

Taxicab, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnerships Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

We have synthesized similar questions to provide a single answer to repeated questions.

Eligibility

1. **Is the grant program open to entities throughout the state?**
 - Yes, the grant program is statewide.
2. **What populations are eligible to use these funds? Can the funds be used for seniors, or for workforce transportation?**
 - This grant opportunity does not specify the specific populations that are eligible to use these funds.
3. **What is the definition of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA)?**
 - Regional Transit Authorities are those identified as RTAs by Massachusetts General Laws. See <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXXII/Chapter161B/Section2>

Partnerships

1. **Is there a list of livery and taxi companies who are eligible to provide the services using these funds?**
 - There is no single list of livery and taxi companies in Massachusetts. Eligible taxi/livery companies should be currently registered to do business and not debarred in Massachusetts. Please see the grant application for more information.
2. **Would a proposal from more than one town for shared taxi services be acceptable?**
 - Yes, applications from multiple agencies and/or municipalities are acceptable. However, there should be one lead applicant who would be eligible to apply and execute a grant agreement if awarded.
3. **Are private bus companies eligible as a taxi or livery company to partner with?**
 - If the businesses primary function is to provide taxi or livery services, has the right size vehicles for your needs, and is registered to do business as a taxi, livery or hackney business in Massachusetts and is not debarred, the business would be eligible. Eligible businesses must prove that they are a licensed taxi or livery operator in the state of Massachusetts that provides taxi or livery services as their primary business function. MAPC may require submission of taxi medallions, licenses, vehicle registration documentation, and other measures to ensure that the correct businesses are receiving the fund.
4. **Does this funding also apply to rides provided by a service such as LYFT?**
 - No, this grant program is specific to support taxi, livery, and hackney businesses. Transportation Network Companies like Uber and Lyft are not eligible to receive funds through this program.
5. **Can an applicant have multiple partnerships such as a regular taxi business and one that does ADA/wheelchair needs?**
 - Yes, applicants can have multiple taxi partnerships.
6. **Can the grant support a microtransit program with a provider such as Via?**
 - A microtransit partnership could be allowed if the provider is not operating as a Transportation Network Company (TNC) as defined by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 159A1/2, and as long as a minimum of 95% of the funds are passed through to taxi, livery, or hackney companies who are currently registered to do business in Massachusetts and who are not debarred on any state or federal lists. River North Transit LLC (Via Transportation Inc.) is registered as a TNC in Massachusetts and is not eligible to receive funds under this grant program.

7. **If a Town partners with a hospital for an application, can our Town apply for our own transportation application for different kinds of trips?**
 - MAPC does not intend to make multiple awards within the same municipality. That said, MAPC does encourage collaboration both in and outside of the responding community through a single application.
8. **Does the taxi or livery company need to be registered as a taxi/livery company within the municipality applying?**
 - No. Applicants may partner with eligible taxi, livery, or hackney companies located outside their municipality. However, the taxi, livery or hackney company does need to be registered to do business in the state of Massachusetts and not debarred on any state or federal lists.
9. **What does supplier diversity certified entail exactly?**
 - Please see the SDC website: <https://www.mass.gov/supplier-diversity-office>
10. **Must the taxi company be Supplier Diversity Certified to be eligible?**
 - There are no requirements that a taxi or livery company be Supplier Diversity Certified. SDC is one criterion used in the grant evaluation but is not a requirement. Please see the application for a link with more information.
11. **Are there any limits on the number of programs that a taxi/livery company can participate in?**
 - There is nothing in the grant requirements that limits the number of applicants and programs a taxi or livery company can be participate in. However, the grant program was established to assist as many taxi, livery, and hackney providers as possible across the Commonwealth, and we encourage a diverse group of applicants.

Use of Funds

1. **What is the source of the funds and how will they be administered?**
 - This statewide grant is being funded through a portion the MassDevelopment Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Fund (TIEF). These funds come from a fee on Transportation Network Companies (TNC) like Uber and Lyft. These are state funds administered by MAPC through an agreement with MassDevelopment.
2. **Is there a minimum amount of funds an applicant can apply for?**
 - No, we have no minimum that an agency or organization can apply for. The maximum amount an entity can apply for is \$250,000.
3. **Towns may need additional administrative costs, above what is allowed (5%) in this grant. How might that be addressed in the proposal?**
 - The maximum allowable administrative fee for this program is 5%. This grant cannot allow for more than that, as it was designed by state statute to support the taxi, livery, and hackney industries. A minimum of 95% of the total grant funds must be passed to the taxi, livery, or hackney company you partner with. Applicants can note in-kind contributions such as staff time or matching funds in their application. Administrative fees incurred by the taxi, livery, or hackney business are not limited to the 5% administrative fee, such as cleaning, dispatching, and data collection.
4. **Could operational costs for salaries be considered through this grant? For example, we have the fleet to manage our current transportation and expansion but what we cannot afford is the overhead to expand that service into another Town that has no transportation services for several years.**
 - The maximum allowable administrative fee for this program is 5%. Grant recipients must partner with taxi, livery, or hackney companies who are currently registered to do business in Massachusetts and who are not debarred on any state or federal lists. The grant funds cannot be used to fund an applicant's own drivers. Entities that have their own vehicles may enter into contracts with taxi, livery, hackney companies to have them to operate those vehicles.

