

# Oklahoma Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) Scholarship Policy and Procedures

## ***The RTAP Scholarship Program***

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is responsible for the administration of the RTAP with funding provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title 49 U.S.C. 5311(b)(3) as amended. The RTAP program supports a variety of services including, but not limited to, the provision of technical assistance and training to meet the specific needs of transportation operators in non-urbanized areas; included in those services is the provision of funds to cover tuition and expenses for individuals to attend training courses, workshops and conferences with subject matter specifically related to the transit industry.

## ***The Purpose of the Scholarship***

- The purpose of the ODOT scholarship program is to provide funding support to eligible transit agencies to help offset the cost of sending personnel to pre-approved training courses, workshops and conferences. The intent of the program is to supplement existing training resources, not to supplant them. Trainings may be in-house, in-state or out-of-state.

## ***Eligibility for Scholarship***

Eligible transit agencies include:

- Recipients of FTA Section 5311 and 5311(c) transit programs
- Small urban transit agencies (as long as activities are primarily designed and delivered to benefit non-urbanized transit providers)
- Federally recognized tribal transit agencies

## ***Scholarship Guidelines/Requirements***

- Eligible transit agency may receive a maximum of \$5,000 per federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) in RTAP funds as long as FTA funding is available. Any eligible transit agency that is not part of ODOT's Section 5311 program must notify ODOT in writing that they would like to participate in the program within the established designated yearly deadline published by ODOT.
- The transit agency must submit a scholarship application to ODOT a minimum of 30 days before the training, workshop or conference begins for review and approval.
- All training, workshop and/or conferences must further the development of the professional skills and abilities of rural transit providers in the State of Oklahoma.
- The request for a scholarship must be sponsored by a recognized transit agency, and signed by the executive officer of the agency.
- A maximum of two people will be approved for out-of-state training, workshop and/or conferences.
- Unused funds at the end of the fiscal year will not roll over to the following program year.

**Scholarship Evaluation Process**

ODOT will review each application and approve requested scholarships.

*Criteria used will include but is not limited to:*

- Justification in terms of financial need and anticipated value to the transit agency.
  - Relevance of training to the individual's job at the transit agency.
  - Amount of RTAP funds available to the transit agency.
  - Transit agency must be in good standing with the ODOT and FTA
- “Good Standing” means:
- ✓ Agency is in compliance with state and federal requirements.
  - ✓ Agency is up to date on submission of monthly claims.
  - ✓ Agency is responsive to communications and requests for information.
  - ✓ Maintains adequate financial records that document and support all contractual expenditures.
  - ✓ Submits monthly progress reports and invoices that are accurate and timely.
  - ✓ Submission of annual reports to ODOT to include audit documents, drug/alcohol monthly logs, etc.
  - ✓ Compliance with all contractual obligations.
  - ✓ Satisfactory progress on contract-funded projects.
  - ✓ Compliance with state and federal reporting requirements.
  - ✓ Not on probation status with ODOT or FTA.

**Mandatory Trainings**

- ODOT mandated trainings, workshops or conferences will be funded separately at ODOT’s discretion.

**Allowable Expenses**

RTAP scholarships will reimburse eligible transit agencies at the state/approved rate for the following expenses with supporting documentation/receipts:

- Training, workshop or conference registration
- Lodging (at approved conference rate or the approved GSA rate).
- Lowest cost of travel, whether airfare or mileage (reimbursed at the approved GSA rate). Use of a private vehicle will need prior approval and justification must be included in the scholarship application.
- Parking, Taxi and/or Shuttle fees (to and from hotel and airport).
- Where meal per diem is allowed, GSA per diem rates will apply ([www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)). Per Diem for meals will not be allowed when meals are provided at a meeting, workshop or conference.
- Reimbursement for meals and lodging shall not begin more than twenty-four (24) hours before the meeting, workshop, conference begins and shall not continue more than twenty-four (24) hours after said meeting, workshop, conference ends in accordance with the Oklahoma State Travel Reimbursement Act §74-500.9E.

***Ineligible Expenses***

- If a transit agency vehicle is used for transportation, mileage will not be reimbursed.
- Accommodations and mileage will not be reimbursed if your transit system is located 60 miles or less from the site of the approved program.
- No reimbursement for meals shall be made for periods which do not include overnight stay.
- Reimbursement will not be made for rental vehicles.
- RTAP scholarships will not cover travel insurance.
- Unforeseen expenses will be evaluated.

***Applying for a scholarship***

- Complete and submit the RTAP scholarship application form signed by the transit agencies executive officer to:

**RTAP Manager  
Oklahoma Department of Transportation  
Office of Mobility and Public Transit  
200 NE 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Room 1D-1  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3204  
Or  
E-mail scanned signed copy to: [rtapok@ou.edu](mailto:rtapok@ou.edu)**

***Reimbursement***

- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within forty-five (45) days of the conclusion of the training, workshop or conference event. If reimbursement is not requested within that time period, the scholarship will be voided and no reimbursement will be issued. The approval of the Estimated Expenses and the Actual Expenses reimbursed could be different based on eligible expenses and State and Federal Laws.

For questions about the RTAP scholarship program, contact RTAP Manager, via telephone at (405) 521-2584 or you may email [rtapok@ou.edu](mailto:rtapok@ou.edu).