

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Call for Projects

Introduction

The current Federal legislation which authorizes funding for transportation is the Safe, Affordable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users, known as SAFETEA-LU. SAFETEA-LU requires the establishment of a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for all Federal Transit Administration (FTA) human service transportation programs: Section 5310 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program, Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) and Section 5317 New Freedom Program. All projects selected for funding from these FTA programs must be derived from this coordinated plan and be competitively selected.

The Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA) has developed the Coordinated Human Services Transportation (HST) Plan for Puerto Rico. The PRHTA is the designated recipient for the Section 5316 and 5317 funds. As designated recipient we are seeking eligible projects to be funded for the New Freedom Program and for JARC Program.

Projects selected will be funded with monies from these Programs. All project proposals must conform to the guidelines established by FTA funding under EITHER 5316 JARC OR 5317 New Freedom Programs. Projects which do not qualify for either funding category will be not be considered consideration.

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Eligible Recipients

There are three categories of eligible subrecipients of JARC and New Freedom Funds:

- 1) Private non-profit organizations. A non-profit organization is a corporation or association determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described by 26 U.S.C. 501(c) which is exempt from taxation under 26 U.S.C. 501(a) or one which has been determined under State law to be non-profit and for which the designated State agency or urbanized area designated recipient has received documentation certifying the status of the non-profit organization.
- 2) State or local government authority and
- 3) Operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation services.

JARC Program Goals

To improve access to transportation services to employment and employment related activities for welfare recipient and eligible low-income individuals and to transport residents of urbanized areas and non-urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities.

Eligible Activities

Funds from the JARC Program (5316) are available for capital, planning, and operating expenses that support the development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment.

Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to capital, planning, and operating assistance to support activities such as:

- a. Late-night and weekend service;
- b. Guaranteed ride home service;
- c. Shuttle service;
- d. Expanding fixed-route public transit routes;
- e. Demand-responsive van service;
- f. Ridesharing and carpooling activities;
- g. Transit related aspects of bicycling (adding bicycle racks to vehicles to support individuals that bicycle a portion of their commute or providing bicycle storage at transit stations);
- h. Local car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides;
- i. Promotion, through marketing efforts, of the:
 - 1) Use of transit by workers with non-traditional work schedules;
 - 2) Use of transit voucher programs by appropriate agencies for welfare recipients and other low-income individuals;
 - 3) Development of employer-provided transportation such as shuttles, ridesharing, carpooling; or
 - 4) Use of transit pass program and benefits under Section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
- j. Supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs. This activity is intended to supplement existing transportation services by expanding the number of providers available or the number of passengers receiving transportation services. Vouchers can be used as an administrative mechanism for payment to providers of alternative transportation services. The JARC program can provide vouchers to low income individuals to purchase rides, including (1) mileage reimbursement as part of a volunteer driver program, (2) a taxi trip, or (3) trips provided by a human service agency. Providers of transportation can then submit the voucher to the JARC project administering agency for payment based on pre-determined rates or contractual arrangements. Transit passes for use on a fixed route or ADA complementary paratransit service are not eligible. Vouchers are an operational expense which requires a 50/50 (federal/local) match;

- k. Applying Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools;
- l. Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), including customer trip information technology;
- m. Integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling, and dispatch functions;
- n. Deploying vehicle position-monitoring systems;
- o. Establishing regional mobility managers or transportation brokerage activities.

New Freedom Program Goal

The New Freedom formula grant program aims to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society. Seek to reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the ADA of 1990.

Eligible Activities

New Freedom program funds are available for capital and operating expenses that support **new public transportation services beyond those required by the ADA and new public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the ADA designed to assist individuals with disabilities with accessing transportation services, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services.** For the purpose of the New Freedom program, “new” service is any service or activity that was not operational before August 10, 2005 and did not have an identified funding source as of August 10, 2005, as evidenced by inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) or the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). In other words, if not for the New Freedom program, these projects would not have consideration for funding and proposed service enhancements would not be available for individuals with disabilities.

Both new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives are required to go beyond the requirements of ADA and must (1) be targeted toward individuals with disabilities; and (2) meet the intent of the program by removing barriers to transportation and assisting persons with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment services.

Eligible projects may include:

A. New Public Transportation Services Beyond the ADA. The following activities are examples of eligible projects meeting the definition of **new public transportation**.