5. **Can the grant be used to fund volunteer drivers?**
 - Grant funds cannot be used to support volunteer driver programs. The grant is designed to support the taxi, livery, and hackney industries. Applicants must partner with a registered taxi, livery, or hackney business in Massachusetts.
6. **We already operate our own fleet of vehicles; would we need to subcontract to taxi operators or could we just use our own fleet and drivers? Can this funding be used to pay our existing drivers, or to hire new drivers?**
 - Grant recipients must partner with taxi, livery, or hackney companies who are currently registered to do business and who are not debarred in Massachusetts. The grant funds cannot be used to fund an applicant's own drivers. Entities that have their own vehicles may enter into contracts with taxi, livery, hackney companies to have them operate those vehicles.

Evaluation

1. **What criteria will be used to evaluate the grant applications?**
 - Please see the grant evaluation scoring criteria posted on our website, found here: <http://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Score-Card.pdf>.

Timeline

1. **When do you anticipate announcing grant awards?**
 - MAPC anticipates announcing the grant awards in December 2020. This timeline is subject to change.
2. **What is the deadline to fully expend the grant funds?**
 - All funds from this grant cycle must be expended by December 31, 2021.
3. **What is the deadline to submit final reports?**
 - All reports from this grant cycle must be submitted by March 31, 2022.

Other sources of funding

1. **If a municipality was awarded funds through MassDOT's Workforce Transit Grant Program to help launch an on-demand rideshare service, can that municipality submit a request for funds through this grant program to be applied to an existing micro-transit service?**
 - Applicants who have other grant funds that are supporting their program are permitted to apply if they meet other grant requirements, including: a.) recipients must partner with taxi, livery, or hackney companies who are currently registered to do business and who are not debarred in Massachusetts; b.) the microtransit service is not operated by a Transportation Network Company as defined by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 159A ½ - Definitions c.) the maximum allowable administrative fee for this program is 5%.

Other questions

1. **How should we determine the amount to request?**
 - First, determine how many rides per week/month you may need, the length of those trips, then work with your taxi partner to negotiate a rate. Some previous grantees have built in costs for tip and cleaning on a per-ride basis.
2. **What happens if funds are used but the need for rides remains?**
 - We hope to offer additional funding opportunities next calendar year.
3. **If there are funds left after the end of the grant contract, what is the procedure?**
 - All un-expended funds must be returned to MAPC at the end of the grant term.

4. **With so many things up in the air with COVID and budgets, and with this grant straddling two different fiscal years, might it be possible to apply for the grant on a quarterly or semi-annual basis? It is quite difficult to project right now how the taxi program would be used through the end of December 2021.**
 - We hope to offer additional funding opportunities next calendar year.
5. **What is the total funding you see having for this program on an annual basis and how might the loss of TNC rides impact that?**
 - We do not know how much funding we will have for future grant cycles.
6. **Has MAPC or MassDevelopment given any thought to a regional entity perhaps taking on the booking of such rides rather than having a range of organizations doing so?**
 - The legislative directive that this fund was developed under did not direct the development of a regional entity to coordinate trips. That being said, if a regional organization wanted to apply for a grant to coordinate trips, they could, so long as they meet the general eligibility requirements of the program.
7. **Is this grant different from the Massachusetts Capital growth grant?**
 - Yes, this is a different grant.
8. **Will the program give multiple grants to the same community? Can you clarify what will be considered the same community? Is this based on where the organization is located or who the program would serve? Also, would you consider giving grants to two organizations located in the same County?**
 - MAPC does not intend to make multiple awards within the same municipality. That said, MAPC does encourage inter municipal collaboration both in and outside of the responding community. There are no limitations on the number of applicants or recipients within the same county.
9. **What kind of data do we need to provide for this program? Can I provide an estimate of the number and frequency of medical rides as well as grocery shopping trips we provided before COVID?**
 - To apply for the program, you should provide data you have available to help explain why this program is needed, and the potential demand for trips that you have budgeted for. Estimates are acceptable.
10. **We are looking to pre-screen residents to make sure they use other transit services when possible. Some residents say they do not qualify for The Ride. Is it acceptable to take their word and offer the taxi? Also, some senior housing may be near a fixed route bus, but seniors have trouble walking ¼ or ½ mile to get to the bus. There is no covered bus shelter. This has been a hindrance for our mobile, but frail seniors, especially in the winter elements. Would we be able to utilize this taxi service for those seniors who can't walk to the bus stop?**
 - Applicants should use their best judgement in reviewing eligible populations and trips. The program should help fill the gaps in current services and assisting individuals who cannot use existing transit services is an eligible service.

Questions specific to Urgent Taxi Grantees (received a grant in the summer of 2020)

1. **For Urgent grantees, is the intention that current grantees would apply for more funding for the currently funded programs? Or a new/different type of program?**
 - Current Urgent taxi grant recipients may apply to extend or modify their current program or create a new program. Please make sure you read through all the documents associated with this grant, as there are differences from the Urgent program.

2. Is it a requirement that all funds from Round 1(Urgent) be exhausted or close to being exhausted prior to be awarded a second round of funding?

- No, Urgent grant funds do not need to be exhausted before receiving Round 2 funding. Applicants should plan their proposed programs and budgets accordingly when developing their proposal. For example, if your current program is projected to end in March 2021, and you plan on extending that program, the proposed budget should reflect an anticipated start in April 2021.

Applicants may propose using the new round of funds concurrently with the Urgent grant funds if there is a new program. However, this Taxi/Livery Transportation Partnership program and the Urgent Taxi/Livery program have differences that should be taken into consideration when planning your programs. You must clearly differentiate the trips for each grant program in your documentation and reporting. Please ensure that you read all documents and understand eligible uses of the funds.

3. What can the funds be used for in Round 2? Will it be for the same uses highlighted in the first grant or can it be used for additional programming such as work force development etc.?

- This is listed in our application instructions. We have no required trip types or populations served for this grant cycle.