, cognitive, emotional, visual, or other disabilities which functionally prevent them from using the fixed-route bus system permanently, temporarily or under certain conditions. Paratransit administers the federally mandated Americans with Disabilities (ADA), and the state-mandated Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) and Agency Coordination Transportation (ACT) programs. Paratransit is charged with purchasing and coordinating all contracts providing specialized transportation in Broward County. In addition, Paratransit provides oversight and serves as the liaison between contracted entities and consumers. The goal is to provide public transportation services to elderly, poor, and disabled individuals in accordance with the ADA and Chapter 427, Florida Statutes. Florida Statute Chapter 427 governs special transportation and communications services, including laws pertaining to Transportation Disadvantaged.

The TOPS Program provides service throughout Broward County during the same hours and in the same areas as the fixed-route bus system. The service area extends as far North as Palm Beach, as far South as Miami-Dade, as far West as Weston, and as far East as the Coast. Most of the vehicles are equipped with lifts to accommodate wheelchairs and scooter devices.

Program applicants are required to meet eligibility requirements to qualify and must undergo a formal determination process that includes medical screening by a Florida-licensed physician to verify physical, cognitive, or visual disability that prevents the use of standard buses. In addition, applicants must complete an in-person functional assessment at a contracted facility. The TOPS Program is available to Broward County residents and eligible ADA visitors. The one-way fare per trip is \$3.50 and must be paid to the driver upon boarding the vehicle. Passengers must have the exact fare since drivers do not make change.

Transportation America (Super Nice STS, Inc.)

Transportation America performs and dispatches rider trips but does not have the ability to schedule trips. On February 3, 2015, the Board awarded an open-end contract to Super Nice STS, Inc. doing business as Transportation America (Transportation America) for the provision of Paratransit Transportation Services, in the five-year estimated amount of \$34,292,394, through December 31, 2019. The contract has had six amendments as noted in Table 1.

**Table 1
Contract Amendments**

Date	Amendment	Amendment Summary
February 2019	First	Approved a threshold increase in the estimated amount of \$15,600,000, from the current total base contract threshold of \$34,292,394 to \$49,892,394, due to an increase in the number of trips exceeding the original estimates.
April 2019	Second	Implemented the increase in salary requirements of the living wage ordinances and modified the passenger trip pricing by \$0.91, which increased the not-to-exceed threshold amount of the contract to \$50,179,300
June 2020	Third	Covered the costs associated with Transportation America assuming the responsibility for providing all Paratransit Transportation Services after the other service provider opted not to renew its agreement with the County. This action increased the contract threshold to a not-to-exceed amount of \$95,229,300.
January 2021	Fourth	Increased the reimbursement rates to cover the Living Wage Ordinance health care benefit increase effective January 1, 2021. As a result, the overall contract threshold with Transportation America increased by \$2,414,400, from \$95,229,300 to \$97,643,700.
October 2021	Fifth	Extended the agreement for a three-year term and authorized the Director of Purchasing to renew the Agreement for an additional two one-year optional periods.
March 2023	Sixth	Increased the passenger trip rates by \$0.86 from the current rate to cover the increase to the living wage rate and paid time off requirements in the Living Wage Ordinance as approved by the Board on October 25, 2022.

Audit of the Agreement Between Broward County and
Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services

Date	Amendment	Amendment Summary
		As a result, the overall contract threshold with Transportation America increased by \$3,022,280, from \$266,799,618 to \$269,821,898.

Compiled by the Office of County Auditor from the Agreement Between Broward County and Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services.

ADEPT

Paratransit utilizes commercial software called ADEPT to manage and control client eligibility. Paratransit can monitor vendor performance through the ADEPT dashboard that provides real-time performance. At the end of each month, the vendor submits invoices and includes reports out of ADEPT that summarize performance for the month.

Service Complaints

Service complaints reported to Paratransit personnel or call center staff are documented within ADEPT. Examples of complaints include, but are not limited to, the following: missed trips, late pick-ups, client behavior, driver behavior, and passenger discomfort. Service complaints are assigned to Transportation America for resolution. Transportation America is responsible for investigating such complaints and reporting the results and any corrective action to Paratransit within five days of receipt of the complaint. Paratransit is responsible for reviewing and approving the complaint responses and dispositions provided by Transportation America.

Performance Disincentives

Transportation America is paid monthly for fixed administrative costs and overhead, as well as costs of operation for services provided the previous month. Performance disincentives are built into the contract to reduce the monthly payment based on Transportation America's inability to meet minimum performance standards. Performance disincentives within the contract are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Performance Disincentives

Performance Disincentive	Description
Late Trips	Failure to achieve on-time performance standard of 92% of trips within 30- minute window; a disincentive applies to all trips in excess of the first 8% - \$10 per occurrence.
Missed Trips	A disincentive of \$50 per missed trip.
Accidents	A disincentive in the amount of two hundred and fifty (\$250.00) dollars per "at fault" vehicle and/or "at fault" passenger accident.

