

## Training & Technical Assistance

# OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CIRCUIT RIDER

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## ODOT OFFICE OF TRANSIT

The Rural Circuit Rider provides technical assistance to Ohio's new rural transit public transit providers and managers to ensure smooth transition and implementation of transportation services and compliance with State and Federal requirements. Through close collaboration with transit system personnel, the Circuit Rider assesses the public transit system, develops an action plan, identifies necessary corrective actions, develops timelines for implementation, works with the system through at least the early stages of implementation, and provides follow-up assistance and guidance, as needed. All of this is performed in close cooperation with the ODOT staff. Regular status reports allow ODOT to remain informed while allowing them to direct their limited staff resources to the appropriate areas. The Circuit Rider has also provided ODOT with an invaluable source of information on areas and topics on which to focus training and staff development.

Included in Circuit Rider responsibilities are the development and administration of System Action Plans, where the operations of various transportation systems are assessed, and technical assistance is provided as needed to rural transit directors throughout the state of Ohio. The Circuit Rider also assists in the implementation of transit development plans by conducting on-site visits and effective communication measures.

Past Circuit Rider responsibilities for ODOT include:

- ◆ Assisting ODOT with project development and administration of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, including the monitoring of obligated funding and expenditures;
- ◆ Conducting reviews of ODOT's 2009-2011 rural transit proposals for all rural transit systems;
- ◆ Completing vehicle inspections to ensure that all vehicles purchased through ODOT's term contract procurement meet ODOT's vehicle specifications;
- ◆ Consulting with County Boards of Commissioners, County Transit Boards, and private non-profit boards during the start-up of rural transit programs;
- ◆ Assessing new-start systems in service design, operating policies, compliance with 5311 and ADA requirements, and Drug and Alcohol Program implementation;
- ◆ Serving as a liaison between new start systems and the ODOT Office of Transit staff;
- ◆ Developing Drug and Alcohol policies for all new start systems using Ohio Department of Transportation's template;
- ◆ Developing Action Plans for each of the assigned new start counties, including a timeframe for each task;
- ◆ Assisting systems with necessary corrective actions to ensure State and Federal compliance;

- ◆ Providing follow-up technical assistance to the new start rural transit systems to ensure State and Federal compliance;
- ◆ Working with rural transit systems to develop transit policies, brochures, and fare structures;
- ◆ Identifying Drug and Alcohol compliance issues with rural systems in Ohio; preparing systems for Drug and Alcohol Audits, assisting existing systems with Drug and Alcohol policy revision; and completing Drug and Alcohol reviews, as assigned;
- ◆ Preparing MIS reports for new start systems and systems with new administrators;
- ◆ Establishing recordkeeping for Drug and Alcohol files using RLS recommended format;
- ◆ Participating as a team member for Ohio Drug and Alcohol audits;
- ◆ Attending numerous training including Reasonable Suspicion, MIS reporting, changes in the Drug and Alcohol regulations and collection site requirements;
- ◆ Presenting contracting workshops, which included methods of contracting with social service agencies, negotiating fully allocated costs, and a review of existing contracts;
- ◆ Gathering and organizing for use as examples and “best practices” established transit practices and materials which included tickets, transit related policies, fareboxes, safety equipment, and training resources from existing systems;
- ◆ Reviewing and commenting on policies and procedures and driver’s job descriptions from other states for application to Ohio’s systems;
- ◆ Conducting transit service and vehicle inventories for Jackson and Vinton Counties. Interviewed human service agency directors responsible for transit services and transportation providers in each county;
- ◆ Developing spreadsheets for public transit and coordinated systems to determine fully allocated cost of service;
- ◆ Conducting training on fully allocated cost, goal writing, fitness for duty, and budgeting; and
- ◆ Performing Quality Assurance Reviews for ODOT’s Coordination Projects.

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