

New Freedom Eligible project examples

Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative solutions to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in their communities within the project examples below.

- a. **New Public Transportation Alternatives Beyond the ADA.** Activities that are examples of projects eligible as new public transportation alternatives beyond the ADA under the New Freedom Program are:
 - (1) *Supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation.* **Mobility management is an eligible capital cost.** Mobility management techniques may enhance transportation access for populations beyond those served by one agency or organization within a community. For example, a non-profit agency could receive New Freedom funding to support the administrative costs of sharing services it provides to its own clientele with other individuals with disabilities and coordinate usage of vehicles with other non-profits, but not the operating costs of the service. Mobility management is intended to build coordination among existing public transportation providers and other transportation service providers with the result of expanding the availability of service. Mobility management activities may include:
 - (a) The promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low-income individuals;
 - (b) Support for short term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services;
 - (c) The operation of transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies and customers;
 - (d) The provision of coordination services, including employer-oriented Transportation Management Organizations' and Human Service Organizations' customer-oriented travel navigator systems and neighborhood travel coordination activities such as coordinating individualized travel training and trip planning activities for customers;
 - (e) The development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on all travel modes and to manage eligibility requirements and arrangements for customers among supporting programs; and
 - (f) Acquisition of technology that enhances service to clients in support of mobility management is also eligible as a stand-alone capital expense. At the outset, WisDOT will only consider funding software rental (e.g., internet based) projects for coordinated vehicle scheduling, dispatching and monitoring technologies as well as technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system. This will allow for future flexibility among providers and services available.
 - (2) *Purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, ride sharing, and/or vanpooling programs.* New Freedom funds can be used to purchase and operate accessible vehicles for use in taxi, ridesharing and/or van pool programs provided that the vehicle has the capacity to accommodate a passenger who uses a "common wheelchair" as defined under 49 CFR 37.3, at a minimum, while remaining in his/her personal mobility device inside the vehicle, and meeting the same requirements for lifts, ramps and securement systems specified in 49 CFR part 38, subpart B.
 - (3) *Supporting the administration and expenses related to new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.* This activity is intended to support and supplement existing transportation services by expanding the number of providers available or the number of passengers receiving transportation services. Only new voucher programs or expansion of existing programs are eligible under the New Freedom Program. Vouchers can be used as an administrative mechanism for payment of alternative transportation services to supplement available public transportation. The New Freedom Program can provide vouchers to individuals with disabilities to purchase rides, including: (a) mileage reimbursement as part of a volunteer driver program; (b) a taxi trip; or (c) trips provided by a human service agency. Providers of transportation can then submit the voucher for reimbursement to the recipient for payment based on pre-determined rates or contractual arrangements. Transit passes for use on existing fixed route, demand response, or ADA

complementary paratransit services are not eligible. Vouchers are an operational expense, which requires a 50/50 (Federal/local) match. Non-urbanized projects may be eligible for DVR funds that require an 80/20 (Federal/local) match.

- (4) *Supporting new volunteer driver and aide programs.* New volunteer driver programs are eligible and include support for costs associated with the administration, management of driver recruitment, safety, background checks, scheduling, coordination with passengers, and other related support functions, mileage reimbursement, and insurance associated with volunteer driver programs. The costs of new enhancements to increase capacity of existing volunteer driver programs are also eligible. FTA notes that any volunteer program supported by New Freedom must meet the requirements of both “new” and “beyond the ADA.” FTA encourages communities to offer consideration for utilizing all available funding resources as an integrated part of the design and delivery of any volunteer driver/aide program.

b. **New Public Transportation Services Beyond the ADA.** Examples of activities that are eligible projects meeting the definition of new public transportation are:

- (1) *Travel training.* New training programs for individual users on awareness, knowledge, and skills of public and alternative transportation options available in their communities. This includes travel instruction and travel training services.
- (2) *Enhancing paratransit beyond minimum requirements of the ADA.* ADA complementary paratransit services can be eligible under New Freedom in several ways as long as the services provided meet the definition of “new:”
 - (a) Expansion of paratransit service parameters beyond the three-fourths mile required by the ADA;
 - (b) Expansion of current hours of operation for ADA paratransit services that are beyond those provided on the fixed-route services;
 - (c) The incremental cost of providing same day service;
 - (d) The incremental cost of making door-to-door service available to all eligible ADA paratransit riders, but not as a reasonable modification for individual riders in an otherwise curb-to-curb system;
 - (e) Enhancement of the level of service by providing escorts or assisting riders through the door of their destination;
 - (f) 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, as well as modifications to lifts with a 600 lb design load, and the acquisition of heavier-duty vehicles for paratransit and/or demand-response service; and
 - (g) Installation of additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by the ADA.
- (3) *Feeder services.* New “feeder” service (transit service that provides access) to commuter rail, commuter bus, intercity rail, and intercity bus stations, for which complementary paratransit service is not required under the ADA.