Audit of the Agreement Between Broward County and
Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services

Performance Disincentive	Description
Lift or Ramp Failure	\$50 per occurrence
Air-conditioning / Heater Failure	\$50 per occurrence
Vehicle Maintenance Standard	\$50 per incident
Failure to comply with the Driver uniform requirement	\$50 per day/per driver
Telephone Communication Systems	\$100 per hour or fraction thereof for any interruption in excess of 30 minutes
Telephone Performance Standard	Average hold >2.5 minutes and/or >5% of total calls have > 5 min hold - \$500 per month
Failure to Respond to Complaints with 5 days.	\$25 per occurrence
Failure to Report Incident or Accident	\$50 per occurrence
Total Complaints Exceeding 0.2% of Trips Delivered in a Calendar Month	\$25 per occurrence
Total Number of Trips with Travel Times more than 90 Minutes Exceeding 2% of all trips	\$500 per month
Any vacancy in one of the Key Personnel positions lasting longer than 60 calendar days	\$1,000 per month or fraction thereof
Falsification of trip time, arrival time, departure time, number of billable riders, number of riders, trip purpose, and/or trip location	\$200 disincentive per occurrence

Compiled by the Office of County Auditor from the Agreement Between Broward County and Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services.

Call Center

Paratransit also utilizes a call center vendor which provides access to paratransit software to schedule and cancel rides. There is a separate contract for the call center. Our audit was limited to the agreement with Transportation America and did not include the requirements of the call center contract.

Summary of Audit Coverage Related to Recent Visually Impaired Customer Concerns

During the course of our audit, customer concerns about the TOPS program were raised by a group representing visually impaired customers to the Surtax Oversight Board and the Board of County Commissioners. While these concerns were not the focus of our procedures, our audit

generally covered topics relevant to those concerns, and in some instances, resulted in Opportunities for Improvement. Table 3 summarizes the areas of concern raised and describes relevant areas covered by our audit procedures.

Table 3
Audit Coverage Related to Areas of Customer Concern

Area of Concern	Concern Summary	Audit Coverage	Audit Result
Performance Disincentives	Disincentives should be used by Paratransit to ensure Transportation America fulfills contract obligations.	We reviewed the application of a sample of performance disincentives for a sample of months. Table 2 outlines performance disincentives allowed by the contract.	We noted disincentives are generally applied; however, enhancements are needed. See Opportunities for Improvement Nos. 2.D and 6.
Late Trips	Riders are picked up late and/or dropped off late to an appointment.	We analyzed late trip statistics for seven months during the audit period.	We noted that Transportation America failed to achieve the on-time performance standard of 92% of trips for each month tested. See Opportunity for Improvement No. 6.
Missed Trips	Transportation America leaves or does not look for customers resulting in missed trips. Missed trips caused by Transportation America are recorded as client cancellations.	We analyzed missed trips statistics for seven months during the audit period. We analyzed a sample of 60 missed trips attributed to clients to evaluate whether key contract provisions were met.	We noted that missed trips attributed to Transportation America are approximately 1% per month tested and missed trips attributed to clients range between 4% and 5% per month. See Opportunity for Improvement No. 7 We noted sampled missed trips attributed to clients met key contract provisions.
Incorrect Drop-off	Visually impaired client taken to incorrect location and did not wait until client entered main entrance.	We reviewed Transportation America's policies and procedures and contract requirements related to door-to-door service.	We noted that Transportation America's procedures require the driver to provide door-to-door service, escorting the client to the main entrance but does not specifically require drivers to wait until client enters. See Opportunity for Improvement No. 8

Audit of the Agreement Between Broward County and
Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services

Area of Concern	Concern Summary	Audit Coverage	Audit Result
Vehicle Maintenance	Vehicles are not adequately maintained. (Loose rails, holes in the floor, malfunctioning seat belts)	We inspected a sample of 28 Paratransit vehicles.	We noted vehicles are adequately maintained. Two railings had a slight wobble but adequately supported the auditor's weight. These were immediately tightened by Transportation America personnel. We noted no holes in the floor or malfunctioning seatbelts. However, areas for improvement for vehicle maintenance were noted in Opportunities for Improvement Nos. 3 and 4
Complaint Handling	Complaints are not followed up on within 5 days.	We reviewed a sample of 51 complaints.	Complaints are not consistently handled in compliance with contract requirements. See Opportunity for Improvement No. 2
Customer Service	TOPS drivers are not adequately trained in ADA per contract. Poor customer service.	We reviewed driver training requirements and evaluated whether drivers receive the required training.	We noted that training is provided to driver and administrative personnel and includes customer service and ADA topics; however, documentation is inadequate to demonstrate compliance with required training hours. See Opportunity for Improvement No. 5

Compiled by the Office of County Auditor from Surtax Oversight Board and the Board of County Commissioners presentations, audit procedures, and results.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Our audit disclosed certain policies, procedures and practices that could be improved. Our audit was neither designed nor intended to be a detailed study of every relevant system, procedure or transaction. Accordingly, the Opportunities for Improvement presented in this report may not be all-inclusive of areas where improvement may be needed.

1. Driver Criminal Background Screenings and Monitoring Procedures Require Enhancement to Comply with Contract Requirements.

Driver criminal background screening procedures are not in compliance with contract requirements and driver’s license monitoring procedures are not consistently followed. Specifically, we noted:

- A. Twenty-two of 30 (73%) drivers sampled did not have a background screening completed within the past six months as required by the agreement. Exhibit A, Section X of the agreement states:

“1. TRANSPORTATION AMERICA must perform criminal background screenings on all prospective and current employees. Criminal background screenings shall include, but not shall not be limited to, employment history checks and statewide criminal correspondence checks through the Department of Law Enforcement, and a check of the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website, and may include local criminal records checks through local law enforcement agencies.

