NOFA800

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)
FTA Section 5310 FY2028-FY2029
Questions and Answers

Q We are considering using [a third-party brokering company] to coordinate transportation through Uber and Lyft. Would rides provided through this model qualify as eligible transportation under the Section 5310 program? If so, do the driver background checks conducted by Uber and Lyft satisfy DHS requirements, or must all drivers complete separate fingerprint-based criminal background checks? If additional screening is required, would it apply to every driver providing rides under the program?

All grantees must comply with the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Transportation Manual, including vehicle inspection, insurance minimums, and driver background requirements. MAN1425 Coordinated Transportation System Transportation Manual :: Policy and Manual Management System (PAMMS). A rideshare brokerage system and rides would only qualify for FTA 5310 funding if all DHS requirements can be met.

Q May an applicant request Section 5310 funding primarily for mobility management activities, including transportation coordination staff salaries, fringe benefits, scheduling, dispatching, and technology, while using a smaller portion of funds for direct transportation assistance? Is there a minimum percentage of project costs that must be dedicated to direct transportation services versus mobility management activities?

ARC does not currently require a minimum percentage of funds to be used toward direct transportation services or mobility management.

Q Can Section 5310 mobility management funding support an existing transportation coordination program that primarily serves an organization's own clients? Or is there an expectation that transportation coordination services be broadly available to the general public and promoted as a community-wide transportation resource?

The FTA Section 5310 program provides funds for the Atlanta Urbanized Area to improve mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services. The program aims to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas – large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000). Any additional operational plans with 5310 funds should be included in the applicant's proposal and will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria listed in the NOFA.

Q Are the following costs eligible under a mobility management project:

- **[Third-party brokering company] transportation coordination, scheduling, and tracking platform fees;**
- **Salesforce licensing and related expenses attributable to transportation coordination, client management, reporting, and program administration; and**
- **Other software or technology tools used to schedule, monitor, and report transportation services?**

The expenses below are considered expenses under Capital Funding:

- Mobility manager staff positions and related program costs,
- Trips (Paratransit, Demand-Response, Fixed/Flex Route Shuttles, etc.) regardless of whether they are voucher run programs with subcontractors
- Short range transit planning as long as it is a part of mobility management,
- Coordination of individualized travel training and trip planning activities projects and technology such as scheduling software and hardware.

The following expenses MAY be deemed Capital upon submission to DHS for review and approval:

- Demonstration projects and technology such as scheduling software and hardware. planning and operation of coordinated systems inclusive of Geographic information Systems (GIS), global Positioning System Technology, coordinated vehicle scheduling, dispatching, and monitoring technologies.
- Technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system
- Single smart customer payment systems.

Q May existing transportation expenditures funded through private donations, foundation grants, or Medicaid-funded transportation services be used to satisfy the required local match, provided those expenditures are directly related to the approved Section 5310 project and comply with applicable federal requirements?

Local Match funding requirements & eligibility are listed on page 8 of the NOFA document, including restrictions on non-cash local match, eligible federal funds and private donations.

Q If transportation provided through the [third-party brokering company]/Uber/Lyft model is determined to be ineligible for Section 5310 reimbursement, could an organization still receive Section 5310 funding for mobility management activities, such as transportation coordination staff, scheduling, dispatching, and technology, while the actual rides are paid for with non 5310 funds? If so, would the rides funded through those non-federal sources still be required to meet Section 5310 driver screening or other program requirements?

All grantees must comply with the DHS Transportation Manual, including vehicle inspection, insurance minimums, and driver background requirements. MAN1425 Coordinated Transportation System Transportation Manual :: Policy and Manual Management System (PAMMS). A rideshare brokerage system would only qualify for FTA 5310 funding if it complies with all DHS requirements. Whether FTA 5310 funds can be appropriately spent on mobility management activities only for rides not otherwise eligible for this funding would be a question subject to DHS interpretation, for which ARC does not offer an opinion.

Q What minimum insurance coverage is required for:

- **Recipients of Section 5310 funding;**
- **Transportation contractors or subcontractors; and**
- **Transportation Network Company (TNC) providers such as Uber and Lyft?**

For transportation coordinated through [a third-party broker] and provided by Uber or Lyft drivers:

- **Would the insurance coverage maintained by Uber and Lyft satisfy Section 5310 requirements?**
- **Are there requirements regarding additional insured status, certificates of insurance, or specific policy limits for either the applicant or transportation providers?**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to describe its ability to comply with the DHS insurance requirements, including insurance coverage. All awarded NOFA applications must abide by the policies outlined in DHS MAN1425. You may refer to chapter 3 of MAN1425 to view the current insurance and risk management policies:https://pamms.dhs.ga.gov/ofss/man1425/risk-management-and-insurance/

Q Can a privately owned, for-profit LLC apply directly as the primary recipient under this FTA Section 5310 funding opportunity?

Please refer to Section 2.4 of the NOFA document to review eligibility requirements.

