

## Volunteer Driver Program Toolkit Introduction Questions and Answers

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Sponsored by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), National RTAP, and the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA), the [Volunteer Driver Program Toolkit](#) offers practical direction, best practices, and lessons learned from programs across the country. During the webinar, panelists shared insights, case studies, and resources to help agencies strengthen mobility through volunteer transportation. These are answers to questions received during the registration process; questions answered during the webinar are available in the recording. Access the webinar [recording](#) and [presentation slides](#).

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**Q: We've been getting questions about the liability to a municipality or other entity that uses volunteer drivers for a mobility program and would love clarification on this.**

A: While we are unable to provide specific guidance about liability for a specific organization, [Section 2 - Volunteer Driver Programs](#) of [National RTAP's Volunteer Driver Program Toolkit](#) does offer information and resources on the subject. The section on [Limiting Financial Exposure Related to Risk](#) discusses the kind of steps that a sponsoring organization will want to take to assure that it is protected from the unique risks posed by the operation of a volunteer driver program. It includes also includes examples of state laws for nonprofits and volunteer liability. [What Type of Insurance is Needed?](#) explains the different types of liability insurance. This section also includes examples of how some states have specific provisions or requirements for the types and levels of coverage that nonprofit agencies, including volunteer driver programs must have in place.

**Q: What did you learn from State DOTs about what makes it compelling for them to support volunteer driver programs?**

A: This project did not consult with State DOTs directly about what compelled them to be supportive of volunteer driver programs. However, after an online search of State DOT websites, the Toolkit does include, as examples and resources, those State DOTs that have web pages with information, resources, or other guidance for volunteer driver programs. For example, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT). MoDOT's [List of Recommended Policies for Volunteer Driver Programs, IN TRANSIT, March 2024](#)

**Q: Do any of the programs have volunteers only utilizing their own personal vehicles? If so, what trainings are required of them? Do they receive state or federal funds?**

A: Yes, [National RTAP's Volunteer Driver Program Toolkit](#) does include information and guidance for programs with volunteers that drive their own vehicles. [Section 4 - Establishing and Managing a Volunteer Driver Pool](#) contains a [Training Volunteer Drivers](#) segment with examples and resources for driver training, including [Recommended Types of Training](#). Volunteer driver programs should always check for state and local laws and regulations related to driver training.

[Section 2 - Volunteer Driver Programs/Funding](#) and [Section 7 – Case Studies and Methodologies](#) include examples and information on how the individual volunteer driver programs are funded.

**Q: What are some examples of how 5310 grantees can help volunteer driver programs?**

A: [Section 2 - Volunteer Driver Programs/Funding](#) includes examples and information on how volunteer driver programs may be funded, including [Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities](#). [Section 7 – Case Studies and Methodologies](#) include examples and information on how the individual volunteer driver programs are funded. The following programs use Section 5310 funds for some part of their program: [WexExpress New Freedom, Cadillac, Michigan](#), [Nevada Rural Counties Retired and Senior Volunteer Program \(Nevada RSVP\)](#), [Carson City, Nevada](#), [Ride Connection, Portland, Oregon](#), [Drive a Senior, Austin, Texas](#), [New Freedom/Compass IL Transportation Program, Menomonie, Wisconsin](#).

**Q: Start-up - what comes first... if we don't have a non-profit?**

A: [Section 2 - Volunteer Driver Programs](#) of the Toolkit introduces specific things an organization should do as a standard part of planning, implementing, and operating a volunteer driver program. It provides an overview of requirements, processes, and procedures known to be of value to volunteer driver programs and sponsoring organizations.

In addition, each of the case studies in [Section 7 – Case Studies and Methodologies](#) begins with some background or a history of how the program started. The following programs started without a non-profit, supporting organization: [Senior Alternatives in Transportation \(SAINT\) Volunteer Transportation, Fort Collins, Colorado](#) and [Drive a Senior, Austin, Texas](#).

**Q: Hosting a regional volunteer driver program, how to start, how to find good partners?**

A: [Section 2 - Volunteer Driver Programs](#) of the Toolkit introduces specific things an organization should do as a standard part of planning, implementing, and operating a volunteer driver program. Organizations like [Area Agencies on Aging \(AAA\)](#), [Community Action Agencies](#), independent living centers, faith-based organizations, urban, rural, and Tribal transit systems are well suited to serve as sponsoring organizations to volunteer driver programs. Sponsoring organizations provide necessary structure, financial oversight, and liability coverage.

If you have additional questions, please contact National RTAP at [info@nationalrtap.org](mailto:info@nationalrtap.org).

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