2. TRANSPORTATION AMERICA shall conduct these background screenings at least once every six (6) months.”

Table 4 shows the number of months since the last background screening for the 22 drivers noted.

Table 4
Number of Months Since Last Criminal Background Screening

No. of Months Since Last Background Check	No. of Drivers
9 to 12	6
13 to 24	8
25 to 36	4

Audit of the Agreement Between Broward County and
Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services

No. of Months Since Last Background Check	No. of Drivers
36+	4
Total	22

Compiled by the Office of County Auditor based on data received from management

In all instances, criminal background checks have not been re-performed since the driver was originally employed. Management confirmed that the background checks were not performed every six months as required by the contract and stated that they are currently updating the files to comply with the contract. Failure to complete criminal background screenings within the required six-month interval results in non-compliance with the Agreement and increases the risk that disqualifying criminal issues that occur after initial employment remain undetected affecting public safety while exposing the County to increased legal and reputational risks.

- B. One of 30 (3%) drivers was hired even though the number of driver’s license suspensions for failure to maintain Personal Injury Protection (PIP) insurance within the last three years exceeded agreement limits. Exhibit A, Section IX of the agreement states:

“Transportation America shall not employ or retain any Driver or supervisor whose driving record, as compiled by the Department of Motor Vehicles of the state of Florida, does not meet the following criteria (“Hiring/Retention Procedures”):

...

vi. No suspensions within the last three (3) years. One suspension for PIP permitted.”

Management informed the audit team that they requested the driver be removed from transportation duties as of December 4th, 2025. Failure to adhere to hiring and employment standards results in non-compliance with the Agreement and increases the risk to public safety while exposing the County to increased legal and reputational risks.

We recommend management:

- A. Enforce procedures that ensure background checks are completed every six months, including monitoring controls that reinforce ongoing compliance with the Agreement.
- B. Strengthen enforcement of hiring and employment standards to ensure ineligible drivers are promptly identified and removed from transportation duties in accordance with the Agreement.

2. Complaint Handling Procedures Require Enhancement.

Paratransit's complaint handling procedures require improvement. Specifically, we noted the following:

- A. Complaint disposition letters are not consistently handled in compliance with contract requirements. Specifically, we noted:
 - i. Ten of 51 (19.6%) complaint disposition letters were not sent to customers to communicate the resolution of complaints made.
 - ii. Thirty-one of the remaining 41 (90%) complaint disposition letters were not sent to customers within five calendar days as required by the contract.

Exhibit A, Section XIII of the agreement states:

“Transportation America must notify the customer and the County of the disposition of the complaint in writing within:

- a) five (5) calendar days of receipt of non-critical complaint*
- b) 24 hours for complaints related to safety, security and/or a severe nature”*

Complaints should be handled completely and timely according to contract requirements. Management informed us that as trip volumes grew, administrative resources did not scale, resulting in longer processing times, which, coupled with lack of a case management system, led to delays beyond the original five-day goal, with most letters taking six to ten days. Late or missing complaint disposition letters reduce transparency and erode customer confidence in the complaint handling process.

- B. While Paratransit approves complaint disposition letters provided by Transportation America for distribution to the complainant, Paratransit does not consistently obtain or retain documentation of the investigative or remediation steps performed by Transportation America to address each complaint.

Exhibit A, Section XIII of the agreement states:

“Transportation America must document and investigate all complaints”

“All complaints must be approved and signed off by the Contract Administrator”

While Transportation America investigates complaints, the current process does not require Transportation America to retain evidence of the investigative steps or

remediation efforts taken. Without such evidence, Paratransit cannot evaluate the adequacy of investigations or ensure the completion of any remediation steps discussed in the letters provided by Transportation America. Retaining documentation of actions taken and evidence reviewed would provide assurance that investigations are thorough and compliant with contract requirements.

- C. Documented complaint handling procedures do not include a requirement to identify, categorize, and require a response to complaints regarded as safety, security or severe issues within 24 hours as required by the agreement. Complaint handling requirements outlined in Exhibit A, Section XIII of the agreement states:

“Complaints of a safety, security and/or of a severe nature require a response within 24 hours.”

Management indicated that they have not encountered any complaints that needed to be categorized as a safety, security or severe issue. If a complaint had to be re-categorized, the staff is trained to make those changes. Without documented procedures, complaints regarding safety, security or severe issues may not be addressed timely increasing the risk of harm to customers and employees, as well as potentially increasing the County’s legal liability.

- D. Performance disincentives practices related to complaints require enhancement. Specifically, we noted:

- i. Performance disincentives are not consistently applied to Transportation America for failure to respond to complaints within five days. During our review, we noted that performance disincentives were not applied to 36 of 47 (77%) complaint disposition letters issued beyond the five-day requirement. Performance disincentives are intended to ensure service quality. Failure to consistently apply disincentives may erode management’s ability to enforce performance requirements.
- ii. Paratransit does not maintain supporting documentation to substantiate the complaint disincentive calculations applied at the time invoices are issued. The agreement requires the application of performance disincentives if the number of complaints exceeds 0.2% of trips delivered in a calendar month of \$25 per occurrence. However, when we reperformed the calculations using data provided by management, we identified variances between our calculated disincentive amounts and those reflected on the invoices for all seven months reviewed. These discrepancies appear to stem from the nature of ADEPT’s real-time data environment, where trip and complaint records are not locked at the time of

invoice generation. As a result, changes in record disposition after the invoice has been generated may lead to fluctuations in the data and reduce management's ability to support invoice amounts.

