

## **Job Access and Reverse Commute Fact Sheet**

### **What Legislation Authorizes the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program?**

On June 9, 1998, the President signed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Section 3037 created the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (USDOT-FTA) Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program.

On August 10, 2005, the President signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which amended TEA-21 and reauthorized the JARC program. Amending changes and reauthorization funding levels were provided in the *Federal Register*, November 30, 2005, pages 71950-71969, “FTA Transit Program Changes, Authorized Funding Levels and Implementation of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users; Notice.”

### **What Types of Projects Does JARC Fund?**

JARC projects are classified as Access to Jobs (Job Access) or Reverse Commute projects.

### **What Is a Job Access Project?**

A Job Access project provides services that transport public assistance recipients and low-income individuals—including economically disadvantaged persons with disabilities—in urban, suburban, or rural areas to and from jobs and employment-related activities. The projects may include:

- financing the eligible costs of projects for planning, capital, and operating costs to provide access to jobs and employment-related destinations;
- promoting public transportation use by low-income workers, including the use of public transportation for workers with nontraditional work schedules;
- supporting mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human services agencies providing employment and employment-related transportation services;
- promoting the use of transit vouchers for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals; and
- promoting the use of employer-provided transportation, including the transit pass benefit program under Section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

### **What Is a Reverse Commute Project?**

A Reverse Commute project provides transportation services for the general public *from* urban, suburban, and rural areas *to* suburban employment opportunities. It includes projects designed to:

- subsidize costs associated with adding reverse commute bus service, train, carpool, van routes, or service from urbanized areas to suburban workplaces;
- subsidize the purchase or lease by a nonprofit organization or public agency of a van or bus dedicated to shuttling employees from their residences to suburban workplaces;
- support mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human services agencies providing employment and employment-related transportation services; and

- facilitate the provision of public transportation services to suburban employment opportunities.

### **What Are Some Examples of Activities that May Be Funded for a JARC Project?**

Examples of eligible JARC projects include activities such as:

- late-night and weekend service;
- guaranteed ride home service;
- shuttle service;
- expanding fixed-route public transit routes;
- demand-response van service;
- ridesharing and carpooling activities;
- implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), including customer trip information technology;
- integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling, and dispatch functions; and
- establishing regional mobility managers or transportation brokerage activities.

### **What Populations Are Targeted by a JARC Project?**

JARC projects are targeted to assist:

- customers receiving workforce services funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) formula and American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/Choices, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Employment and Training (SNAP E&T);
- individuals with disabilities;
- low-income individuals, who are defined as individuals whose family income is at or below 150 percent of the poverty line [as that term is defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act, 42 U.S.C. 9902(2)], including any revision required by that section for a family of the size involved; and
- welfare recipients, who are defined as individuals who receive or received aid or assistance under a state program funded under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act—whether in effect before or after the effective date of the amendments made by Title I of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-193, 110 Stat. 2110)—at any time during the three-year period before the date on which the applicant applies for a grant under this section.

### **How Are JARC Funds Allocated to Local Areas?**

The USDOT-FTA formula allocates JARC funds to states based on the ratio that the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in each area bears to the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in all areas. In Texas, JARC funds are allocated to local areas according to the area's population as follows:

- Populations of less than 200,000—TxDOT is the recipient of JARC funds for urban areas having populations of less than 200,000, and for all non-urban areas. TxDOT uses a competitive selection process to fund projects through sub-grants to eligible entities in local areas.

- Populations greater than 200,000—The Governor designates an entity to receive JARC funds for each area having a population greater than 200,000. Typically, this entity is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in that area. The entity functions as the recipient and program administrator for the area. Like TxDOT, it uses a competitive selection process to fund projects through sub-grants to eligible entities in the local area.

JARC projects are awarded on a cost reimbursement basis. Funds are available for three years, including the year of federal apportionment plus two years.

TxDOT has established rules for its administration of the program at 43 TAC §31.17.

**Are Local Workforce Development Boards Eligible to Compete for JARC Funding?**

Yes. Eligible entities who may apply to be a JARC subrecipient include:

- Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards);
- operators of public transportation services;
- private nonprofit organizations;
- local governments and governmental authorities;
- state units of government; and
- American-Indian tribal organizations.

**How Can a Board Be Informed about JARC Funding Opportunities?**

Information about JARC Requests for Proposals is available on the TxDOT Web site at [http://www.txdot.gov/business/governments/grants/public\\_transportation.htm](http://www.txdot.gov/business/governments/grants/public_transportation.htm).

Interested parties may also contact:

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 125 East 11th Street  
 Austin, Texas 78701-2483  
 (512) 374-5248

**What Are the Match Requirements for a JARC Project?**

Federal match requirements for JARC projects are determined according to the type of expenditures funded:

- Minimum of 20 percent match for capital, planning, and marketing expenditures
- Minimum of 50 percent match for operating expenditures

Administrative expenditures incurred by a JARC subrecipient are considered to be operating expenditures and are generally subject to the 50 percent match requirement.

**What Is Eligible for Match?**

The JARC match requirements can be satisfied by non-USDOT-FTA cash, including some federal funds, or documented in-kind services. Capital expenses generally require a cash match. Additionally, a JARC recipient may choose to limit the use of in-kind funds.

Under the authority of SAFETEA-LU (49 U.S.C. 5316), eligible sources of cash match are:

- WIA, TANF/Choices, and SNAP E&T funds;\*
- state, county, municipal, and transit funds;

- Community Service Block Grant funding from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS);
- Community Development Block Grant funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- partnering organizations, such as colleges, community-based or faith-based organizations, and employers; and
- other authorized non-USDOT-FTA resources.

Revenue from service contracts may be used as local match.

\*Note: Uniform Administrative Requirements expressly prohibit the use of federal funds as match or cost sharing for other federal funds, “except where authorized by Federal statute.” SAFETEA-LU permits the use of other federal funds such as TANF/Choices and WIA as local match for JARC programs.

### **How Is the Federal Government Working to Coordinate Transportation Efforts?**

Executive Order 13330, issued February 24, 2004, created the federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) to promote the coordination of federally-funded human service transportation services by:

- reducing the duplication of such services;
- increasing the delivery efficiency of such services; and
- expanding access for older individuals, persons with disabilities, low-income individuals, and other disadvantaged populations.

CCAM is composed of leaders from 11 federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Labor, DHHS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

### **What Are the State Requirements for Maximizing Transportation Funds?**

Texas Labor Code §302.0036 and §302.0037 direct the Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) and Boards to “...maximize the state’s receipt of federal funds available to provide transportation assistance to recipients of financial assistance participating in employment programs under Chapter 31, [Texas] Human Resources Code...that enables the recipients to maintain a stable work history and attain financial stability and self-sufficiency.”

Such programs “provide financial assistance and services to families with dependent children,” as provided in Chapter 31, giving first priority “to assisting an adult recipient of or unemployed applicant for the financial assistance and services in finding and retaining a job.” The statute also authorizes the Commission and Boards to provide such assistance by “implementing new initiatives or expanding existing initiatives that provide transportation assistance to recipients of financial assistance for whom transportation is a barrier to employment.”