Q Can a company without previous passenger transportation contracts qualify if it demonstrates the financial and operational ability to launch the program?

Yes. Applications will be evaluated based upon all criteria listed in the NOFA including, but not limited to:

- The respondent's experience in delivering transportation services and ability to implement the project, and experience in working with populations 65 and above
- Experience in delivering this service and/or why the respondent would like to begin delivering this service

Q Can a nonprofit organization or private investor provide the required 20% local match without becoming a subcontractor or co-applicant?

Local match requirements are listed on page 8 of the NOFA document.

Q Must applicants have all matching funds available when submitting proposals, or can they provide a binding funding commitment before contract execution?

Possession of the match funds does not have to be in place during the time of proposal submission. The match funds must be in place once service provision begins under this ARC grant.

Q Are commercially leased passenger vans and wheelchair-accessible vans allowable expenses under this particular funding opportunity?

The purchase of vehicles using 5310 funds is not an allowable expense under this NOFA. Organizations may enter into lease agreements for vehicles in lieu of purchasing only with prior written approval.

Q Can lease payments, commercial insurance, fuel, maintenance, driver wages, and dispatch expenses be included in the project budget?

Commercial insurance, fuel, maintenance, driver wages, and dispatch expenses would be eligible expenses as reported on Uniform Cost Methodology (UCM). Organizations may enter into lease agreements for vehicles in lieu of purchasing only with prior written approval.

Q Are there minimum annual trip requirements or minimum numbers of individuals who must be served?

ARC does not currently have a required minimum annual trips or minimum number of individuals to be served.

Q What financial statements are acceptable for a newer transportation business that has not completed an independent financial audit?

Inability to submit a completed independent financial audit does not deem an applicant ineligible. Applicants should submit a completed Financial Components workbook, the DHS Pre Award Risk Assessment Form and current budget of applicant organization.

Q Is a pre-revenue Georgia for-profit LLC eligible to apply as an 'operator of public transportation' under NOFA800?

As noted in the FTA Circular C9070.1H-Circular-11-01-2024.pdf "Eligible subrecipients for other eligible Section 5310 activities include a State or local governmental authority, a private nonprofit organization, or an operator of public transportation that receives a Section 5310 Award indirectly through a recipient. Taxi companies and TNCs that provide only exclusive-ride service are not eligible subrecipients; however, they may participate in the Section 5310 program as contractors while under a transportation service contract with a State, Designated Recipient, or eligible subrecipient, such as a local government or nonprofit organization, in order to provide accessible transportation services on behalf of the recipient or subrecipient."

Applications will be evaluated based upon all criteria listed in the NOFA including, but not limited to:

- The respondent's experience in delivering transportation services and ability to implement the project, and experience in working with populations 65 and above
- Experience in delivering this service and/or why the respondent would like to begin delivering this service

Q If eligible, may the applicant request capital funding toward the purchase of a wheelchair-accessible van and related wheelchair lift, ramp, and securement equipment?

The purchase of vehicles using 5310 funds is not an allowable expense under this NOFA.

Q Please confirm the local-match requirement applicable to vehicle and accessibility-equipment capital expenses.

All funding is reimbursed at 80% with a 20% local match requirement. Any respondent awarded funding through 5310 will be responsible for the 20% match

Q May donated funds, documented in-kind contributions, or funds from another federal program satisfy any portion of the required local match?

Local Match funding requirements & eligibility are listed on page 8 of the NOFA document, including restrictions on non-cash local match, eligible federal funds and private donations.

Q If a pre-revenue for-profit transportation provider is not eligible as a direct applicant, may it participate as a contracted transportation provider or project partner of an eligible public agency or nonprofit applicant?

All transportation providers utilizing 5310 funds through ARC must meet all federal and state eligibility requirements regardless of whether they are a direct applicant or subprovider.

Q Are 5310 funds able to apply to people who are 55+ or does it have to be 65+?

Section 5310 funding is restricted to individuals that are over 65 years of age or individuals under 65 living with a disability.

Q Is there a technical support line to call if we are having issues with submitting the proposal through the website?

When your proposal is successfully uploaded to the ARC website, the email associated with the upload will receive confirmation that the proposal has been submitted. If any applicant is having difficulty uploading documents, please refer to the user guide posted on the ARC website (Linked here: https://procurement.atlantaregional.org/user-guide/). Late submittals will not be accepted, so do not wait until the last minute to upload your response template. If your attempts to troubleshoot using the user guide are unsuccessful, you may email 5310@atlantaregional.org to request additional technical assistance / guidance.

Q Will applicants receive an automated confirmation after submitting a proposal through the online portal?

Yes. The procurement system will automatically record the date and submission. Upon successful submission, the system will provide email confirmation. This confirmation serves as proof of receipt.

ARC is not responsible for technical difficulties, internet outages, user errors, or system delays experienced by the respondent. Respondents are strongly encouraged to submit proposals well in advance of the deadline. If you have not received an automatic confirmation, you may email 5310@atlantaregional.org to ask if ARC has received your proposal.