We recommend management:

- A. Evaluate whether the five calendar day response requirement for complaint disposition letters is realistic given current trip volume and available resources, including the lack of a case management system, and ensure that complaint disposition letters are handled in accordance with contract requirements.
- B. Consistently obtain and retain documentation of the investigative or remediation steps performed by Transportation America to address each complaint in order to support the approval of complaint disposition letters.
- C. Enhance documented complaint procedures to identify, categorize, and require a response to complaints regarded as safety, security, or severe issues within 24 hours as required by the contract.
- D. Enhance performance disincentives practices related to complaints by implementing the following:
 - i. Consistently apply performance disincentives to Transportation America for failure to respond to complaints within five days.
 - ii. Maintain documentation at the time invoices are created to adequately support invoiced complaint disincentive charges.

3. Vehicle Maintenance Alert Monitoring Requires Enhancement.

During our review, we observed that vehicles provided by the County to Transportation America for paratransit transportation services are in good overall condition; however, a significant number of vehicles operate with active check engine and tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS) alert lights. Specifically, we noted:

- A. Twenty-two of 28 (78%) of vehicles observed had active check-engine light alerts.
- B. Twelve of 28 (43%) of vehicles observed had active TPMS light alerts.

Article 10, Section 10.9 of the agreement states:

"TRANSPORTATION AMERICA shall maintain the Vehicle(s) and all its appliances and appurtenances, in a good state of repair and in efficient operating condition

during the entire term of this Agreement. TRANSPORTATION AMERICA shall be fully responsible for all maintenance and repair, of whatever kind or nature, of all Vehicle(s), which obligation shall include, but in no way be limited to, regularly scheduled routine maintenance, required inspections, and repairs."

The vehicles observed consisted of three propane-only vehicles and nineteen bi-fuel vehicles. Management indicated that the bi-fuel systems frequently trigger check engine alerts that when scanned, show codes that require no repair. As a result, these alerts are routinely ignored between scheduled preventative maintenance intervals. Additionally, management indicated that the TPMS sensors are not consistently reliable. Although management notes that vehicles undergo preventative maintenance frequently due to mileage requirements, the presence of these warning indicators may indicate potential mechanical or safety issues that may remain unaddressed if routinely ignored.

We recommend management continue its efforts to engage with the vendor to identify a permanent resolution for bi-fuel and propane system alerts. In the interim, management in coordination with Transportation America should ensure maintenance protocols are sufficient to monitor and remediate underlying maintenance and safety issues that may be masked by active check-engine and other service light alerts.

4. Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Vehicle Inspection Documentation Require Enhancement.

Pre-Trip and Post-Trip vehicle inspection documentation requirements do not consistently meet the requirements of the contract. During our review, we noted the following;

- A. Pre-Trip and Post-Trip inspection documentation are not retained for a period of one year to be made available to the Contract Administrator for inspection and review as required by the contract. Inspection documentation is only retained for two weeks. Exhibit A Section VIII.20 of the contract states:

"...Transportation America shall keep all Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspections for a period of one year from start of Service and shall be ongoing for duration of the agreement. All record of all Vehicle inspections shall be available to the Contract Administrator for inspection and review."

Management stated that Florida Administrative Code 14.90 (14.90) only requires records of daily bus inspections and any corrective action documentation to be maintained for a minimum of two weeks; however, the agreement requires Transportation America to maintain pre-trip and post-trip inspection records for one year, the County currently does

not require Transportation America to retain these records beyond the two-week period described in 14.90 unless a defect is noted. Lack of adequate inspection documentation reduces management's ability to support investigations and demonstrate compliance over time.

- B. Three of 57 (5%) vehicles reviewed had post-trip inspection forms that were not completed in their entirety. Article 10, Section 10.7 of the agreement states:

“Transportation America shall conduct and document Pre-trip and Post-trip Vehicle inspections each day. The inspection shall include an inspection of every item that appears on the Pre-trip and Post-trip Vehicle inspection form”

Management has not established a process to ensure that pre-trip and post-trip inspection forms are consistently completed in their entirety with contractual requirements. Incomplete inspection forms may allow vehicle issues to remain undetected, increasing the risk of service disruptions.

We recommend management

- A. Retain pre-trip and post-trip vehicle inspection documentation for a period of one year to be made available to the Contract Administrator for inspection and review as required by the contract or evaluate updating contract retention requirements to align with Florida Administrative Code 14.90.
- B. Implement procedures to ensure inspection records are consistently completed in their entirety.

5. Training Documentation is Not Adequate to Demonstrate Compliance with Contract Requirements.

Management does not maintain adequate documentation to demonstrate driver and administrative personnel compliance with the training requirements within the agreement. Specifically, we noted the following:

- A. Transportation America does not maintain adequate documentation to demonstrate that drivers complete the 80 hours of training required by the contract. Management informed the audit team that the contractual 80 hours requirement is split between 40 hours in the classroom and 40 hours behind-the-wheel with an experienced driver. We noted that Transportation America maintains adequate documentation to demonstrate that drivers completed a minimum of 40 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction; however,

management does not maintain records of the number of hours of classroom instruction received by drivers.

Exhibit A, section XI of the agreement states:

“Drivers shall receive a minimum of eighty (80) hours of training prior to driving a vehicle in service.”

“Retraining shall occur every 2 years or sooner as may be required by the certifying entity.”

