

Section 5310 Human Service and Alaska Mental Health Trust Transportation Grant Program Fact Sheet

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Human Service Transportation Grant is to provide transportation services that meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities and Alaska Mental Health Trust Beneficiaries for whom public transportation services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Transit Office (ACT) uses a combination of federal Section 5310 and Alaska Mental Health Trust funds to provide awards to nonprofit organizations, or public bodies which certify that no nonprofit organization or association is readily available in an area, to provide service.

Funds may be used for traditional activities:

- purchase of vehicles and related capital equipment (wheel chairlifts, ramps, and securement devices)
- transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems
- mobility management programs
- acquisition of transportation services under contract (purchase of service)
- operating assistance

Funds may also be used for non-traditional activities:

- travel training
- volunteer driver programs
- building an accessible path to a bus stop
- purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxis, rides sharing, and/or vanpooling programs
- the incremental cost of providing same-day services or door-to-door service

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

DOT&PF is the designated recipient for rural and small urban (Fairbanks, Palmer-Wasilla area) apportionments. ACT administers the program through a single application process that includes funding appropriated to DOT&PF for MH Trust: Coordinated Transportation and Vehicles in the state's enacted Mental Health Capital and Operating budget. Once applicants are selected, ACT develops the program of projects (POP) and submits the Section 5310 application to FTA; ensures compliance with Federal requirements by all subrecipients; monitors the sub-recipient's project activity; and oversees project completion and award closeout.

ELIGIBLE SUBRECIPIENTS

There are three categories of eligible subrecipients for Human Services:

- Private nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under IRS Section 501(c)3
- Public bodies or Alaskan native tribes that certify to ACT that there are no nonprofit agencies available in the area to provide the service
- Public bodies or Alaskan native tribes approved by the State to coordinate services for seniors and persons with disabilities

All applicants must have, and participate in, an up-to-date coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

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LOCAL SHARE & LOCAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

The federal share for capital projects (purchase of vehicles and related capital equipment and acquisition of transportation services under contract) is 80 percent and the local match is 20 percent. Local match must be cash or services provided from sources other than USDOT funds, except where permitted to be used as match for other USDOT funds. For vehicle and related capital equipment purchases, the local match must be cash only. Other federal funds can be used as match if allowed by that program.

The federal share for operating assistance is 50 percent and the local match is 50 percent. Funds are available to cover the net operating deficit after fares are applied to eligible expenses. Local match must be cash or services provided from sources other than USDOT funds, except where permitted to be used as match for other USDOT funds. Other federal funds can be used as match if allowed by that program. Donations are considered local match.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & METHOD OF FUND DISTRIBUTION

ACT assesses such factors as organizational capacity, need, ridership, inclusion in a coordinated plan, coordination potential, increased mobility or access to services for target populations, level of local funding contributions, vehicle utilization, vehicle replacement value, ADA compliance, and maintenance and storage capability. Projects in areas with no public transit receive priority. ACT staff reserves the final decision on the award amount and funding source. ACT announces awards on its website as well as on gov.delivery, the State's electronic notification system. In addition, ACT informs selected State agencies that coordinate social, rehabilitation, aging, and tribal services as well as providers and consumers. Award decisions may be appealed following the ACT appeal process.

In keeping with the goal of the Section 5311 program to open the rural human services transportation network to the general public, ACT considers the availability of public transit when allocating Section 5310 and AMHT operating assistance/acquisition of transportation services by the community.

SFY 2026 GRANT TIMELINE

- August 16, 2024 Intent to Apply opens
- September 23, 2024 Intent to Apply due by 4:30 pm
- October 1, 2024 Notifications of Intent to Apply Eligibility Sent
- October 14, 2024 Application open
- December 16, 2024 Applications due 4:30 pm

If you have any further questions. Please contact Susie Edwardson, Rural Transit Planner, at susie.edwardson@alaska.gov or 907-465-6961