- 1) Enhancing public transportation services beyond minimum requirements of the ADA.
 - a) Expansion of paratransit service parameters beyond the 3/4 mile required by the ADA;

- b) Expansion of current hours of operation for paratransit services that are beyond those provided on the fixed route services;
 - c) The provision of same day service;
 - d) Enhancement of the level of service by providing escorts or assisting riders through the door of their destination;
 - e) Acquisition of vehicles and equipment designed to accommodate mobility aids that exceed the dimensions and weight ratings established for common wheelchairs under the ADA and labor costs of aides to help drivers assist passengers with over-sized wheelchairs. This would permit the acquisition of lifts with a larger capacity, instead of just modifications to lifts with a 600 lb design load, as well as the acquisition of heavier-duty vehicles for paratransit and/or demand-responsive service; and
 - f) Installation of additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by the ADA.
- 2) Feeder Services.
 - 3) Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations.
 - 4) Travel Training.

B. New Public Transportation Alternatives Beyond the ADA. The following activities are examples of projects that are eligible as **new public transportation alternatives beyond the ADA** under the New Freedom program:

- 1) Purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, ride sharing, and/or vanpooling programs.
- 2) Supporting the administration and expenses related to new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers. Vouchers are an operational expense which requires a 50/50 (federal/local) match.
- 3) Supporting new volunteer driver and aide programs.
- 4) Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation.

Federal/Local Matching Requirements

1-JARC

- a. General. JARC funds may be used to finance capital, planning, and operating expenses. The Federal share of eligible capital and planning costs may not exceed 80% of the net cost of the activity. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating costs of the activity. Recipients may use up to 10% of their apportionment to support program administrative costs including administration, planning, and technical assistance, which may be funded at 100% federal share. The local share of eligible capital and planning costs shall be no less than 20% of the net cost of the activity and the local share for eligible operating costs shall be no less than 50% of the net operating costs. All of the local share must be provided from sources other than Federal DOT funds. Some examples of sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share include: State or local appropriations; revenue from human

services contracts; toll revenue credits; and net income generated from advertising and concessions. Non-cash share such as donations, volunteered services, or in-kind contributions is eligible to be counted toward the local match as long as the value of each is documented and supported, and represents a cost which would otherwise be eligible under the program.

Income from contracts to provide human service transportation may be used either to reduce the net project cost (treated as revenue) or to provide local match for JARC operating assistance. In either case, the cost of providing the contract service is included in the total project cost.

- a. Exceptions. The Federal share is 90% for vehicle-related equipment and facilities required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). It is only the incremental cost of the equipment or facility required by the CAAA or ADA that may be funded at 90%, not the entire cost of the vehicle or facility, even if the vehicle or facility is purchased for use in service required by the ADA or CAAA. States wishing to apply for assistance at the higher match ratio should consult the FTA regional office for further guidance regarding methods of computing the incremental cost before submitting an application.
- b. Use of Other Federal Funds. Local match may be derived from other Federal funds derived from Federal programs that are eligible to be expended for transportation, other than from the Department of Transportation programs. Examples include Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Medicaid, Employment training programs, Rehabilitation Services, and Administration on Aging. To be eligible for local match for FTA funds, the other Federal funds must be used for activities included in the total net project costs of the FTA grant. Expenditure of other Federal funds for transportation outside of the scope of the project cannot be applied as a credit for local match in the FTA grant.

2-New Freedom

General. New Freedom funds may be used to finance capital, planning, and operating expenses. The Federal share of eligible capital and planning costs may not exceed 80% of the net cost of the activity. The Federal share of the eligible operating costs may not exceed 50% of the net operating costs of the activity. Recipients may use up to 10% of their apportionment to support program administrative costs including administration, planning, and technical assistance, which may be funded at 100% federal share. The local share of eligible capital and planning costs shall be no less than 20% of the net cost of the activity and the local share for eligible operating costs shall be no less than 50% of the net operating costs. All of the local share must be provided from sources other than Federal DOT funds. Some examples of sources of local match which may be used for any or all of the local share include: State or local appropriations; other non-DOT Federal funds; revenue from human services contracts; toll revenue credits; and net income generated from advertising and concessions. Non-cash share such as donations, volunteered services, or in-kind contributions is eligible to be counted toward the local match. The value of any non-cash share shall be documented and supported, represent a cost which would otherwise be eligible under the program, and be included in the net project cost in the project budget. Income from contracts to provide human service transportation may be used either to reduce the net project cost (treated as revenue) or to provide local match for New Freedom operating

assistance. In either case, the cost of providing the contract service is included in the total project cost.

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- b. Use of Other Federal Funds. Local match may be derived from other Federal funds derived from Federal programs that are eligible to be expended for transportation, other than funds from DOT programs. Examples include Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Medicaid, Employment training programs, Rehabilitation Services, and Administration on Aging. To be eligible for local match for FTA funds, the other Federal funds must be used for activities included in the total net project costs of the FTA grant. Expenditure of other Federal funds for transportation outside of the scope of the project cannot be applied as a credit for local match in the FTA grant.