Although management maintains supporting documentation such as class attendance records, course certificates, and sign-in sheets, they do not maintain records that capture the number of training hours completed. Failure to capture classroom training hours reduces Transportation America’s ability to demonstrate compliance with contract training requirements.

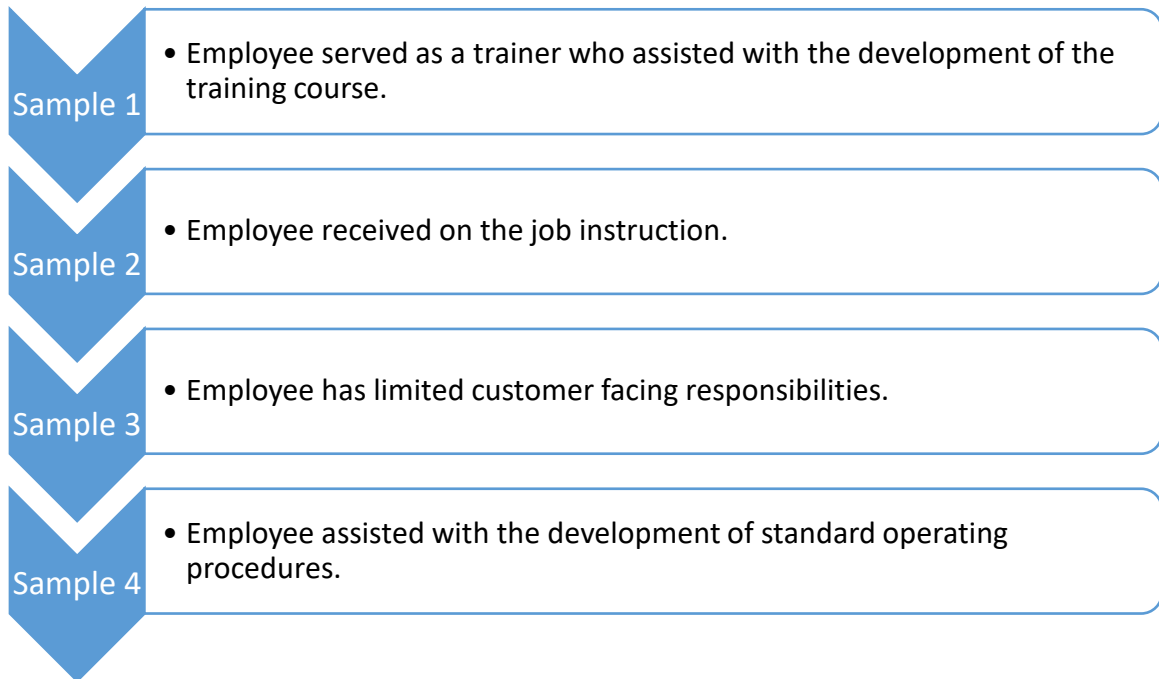
- B. Transportation America does not maintain adequate documentation to demonstrate that administrative personnel receive the standardized training required by the contract. Four of 9 (44%) administrative personnel sampled did not have written documentation to demonstrate that they received the standardized training required by the contract.

Exhibit A, Article XI of the agreement states:

“Standardized training is required of all administrative personnel, including call takers, dispatchers, and schedulers. Training should include TOPS policies and procedures, phone decorum and sensitivity to the needs of clients with disabilities, ADA requirements, and proficiency in the use of business related software used by TRANSPORTATION AMERICA to provide the Service, proficiency in use of the Paratransit Service application software.

“Written documentation of the successful completion of said training and testing as well as any re-training, (NOTE: retraining shall occur every 2 years or sooner as may be required by the certifying entity), shall be maintained as a permanent record for each employee.”

Management provided the following reasons for each of the four exceptions:



We noted no exceptions within the agreement to allow for the absence of the required documentation. Failure to document the completion of standardized training reduces Transportation America’s ability to demonstrate compliance with contract training requirements and ensure administrative personnel are adequately trained.

We recommend management:

- A. Implement procedures to ensure that classroom training hours are formally tracked, recorded, and retained so that compliance with the required 80 hours of training can be demonstrated.
- B. Implement procedures to ensure that administrative personnel complete and maintain written documentation of standardized training. In instances where an employee may be exempt from training, management should document the approval of the exemption along with the justification for the exemption, which should include how the employee met the training standards enforced by the agreement.

6. Transportation America Consistently Fails to Achieve the On-Time Performance Standard of 92% of Completed Trips.

Transportation America consistently fails to achieve the on-time performance standard of 92% of trips (8% threshold of late to completed trips). For 7 of 7 (100%) months reviewed, late trip performance metrics consistently exceeded the 8% of completed trip threshold established within the contract resulting in financial performance disincentives applied to Transportation

America. Failure to achieve on-time performance standard of 92% of trips results in a performance disincentive of \$10 per occurrence that applies to all trips in excess of the first 8%. A late trip occurs if the vehicle arrives at the pick-up location more than 30 minutes after the start of the Pickup Window or arrives at the drop-off location more than 10 minutes after the requested appointment time. Table 5 shows Transportation America’s Performance related to the 8% late trip threshold for seven selected months. For the seven months reviewed, late trips exceeded the 8% threshold ranging from 3% – 6% above the threshold.

Table 5
Transportation America’s Late Trip Performance
October 2024 through April 2025.

