# NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF NEW MEXICO

# RESOLUTION 2023-01

# To Commend ABQ-Ride for Allowing for Certification of Sun Van Applicants Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired by Appropriate Education and Rehabilitation Professionals

WHEREAS, Sun Van, the paratransit service of ABQ-Ride, and other complementary paratransit systems in New Mexico are valuable transportation options, allowing the blind and others with permanent or temporary physical disabilities to travel independently to employment, medical care, shopping and other destinations; and

WHEREAS, complementary paratransit systems such as Sun Van must implement a process to determine eligibility for their services in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as specified in Section 49 CFR 37.125(A) of promulgated regulations; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico adopted Resolution 2022-2 at its convention on August 28, 2022, and this affiliate’s West Mesa Chapter passed Resolution 2023-01 on February 8, 2023, calling upon ABQ-Ride and other complementary paratransit services in New Mexico to review their policies and procedures regarding certification of Sun Van applications for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and to consider expanding the types of qualified professionals authorized to certify these applications to include vocational rehabilitation and education professionals who work with adults and youth who are blind or visually impaired who can provide more accurate information regarding travel function and needs; and

WHEREAS, work of the Paratransit Advisory Board and ABQ-Ride upon receipt of the West Mesa Chapter's resolution has resulted in a medical waiver process for which instructions provided in a document from ABQ-Ride entitled "Sun Van Medical Waiver 2023", part of a new certification process which is to be implemented on October 1, 2023, which states: "For applicants whose application is based on a visual disability, the following professionals are authorized to provide clarifying information:

Ophthalmologist; Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC); Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired (CTVI); Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS); Certified Rehabilitation Teacher of the Blind (CRTB) and those holding the National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC).":

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico assembled in convention in the city of Albuquerque this 24th day of September that the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico commend ABQ-Ride and the Paratransit Advisory Board for their work in expanding the types of qualified professionals authorized to certify applications for those who are blind or visually impaired to include CRCs, CTVIs, CRTBs, COMSs and those holding the NOMC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico call upon other communities in the state who offer complementary paratransit service review their application procedures to likewise allow for qualified and certified professionals who serve blind and visually impaired adults and children, allowing for appropriate options and greater flexibility in certification of applications.