

## **Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) Guidelines**

### **RTAP fund availability**

RTAP provides a source of funding to bring training opportunities and materials to non urbanized transit operators. RTAP funds are available through Michigan Public Transit Association for rural agencies that receive Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 or 5311 funds.

If an agency is primarily urban but receives Section 5310 or 5311 federal funds in addition to Section 5307 funds, the agency may be eligible for RTAP as a percentage of rural versus urban funding for the agency, a cost allocation plan must be submitted to Michigan Public Transit Association to determine the rural percentage factor.

### **Reimbursement Requests**

Complete an RTAP Travel Expense Voucher within 60 days of the training activity. Use the RTAP Schedule of Travel Rates to complete the expense voucher.

Eligible expenses will be dispersed at the rates outlined in the RTAP Schedule of Travel Rates. Receipts must be submitted for all transportation modes. Payments for meals will be allowed up to the maximum state rate shown and meal receipts are not required. Indicate travel start and end times on the expense voucher. The expense voucher must be signed by the transit manager. The expense voucher must include a description of the training and the purpose.

### **Meals**

Meals that are furnished as part of the fare in the course of travel, as part of the registration fee, as part of the lodging rate (other than cold continental breakfasts) or through the courtesy of another individual cannot be submitted for reimbursement.

To be eligible for a meal expense, the travel must occur as outlined below.

Breakfast: Travel commences prior to 6:00am and extends beyond 8:30am.

Lunch: Travel commences prior to 11:30am and extends beyond 2:00pm.

Dinner: Travel commences prior to 5:00pm and extends beyond 8:00pm.

### **Travel and Lodging**

Airline travel should be by coach class. If reduced air fare and/or hotel rates are available in conjunction with the conference, the agency should make efforts to obtain the special rate.

Rental car use should be limited to those instances where it is the only practical local transportation means. A justification of the rental car must be submitted with the expense voucher.

Travel by personal car will be reimbursed at the current IRS federal mileage rate. For long trips, the total cost should not exceed the lowest available airfare.

#### Lodging

One overnight before the event if the event starts earlier than 10:00 am, and allowable meals.

All nights during the event, along with allowable meals, unless the event provides its own meals.

One overnight at the end of the event if the event ends after 6:00 pm and is more than 50 miles from official workstation or home.

### **RTAP Grant/Scholarship Activities**

Grants/ Scholarships are available to reimburse eligible transit agencies for the following activities:

Training/registration materials for transit related workshops, conferences and seminars that focus on issues affecting rural transit operations. RTAP money may be used to attend job related college courses (reimbursement will be tuition only).

Eligible travel, meal, and lodging expenses.

Capital training aids – such as computer, television, DVD player, video camera, overhead or LCD projector, wheelchair for training purposes. Any items purchased must be for training use exclusively.

Training manual, books, CD's or DVD's used for training purposes.

If a transit agency or transit related association sponsors training that is open for attendance by other transit agencies, the sponsoring agency/association and attending agencies should follow these guidelines;

- Sponsoring agency determines registration fees and advises agencies
- RTAP eligible agencies submit RTAP Grant Request Forms listing the estimated costs to attend to RTAP coordinator for approval.
- Transit agencies submit expense vouchers with required receipts for reimbursement after training.

The following is not eligible for RTAP funding:

- Training provided for transit agency staff by another staff person,
- A computer upgrade unless the computer is used exclusively for training purposes.

## **Grant/Scholarship Program**

The RTAP program is available to encourage the development of transit operational skills. Grants are awarded to transit agencies for offsetting the expenses of attending transit related training workshops, conferences and seminars.

Grant/ scholarship funds are limited to **\$5,500** annually. Grant requests must be submitted at least 15 days prior to the date of training. All requests must be for more than \$100.00 prior to submitting to Michigan Public Transit Association. ***New grant requests will not be accepted after September 15 of the current fiscal year.***

**All reimbursements must be submitted within 60 days after the successful completion of the training activity or they will not be eligible for reimbursement.**

### **RTAP contact info**

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