		Reporting Period	Total Completed Trips	Late Trips Completed	Late Trip Threshold (contracted)	Late Trip Rate	% Over Threshold	Disincentive Amount
Late Trip Statistic	2024	Oct	82,524	9,568	8%	12%	4%	\$29,660
		Nov	76,245	8,099	8%	11%	3%	\$19,990
		Dec	76,530	8,776	8%	11%	3%	\$26,540
	2025	Jan					4%	\$32,560
		Feb	79,095	10,582	8%	13%	5%	\$42,540
		Mar	84,470	10,403	8%	12%	4%	\$36,450
		Apr	88,826	12,812	8%	14%	6%	\$57,060

Compiled by the Office of County Auditor based on data received from management

Failure to achieve established performance standards may affect customer service and the public’s perception of the TOPS program.

We recommend management continue to monitor performance metrics related to late trips and work with the vendor with the goal of reducing the number of late trips.

7. Management Should Continue to Monitor and Analyze Missed Trip Statistics to Identify Potential Areas for Improvement.

For 7 of 7 (100%) months reviewed, missed trip performance metrics attributed to a failure by Transportation America was approximately 1% of scheduled trips while missed trips attributed to clients ranged from 4% to 5% of scheduled trips. A missed trip occurs when a vehicle fails to arrive at the pickup location or arrives after the end of the scheduled pickup window and the client is either not present or cancels at the door. Missed trips are not reimbursed, and those attributable to the provider incur an additional financial disincentive. Table 6 shows missed trip

statistics breaking out trips missed by clients and by Transportation America for seven selected months.

Table 6
Missed Trip Statistics
October 2024 through April 2025.

		Reporting Period	Total Scheduled Trips (est.)	Client Attributed Missed Trips	Client Attributed Missed Trip Rate %	Provider Attributed Missed Trips	Provider Attributed Missed Trip Rate %	Disincentive Amount
Missed Trip Statistics	2024	Oct	87,374	4,100	5%	750	1%	\$37,500
		Nov	81,126	3,808	5%	1,073	1%	\$53,650
		Dec	81,259	3,961	5%	768	1%	\$38,400
	2025	Jan						
		Feb	83,356	3,451	4%	810	1%	\$40,500
		Mar	89,064	3,809	4%	789	1%	\$39,450
		Apr	94,064	4,168	4%	1,070	1%	\$53,500

Compiled by the Office of County Auditor based on data received from management

Missed trips by Transportation America affect customer service and affect the perception of the program, while missed trips by clients may affect program efficiency and cost.

We recommend management continue to monitor performance metrics related to missed trips and evaluate whether any program changes can be made to reduce the number of missed trips, particularly those attributed to clients.

8. Door-to-Door Service Requirements May Require Enhancement for the Visually Impaired.

During the course of our audit, customer concerns were raised by a group representing visually impaired customers to the Surtax Oversight Board and the Board of County Commissioners related to being left at the incorrect residence and not realizing this until after the driver had already left. Relative to this specific concern, we noted that neither the Transportation America contract nor documented procedures currently require that drivers wait until clients enter the main entrance of a residence; however, drivers are allowed to provide assistance into the main lobby of public buildings. The Broward County TOPS Vehicle Operator Handbook Version 1.2, Onboard Customer Service, Section 2 states:

“TOPS provides Door-to-Door service for all its eligible riders to or from the main entrance location of either their origin pickup or their destination drop-off. Passengers who need assistance must be escorted into the ground floor lobby of any public building or to the first threshold of a residence. Passengers are NOT escorted beyond the ground floor lobby or past the first threshold of a residence. Vehicle Operators shall not sit in the TOPS vehicle and wait for the rider to come to the vehicle. The TOPS Vehicle Operator shall meet the rider at the main door of the pickup location and escort them to the TOPS vehicle then from the TOPS vehicle to the main door at the drop off location.”

Section 1.3.7 of the agreement states:

“Door-To-Door Service - Transportation service which requires the Driver to assist the client(s) from the main accessible door at the point of origin to the main accessible door of the point of destination. This does not include lifting of any client(s) and does not include going above 1st floor.”

We recognize that some drivers may already wait to ensure clients enter the main entrance if needed; however, the lack of documented policies and procedures may reduce the consistency of this service.

We recommend management consider enhancing policies and procedures to require drivers to wait until entry to the main entrance of a residence for clients that require it.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE



LAURETTE JEAN, Assistant County Administrator
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 409 • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-357-7364 • FAX 954-357-7360

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 14, 2026

TO: Robert Melton, CPA, CIA, CFE, CIG
County Auditor

FROM: Laurette Jean *Laurette Jean*
Assistant County Administrator

RE: **Management Response to the Audit of the Agreement Between Broward County and Transportation America for Paratransit Transportation Services**

The Transportation Department (BCT) and County Administration (jointly referred to as Management) have reviewed the Office of the County Auditor's Report of the Transportation Department's Paratransit Program and submits the following as Management's response.

In summary, Management concurs with the overall conclusion of the Audit Report that the Transportation Options (TOPS) program is adequately coordinated and operationally effective and the agreement with Transportation America is administered and performed in accordance with contract terms and conditions and all applicable laws. Management further acknowledges that there are opportunities for improvement, many of which have been fully or partially implemented.

Below please find detailed responses to the opportunities for improvement and recommendations noted in the Audit Report.