Full Program Guidance and Application Instructions can be at the following links below:

CIRCULAR FTA 9050.1: The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program Guidance and Application Instructions

http://www.fta.dot.gov/publications/publications_5655.html

CIRCULAR FTA 9045.1: New Freedom Program Guidance and Application Instructions

http://www.fta.dot.gov/publications/publications_5656.html

Project Proposal Requirements

Projects will be selected based on the evaluation criteria established in the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. Priority will be given to projects which serve populations qualifying for both JARC and New Freedom funding and that show new innovative approaches to human services transportation planning and services delivery.

Applicants to participate in Section 5316/5317 Programs Funding shall submit the following information in the Applicant Form (Enclosed, see **Appendix A**):

- 1. Project Title** - Provide the title of the project, not to exceed one line, for which funding is requested. This title will be used on all project listings.
- 2. Name of Implementing Agency** - Identify the agency applying for funding under this Call for Projects. PRHTA encourages and accepts multi-jurisdictional/agency applications. If the

implementing agency is not a direct recipient of FTA funds, include the name, contact and commitment letter from the direct recipient.

3. Point of Contact – Identify a contact person who will serve as the liaison between PRHTA and the implementing agency for all matters pertaining to the project application and if funding is awarded, for the grant. Include the person's name, title, mailing address, direct telephone line, fax number, and e-mail address.

4. Project Funding Sources and Local Match - Identify, by Fiscal Year, which FTA program you are applying for and local match source(s) for the project. If your project is eligible for either, choose the program that is most applicable to your project's scope.

5. Project Description – Provide a detailed project description to include:

- Project context and background
- Study or service area
- Key people involved
- Description of the problem to be addressed and how it will be resolved
- Description of what will be achieved and what will be delivered to the customer
- Project goals

6. Project Benefits - Provide a description of how your project will (as detailed in the evaluation criteria below):

- Improve accessibility and mobility for the transportation disadvantaged
- Improve customer services for HST users and providers
- Improve coordination among HST programs
- Maximize project cost effectiveness

7. Project Implementation Strategy - Describe in detail the efforts that will be carried out to meet these criteria. This will help determine the quality of service provided by your agency and its financial capability (as detailed in the evaluation criteria below):

- *Ability to Service Target Population*
Describe the target population which this project is designed to serve and what gap in public services will be filled through the use of these funds.
- *Measures of Effectiveness*
Describe the measures which will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Explain how the project will demonstrate to have had a positive impact and how those impacts will be assessed.
- *Need and Use of Proposed Funds*
Applicant must include: the degree and urgency of need for funds; applicant's ability to conduct the proposed project; proposed use of funds; and, if appropriate ridership projections.
- *Sustainability*
Describe what proactive efforts will be undertaken to insure the continuation of the project at the end of the grant period.

- *Fiscal and Managerial Capability*

Applicant must describe its ability to provide efficient/effective transportation services including scheduling, dispatching, compliance with reporting and monitoring requirements; its fiscal accountability; process for hiring and training of drivers and other personnel, if applicable; and funding sources which will enable the applicant to provide required local match, if needed.

8. Project Work Plan - Provide a schedule and work plan for the project – Identify the timeline for the project and schedule by task. Include a start date and specific dates for deliverables.

9. Relationship to other activities related

10. Project Budget - Provide a budget for the project. Outline specific project expenses by task. Specify if the project will be implemented in-house or contracted. Identify operational, capital and administrative expenses.

11. Certification and Assurances for FTA Assistance Program- A grant applicant must submit properly signed the Certification and Assurance that can be expected to apply to any FTA grant. (For further information and details on this certification refer to <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/07-5294.pdf> (Enclosed, see **Appendix B**)

**12. Required Additional Information JARC: FTA Circular 9050.1 Chapter VIII and Appendix A–C
New Freedom FTA Circular 9045.1 Chapter VII and Appendix A–C**

Selection Process

Title 49 U.S.C. 5317 requires that selected projects be derived from the locally developed coordinated plan and meet the intent of the NF & JARC program.

In large urbanized areas, this process is conducted in cooperation with the MPO.

Priorities will be given to those projects identified in the coordinated public transit human service transportation plan. The State publishes an announcement for NF & JARC project for all funding sources available. Competitions for projects will be in the areas (Urbanized Areas/Non Urbanized Areas) to receive funding for project. The projects to be funded in an area will be determined locally.

The state evaluates application based on Criteria such as completeness of required documentation, identification of needs and solutions that address the needs.

In order to qualify for funds, the applicant must:

1. Complete and submit an original of the Capital Assistance Application by the deadline date.

2. Comply with the following planning requirements:
 - a. Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO). Applicants from an urbanized area are required to notify their respective Mayors of their intention to submit an application. The Mayor will then submit a petition to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which is prepared by the PRHTA.

