

Transportation and Bus Pass Policies and Procedures

Overview

For many older adults, due to deteriorating health and vision, driving is no longer a viable mode of transportation. Access to public or senior-specific transportation is a crucial piece of the home and community based services puzzle and helping seniors to remain independent. Title III of the Older Americans Act (OAA) funds transportation services for individuals age 60 and older, targeting the most vulnerable in that population, through the Aging Services Network.

In response to a request from a state, NASUAD sent a survey to its members asking questions about OAA funded modes of transportation and the methods that state agencies use to purchase these services. In addition, NASUAD asked specific questions covering unlimited/multi-ride bus passes. Sixteen states responded to at least part of the survey, including: Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Texas. The response summary below is based on the answers given by these states.

Response Summary

Modes of transportation funded by state Older Americans Act dollars:

- Public transportation van services are funded in 12 states. (Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Texas)
- Private van services are funded in 11 states. (Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon)
- Taxis are funded in 10 states. (Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, and Texas)
- Private cars are funded in 10 states. (Colorado, Delaware, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, and Oregon)
- Passes on the public bus system are funded in 9 states. (Colorado, Illinois, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon)
- Ambulances are funded in 3 states. (Kansas, New Mexico, and Texas)

Methods used to purchase Older Americans Act funded transportation services:

- 13 states reimburse based on unit rate per one-way trip. (Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Texas)
- 8 states reimburse volunteers for their mileage. (Colorado, Delaware, Mississippi, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, and Oregon)
- 7 states have contract rates for taxi services. (Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, and Ohio)
- Kansas has a contracted rate for private van services.

Unlimited and Multi-Ride Bus Pass Programs

Missouri and Oklahoma described their unlimited or multi-ride bus pass programs based on several additional questions asked in the NASUAD survey.

Missouri's state aging office described their multi-pass senior bus pass program. In order to complete eligibility for the program, the senior must attend a monthly bus pass program. First time applicants must also present their Reduced Fare Metro ID. If the senior's address is not on the Reduced Fare ID they will also need proof of residency. The senior then completes an intake form, which asks for date of birth and eligibility status. Those eligible are given one bus pass each month that covers 40 rides or 20 round-trips per month to any destination the senior chooses. Seniors must pick up this pass in-person. Metro drivers also require the senior to show their Metro ID when they use the pass.

In Oklahoma, only seniors who have completed the intake process for the Title III program and have been approved for the bus pass program are issued a multi-ride bus pass voucher. Program workers conduct follow-up with eligible seniors and seniors are asked for their signature when using a voucher in order to confirm their identity. Transportation providers are required to report each one-way trip that a senior redeems; providers track these numbers using a punch system each time a voucher is used and by handing the signed vouchers in to the state agency. The state agency on aging also tracks transportation provided to senior centers for OAA meals programs.

For more information contact Kelsey Walter: kwalter@nasuad.org