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America Agreement for Paratransit Services

Opportunity for Improvement 1: Driver Criminal Background Screenings and Monitoring Procedures Require Enhancement to Comply with Contract Requirements.

Auditor Recommendation A: Enforce procedures that ensure background checks are completed every six months, including monitoring controls that reinforce ongoing compliance with the Agreement.

Management Response: Management concurs and implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Although all drivers are required to complete pre-employment background checks, Management agrees that compliance with the background checks should be reinforced. When BCT staff discovered that the six-month checks were not being conducted, all current employees immediately underwent screening, which revealed no issues. To improve BCT's oversight moving forward, BCT staff has updated the monthly paratransit contractual monitoring checklist, effective April 2026, to incorporate a step within the safety procedures section that requires staff to verify that background checks are conducted every six months by the paratransit contractor. In addition to the monitoring performed by paratransit staff, BCT will create an additional level of review through its Compliance team, which operates independently from the paratransit team, to conduct monthly reviews of records and verify compliance.

Auditor Recommendation B: Strengthen enforcement of hiring and employment standards to ensure ineligible drivers are promptly identified and removed from transportation duties in accordance with the Agreement.

Management Response: Management concurs and implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

While the audit identified one instance in which a driver was hired despite exceeding the allowable number of license suspensions related to lapses in Personal Injury Protection (PIP) insurance within the past three years, BCT agrees that opportunities exist to further strengthen hiring and employment standards. For background, all current drivers are monitored through the County's SHIELD program that tracks license suspensions on an ongoing basis. Paratransit personnel are promptly notified whenever a contracted TOPS driver's license is suspended, along with the reason for the suspension. The Contract Administrator records the reason for the suspension and relays this information to the paratransit contractor to ensure the driver is removed from service.

To strengthen pre-employment compliance controls, BCT now requires Transportation America to implement a standardized employment checklist for all

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America Agreement for Paratransit Services

new hires prior to assignment to service. Effective May 7, 2026, Transportation America has fully implemented the employment checklist.

Additionally, BCT will create an additional level of review with its Compliance section team, which is independent from the paratransit team, to carry out a monthly review of the records to verify compliance. Non-compliance may result in withheld payments or termination of the agreement.

Opportunity for Improvement 2: Complaint Handling Procedures Require Enhancement.

Auditor Recommendation A: Evaluate whether the five calendar day response requirement for complaint disposition letters is realistic, given current trip volume and available resources, including the lack of a case management system, and ensure that complaint disposition letters are handled in accordance with contract requirements.

Management Response: Management concurs.

BCT is evaluating the feasibility of issuing disposition letters within the timeframe set in the contract (five calendar days). BCT acknowledges that certain current resources, such as the current software used to track complaints, has limitations. Staff is exploring new, robust case management technology to better administer the complaint process. Staff is evaluating operational improvements and technology enhancements to support timely complaint resolution and will also assess whether certain contractual timelines remain operationally realistic. Staff estimates that this process may take up to 24 months to identify, procure, and implement the new solution.

Auditor Recommendation B: Consistently obtain and retain documentation of the investigative or remediation steps performed by Transportation America to address each complaint in order to support the approval of complaint disposition letters.

Management Response: Management partially concurs.

BCT has instructed Transportation America to create an investigation form that will consistently document the investigative or remediation steps taken and to address each complaint to support the disposition summary entered into BCT's complaint software. Transportation America, as required by the contract, will retain investigation records. These records are subject to review by BCT upon request. The BCT compliance team will conduct weekly reviews of these documents as an additional level of oversight.

Auditor Recommendation C: Enhance documented complaint procedures to identify, categorize, and require a response to complaints regarded as safety, security, or severe issues within 24 hours as required by the contract.

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America Agreement for Paratransit Services

Management Response: Management concurs.

BCT will evaluate revisions to the contract language and documented procedures to further clarify the distinction between service-related complaints and safety or security incidents, as well as the associated reporting and response requirements for each category. In June 2025, Transportation America implemented a notification system that immediately reports serious incidents and accidents to County staff via SMS or email, exceeding the contract requirement for notification within 24 hours. BCT will continue monitoring procedures to ensure safety, security, and severe incidents are appropriately identified, documented, escalated, and addressed in accordance with contract requirements.

Auditor Recommendation D: Enhance performance disincentives practices related to complaints by implementing the following:

- i. Consistently apply performance disincentives to Transportation America for failure to respond to complaints within five (5) business days.
- ii. Maintain documentation at the time invoices are created to adequately support invoiced complaint disincentive charges.

Management Response: Management concurs and implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

BCT acknowledges that the current approach for calculating, processing, and record-keeping of performance disincentives needs improvement. Following the audit interview last July 2025, supporting documentation is now retained at the time disincentives are assessed. BCT is evaluating the overall process to ensure that the disincentives are being applied consistently. Additionally, BCT staff will create a log to identify all complaints charged with a monthly disincentive, as well as document any complaint exempted from a disincentive and the reason for the decision.

Opportunity for Improvement 3: Vehicle Maintenance Alert Monitoring Requires Enhancement.

Auditor Recommendation: We recommend that management continue its efforts to engage with the vendor to identify a permanent resolution for bi-fuel and propane system alerts. In the interim, management in coordination with Transportation America should ensure maintenance protocols are sufficient to monitor and remediate underlying maintenance and safety issues that may be masked by active check-engine and other service light alerts.

Management Response: Management partially concurs.