Recommended applications are included into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) of the corresponding urbanized area, to be approved by the MPO and incorporated into the State Transportation Improvement (STIP). Projects in non urbanized area will be incorporated in STIP.

HST Plan Goals

Coordinated HST Plan established several goals for the regions human services transportation system. These goals are listed below to provide applicants with an idea what the region hopes to accomplish with the projects funded.

- Improve accessibility and mobility for the transportation disadvantaged
- Improve customer services for HST users and providers
- Improve cost effectiveness
- Improve coordination between Agency that serve these population
- Promotion of Services

Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria were designed to score projects based upon their ability to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan for Puerto Rico. The evaluation criteria were derived directly from the goals and objectives and finalized by the HST Committee. They are designed to encourage innovative strategies for serving transportation disadvantaged populations. A set of broad categories was created in which applicants will receive scores based on their ability to achieve said objective. Within each category, suggestions are made of strategies that might be used to complete the goal; however these guidelines are only suggestions and are not meant to be interpreted as a checklist of required components.

As a precursor to the evaluation criteria, it was decided that applicants must qualify for funding under the guidelines set by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under one or both of the programs known as JARC (5316) or New Freedom (5317). In order to provide an incentive to serve all HST populations in an efficient and convenient manner, proposals serving populations that qualify for JARC and New Freedom funding will be given priority, also applicant that have demonstrate compliance with FTA Programs requirements. Additionally, in order to ensure that projects are cost-effective, proposals must include adequate measures of effectiveness and project readiness. These measures must be able to demonstrate that the service can provide improved transportation to HST groups. Without adequate measures of effectiveness, proposals will not be given further consideration.

These criteria and their guidelines are as follows:

1. Improve accessibility and mobility for the transportation disadvantaged (25% of score)

Project components may include:

- Increase transportation options
- Improve mobility for HST groups
- Simplify the use of HST services
- Fill gaps in existing transportation infrastructure
- Utilize technology such as ITS
- Increase ridership

2. Improve customer services for HST users and providers (20% of score)

Project components may include:

- Utilize technology such as ITS
- Include services delivery and reporting
- Provide amenities and planning tools
- Provide information on other HST options
- Institute seamless fares and transfers
- Include program monitoring
- Provide service that is affordable, useable, safe, clean, and comfortable
- Respond to the travel patterns of local citizens

3. Improve coordination among HST programs (15% of score)

Project components may include:

- Serve cross-jurisdictional trips
- One-call scheduling of inter-agency trips
- Interface with existing transportation systems
- Utilize existing fixed-route transit systems
- Reduce barriers to coordinated service delivery (geographic, political, funding, etc.)
- Maximize planning, service delivery and reporting
- Establish or expand programmatic relationships with other HST providers
- Partner with other local and federal agencies and the private sector to promote policies, programs, and activities

4. Maximize project cost effectiveness (15% of score)

Project components may include:

- Maximize use and operating efficiency of existing vehicles
- Eliminate duplicative services (either intra- or inter-agency)
- Maximize financial resources available through good coordination
- Establish or expand financial relationships with other HST providers
- Share vehicles during off-peak times
- Increase number of riders per trip

5. Statement of need/organizational capacity (20% of score, each bullet worth 4 points)

Describe efforts to meet these criteria in as much detail as possible to help us determine the quality of service provided by your agency and its financial capability.

- *Ability to Service Target Population*
Describe the target population which this project is designed to serve and what gap in public services will be filled through the use of these funds.
- *Measures of Effectiveness*
Describe the measures which will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Explain how the project will demonstrate to have had a positive impact and how those impacts will be assessed.
- *Need and Use of Proposed Funds*
Applicant must include: the degree and urgency of need for funds; applicant's ability to conduct the proposed project; proposed use of funds; and, if appropriate ridership projections.
- *Sustainability*
Describe what proactive efforts will be undertaken to insure the continuation of the project at the end of the grant period.
- *Fiscal and Managerial Capability*
Applicant must describe its ability to provide efficient/effective transportation services including scheduling, dispatching, compliance with reporting and monitoring requirements; its fiscal accountability; process for hiring and training of drivers and other personnel, if applicable; and funding sources which will enable the applicant to provide required local match, if needed.

6. Project budget (5% of score)

- Outline specific project expenses by task

Section 5310 Goals

The goal of the Section 5310 program is to improve mobility for elderly individuals and individual with disabilities throughout the country toward this goal, FTA provides financial assistance for transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in all areas, urbanized, small urban and rural. The program requires coordination with other Federally-assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources.

Programs objectives, eligible recipient and details information for this Program is included in a separate document "Application Instruction to Participate in Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities Program. The same is available upon request at the Federal Coordination Offices.