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Subject: U.S. Department of Transportation Announces Increased Flexibility to Help Transit Agencies Respond to Coronavirus



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U.S. Department of Transportation Announces Increased Flexibility to Help Transit Agencies Respond to Coronavirus

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced that expanded eligibility of federal assistance is available under FTA’s Emergency Relief Program to help transit agencies respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19) in states where the Governor has declared an emergency. This includes allowing all transit providers, including those in large urban areas, to use federal formula funds for emergency-related capital and operating expenses, and raises the cap on the federal government’s share of those expenses.

“Today, I have issued a notice of concurrence with declarations of emergencies issued by Governors that relate to COVID-19. FTA grantees may now use their Urbanized Area and Rural formula funds to take measures to protect the health and safety of their riders and their workforce,” said FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams. “Expansion of the permissible uses of federal funds will allow transit providers greater flexibility in the areas of the country that need it most. Invoking the eligibility of the Emergency Relief Program also provide funds at a higher federal share.”

Today’s announcement allows all transit providers in states where the Governor has declared an emergency related to COVID-19 to use their federal formula funds for operating expenses in addition to capital expenses and permits operating expenses to be covered at an 80 percent federal share rather than 50 percent.

In addition to allowing the expanded use of formula funds for transit providers, FTA has established an [Emergency Relief docket](#) that allows transit providers in states where the Governor has declared an emergency related to COVID-19 to request temporary relief from Federal requirements under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 as well as any non-statutory FTA requirements.

The U.S. Department of Transportation is working closely with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and other federal partners to provide guidance to the public transportation industry in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19). FTA recently held a conference call with transit stakeholders and posted [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) on its web site.

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