BCT acknowledges that false service codes are generated when a gas-powered vehicle is converted to alternative fuels. Although BCT believes existing oversight

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America Agreement for Paratransit Services

controls are sufficient to identify actionable maintenance concerns, BCT will continue coordinating with the vendor and Transportation America to monitor the issue.

Opportunity for Improvement 4: Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Vehicle Inspection Documentation Requires Enhancement.

Auditor Recommendation A: Retain pre-trip and post-trip vehicle inspection documentation for a period of one year to be made available to the Contract Administrator for inspection and review as required by the contract or evaluate updating contract retention requirements to align with Florida Administrative Code 14.90.

Management Response: Management concurs.

BCT will revise the contract language to align retention requirements with Florida Administrative Code 14.90.

Auditor Recommendation B: Implement procedures to ensure inspection records are consistently completed in their entirety.

Management Response: Management concurs and the recommendation has been implemented.

All paratransit drivers underwent refresher training focused on the completion of pre-trip forms. These corrective actions were finalized in November 2025. Supervisory spot checks will also be conducted to ensure forms are completed consistently and in their entirety.

Opportunity for Improvement 5: Training Documentation is Not Adequate to Demonstrate Compliance with Contract Requirements.

Auditor Recommendation A: Implement procedures to ensure that classroom training hours are formally tracked, recorded, and retained so that compliance with the required 80 hours of training can be demonstrated.

Management Response: Management partially concurs.

In response to this recommendation, BCT has instructed the paratransit contractor to amend its classroom training participation records to track the total hours employees spend in classes.

Auditor Recommendation B: Implement procedures to ensure that administrative personnel complete and maintain written documentation of standardized training. In instances where an employee may be exempt from training, management should document the approval of the exemption along with the justification for the exemption,

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America Agreement for Paratransit Services

which should include how the employee met the training standards enforced by the agreement.

Management Response: Management concurs and implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

BCT has instructed Transportation America to improve its documentation regarding the required formal training for administrative personnel, ensuring that the training requirements are clearly delineated by job classification. The estimated completion time is 60 days.

Opportunity for Improvement 6: Transportation America Consistently Fails to Achieve the On-Time Performance Standard of 92% of Completed Trips.

Auditor Recommendation: We recommend that management continue to monitor performance metrics related to late trips and work with the vendor with the goal of reducing the number of late trips.

Management Response: Management concurs.

BCT is committed to its continuous daily oversight of the Paratransit system quality and Transportation America's performance to improve overall on-time performance. It is standard industry practice to establish on-time performance targets at 90% or higher, based on the pickup times. BCT's contract stipulates a more rigorous standard by also mandating drop-off accuracy within 10 minutes of the requested appointment time. Various factors influence this metric, including traffic, weather conditions, vehicle reliability, and the frequency of customer late cancellations or no-shows, all of which can impact performance.

Over the last 12 months the program completed 1,039,442 trips with an 89.6% on-time status for the pickups and 95.8% on-time for appointment-based trips. BCT is evaluating new scheduling technology that will modernize the tools used for paratransit operations, such as real-time traffic updates, autonomous route optimization, and real time vehicle tracking for paratransit customers.

Opportunity for Improvement 7: Management Should Continue to Monitor and Analyze Missed Trip Statistics to Identify Potential Areas for Improvement.

Auditor Recommendation: We recommend that management continue to monitor performance metrics related to missed trips and evaluate whether any program changes can be made to reduce the number of missed trips, particularly those attributed to clients.

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America Agreement for Paratransit Services

Management Response: Management concurs.

BCT is committed to enhancing overall on-time performance and minimizing missed trips caused by the paratransit vendor. As indicated in the audit, approximately 1% of missed trips were attributable to Transportation America, while 4% to 5% of missed trips were attributed to clients. Management will continue to monitor performance metrics related to missed trips caused by Transportation America and evaluate potential operational and contractual changes to improve performance. In addition, BCT will further evaluate trends and contributing factors associated with client-related missed trips to identify potential non-punitive operational improvements, customer communication enhancements, and rider education opportunities that may help reduce avoidable missed trips while remaining consistent with ADA requirements.

Opportunity for Improvement 8: Door-to-Door Service Requirements May Require Enhancement for the Visually Impaired.

Auditor Recommendation: We recommend that management consider enhancing policies and procedures to require drivers to wait until entry to the main entrance of a residence for clients who require it.

Management Response: Management partially concurs.

BCT, in accordance with its ADA Reasonable Accommodation policy, authorizes hand-to-hand accommodation when a customer requires support at both the origin and destination of a trip for safety considerations. This authorization may be requested by the passenger and will be approved based on the supporting documentation. In addition, customers are permitted to travel with personal care attendants at no additional charge to offer support beyond the transportation component of a journey. BCT will continue evaluating operational practices and customer feedback regarding hand-to-hand assistance for customers who require it.

Management appreciates the Office of the County Auditor's review of the Transportation Department's Paratransit Services and the agreement with Transportation America. The recommendations and opportunities for improvement identified in the audit will assist BCT in further strengthening oversight, enhancing operational processes, and improving service delivery for TOPS customers.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

cc: Monica Cepero, County Administrator
Kevin Kelleher, Deputy County Administrator
Coree Cuff Lonergan, Broward County Transportation Director/General Manager

May 14, 2026

Management Response to Office of the County Auditor's Audit of Broward County and Transportation America
Agreement for Paratransit Services

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