



Transit Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2010

Preparing for the Audit

FTA expected to Audit NDDOT Transit office in April

As many of you know, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) was in the NDDOT Transit Office in August 2010. They performed a "pre-audit". This gave us an idea of some of the things our program needed in order to be federally compliant.

Why do we need new policies?

Many of the policies in place today have not been updated in the past few years. In order to continue to receive funding, we must comply with federal regulations.

What if we only use state funds?

State funds have the same requirements as federal funds. In order to continue to receive state funds, all federal regulations must be followed.

Applications for additional funding for the current contract year will be accepted in January and February.

Please use the form "FTA Additional Funding Request" located on the NDDOT Transit web site. Include adequate information to justify the requested need.

Requests for future capital purchases will be accepted until **January 20, 2011**.

(generally 1.5 to 5 years into the future)

You may submit this in a letter format. Please include adequate information to justify the requested needs. If you have already requested future capital needs, please do so again, as planning changes from year to year.

Charter Regulations

It is important we are using the transit funding received in a way that is compliant with federal regulations, while providing service needed in our communities.

Allowable trips

The following can be provided and are NOT required to be advertised. Agencies must keep track of destination, hours, mileage, and # passengers for these trips.

- Any trip developed by the TRANSIT AGENCY.
- Fare must be reasonable or free.
- Must be open to the public



Non-allowable Trips

- A trip where a third party plans the trip or pays a negotiated price for a group.
- A trip with a premium fare. Premium fare is defined as a fare that is greater than the usual or customary fare.

More information can be found in the Policies and Procedure Manual found on the NDDOT Transit web-site

Further details on Charter Regulations are forthcoming.

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Accidents/incidents - Any of us.

Buildings - Denny or Bruce

special requests, RTAP/training - Bruce or Dawn

Pre-authorizations for Capital - Bruce or Dawn

Contracts, Reports, Vehicles, - Dawn

Quarterly reports , eligible expenses - Paula

Policies - Drug & Alcohol, Title VI, LEP - Kim or Dawn

New policies to be updated 1/1/2011.

The **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan** must be adopted by each agency in order to continue to receive funding. In order to simplify the compliance process, we have provided a sample policy on the NDDOT Transit Web-site. If you need assistance completing the plan, please contact Kim or Dawn and we will be happy to assist you. "I can read" cards can be provided for your staff upon request.

A sample **Title VI Statement** has been provided on the NDDOT web-site. This also needs to be adopted by your agency. Additional Title VI forms are available for your use, but do not need to be submitted to our office.

The updated **Drug and Alcohol** plan must also be adopted. There have been updates to the program quarterly for the past several years. In order to simplify the compliance process, we have provided two sample policies on the NDDOT Transit Web-site.

If you prefer to update your current policy, you must go to the FTA web-site and search for Drug and Alcohol. You should find the newsletters for the past few years there. After completing the update, you can use the Drug and Alcohol checklist on the NDDOT web-site to check for compliance. Please note, the checklist does NOT have the October 2010 updates included.

Completing these requirements

After each agency has adopted current policies, a copy needs to be submitted to the NDDOT transit office. The Drug and Alcohol Compliance Questionnaire and employee training will also need to be completed.

What is next?

The NDDOT Transit office is working toward providing a compliant **preventative maintenance policy** for both buildings and vehicles. While many of you have programs, few if any include all required elements such as maintenance for lifts, ramps, and tie-downs.

The NDDOT is working toward providing guidance for **governing boards** in both selecting board members, and training those members. We will be asking for board bylaws and board member information for each agency.

We will be requiring updated **brochures** to ensure inclusion of non-discrimination information and notification that the service is open to the public, as well as other important information.

Fleet Numbers

If you have a fleet number with Ford or Chevy, please contact the company and cancel that number. If a bidder uses a fleet number in bidding for a vehicle, the contract may be cancelled.

Drug and Alcohol Alert

If you have an accident, a **drug and alcohol test is required** if there are injuries or if a vehicle is towed from the scene.

All employees must have one hour of Drug and Alcohol training (one time only).

All supervisors must have two additional hours of training.



All training is expected to be completed by April 1, 2011. NDDOT Transit staff is working toward providing resources to help you in completing the training requirements.

Safety Alert

If you are interested in replacing the steps in your bus(es) with new "safety flooring" (material similar to **Altroofloor**, which was shown at the annual conference in Rapid City) you may contact Harlow's and North Central Bus Sales for estimates. Contact our office after you receive estimates and before you proceed with the replacement. You may use discretionary capital or operating funds for this upgrade.

Note: Safety flooring is smooth and does not get slippery when wet.

Safety Information

Please check your vehicles to ensure they have seat belt cutters and blue webbing loops.

We will order 14" blue webbing loops for anyone requesting them before December 15th.

We will order seat belt cutter and emergency hammer combinations to be put in the minivans. If minivans have a regular seat belt cutter, we ask that you move them to any bus that does not have a cutter. An order will be placed December 15th for requested cutters.

We are considering providing fire blankets for each vehicle. This has not been decided at this time. If you have any information to assist in the decision, please let us know.