What's New in the ADA Toolkit?

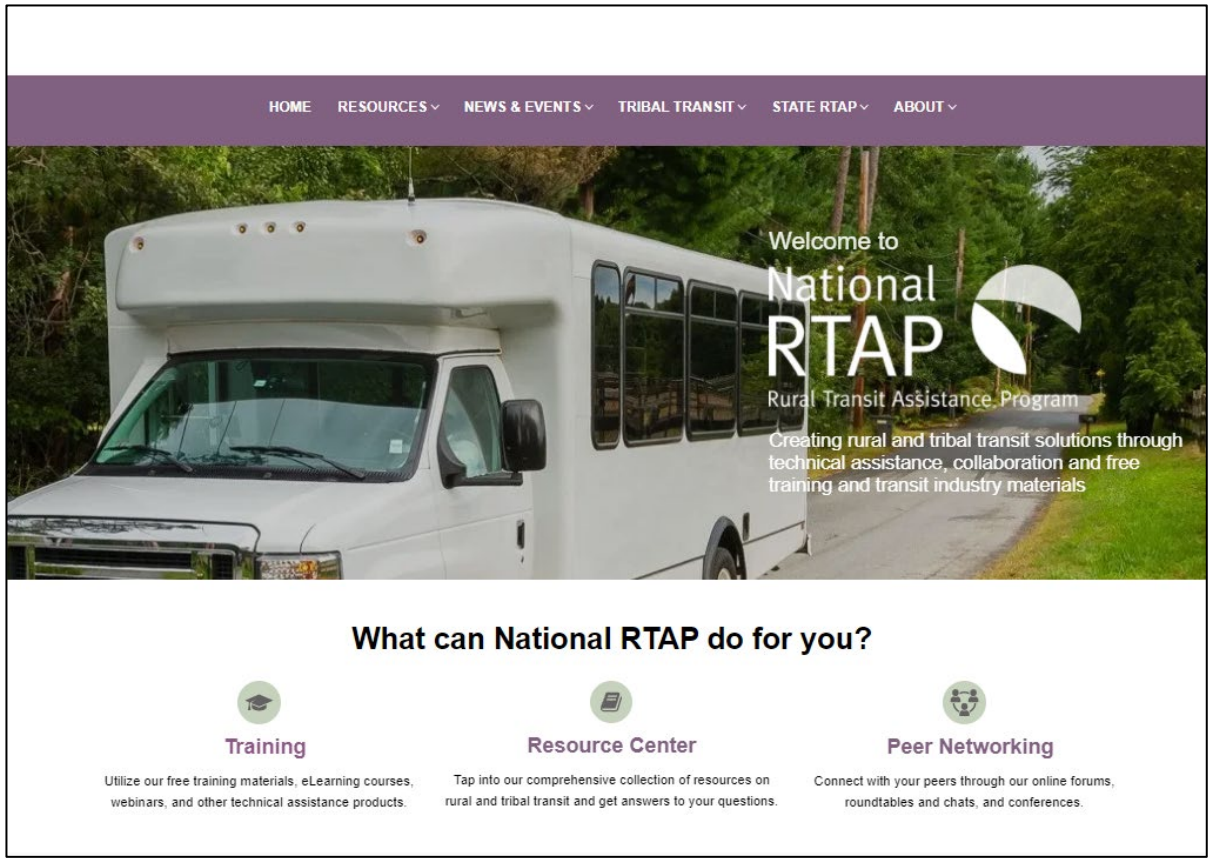
February 6, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

FTA
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

National Rural Transit Assistance Program

- Technical assistance center funded by FTA through the Section 5311 Program
- Provides free training materials and technical assistance to rural and tribal transit providers and State RTAPs
- Review Board – 14 State DOT and rural and tribal transit agency managers from across the country
- Learn more at nationalrtap.org



National RTAP Resources and Services

Training

manuals, videos, slides, and eLearning for front-line staff and management

Information

and best practices via tech briefs, toolkits, topic guides, articles, and news

Technology Tools

for procurement, cost allocation, website building, and GTFS

Peer Networking

and training via webinars, conferences, roundtables, and online forums

Assistance

through reference services and tech support – bring us your questions!

What is TACL?

TACL
TRANSPORTATION
Technical Assistance Coordination Library

http://transportation-tacl.org

The Transportation Technical Assistance Coordination Library (TACL) provides a sustainable methodology and platform for access and findability of rural and tribal transit coordination resources across a diverse range of transportation technical assistance centers and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The FTA-funded technical assistance centers participating in this ongoing work are:

- National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC)
- National Center for Applied Transit Technology (N-CATT)
- National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)
- National Rural Transit Assistance Program (National RTAP)
- Shared-Use Mobility Center (SUMC)
- Transit Workforce Center (TWC)

Presenter

Cara Marcus

Knowledge and Resource Manager

National RTAP

Toolkit Preparation Team and Reviewers

Preparation Team

- Paula Clark – KFH Group
- Buffy Ellis – KFH Group
- Luke Huddon – KFH Group

Reviewers

- Kristin Haar, Iowa Department of Transportation
- Jessie Schmitzer, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Kevin Wassom, Michigan Department of Transportation

ADA Toolkit Updates and Expansion in 2024

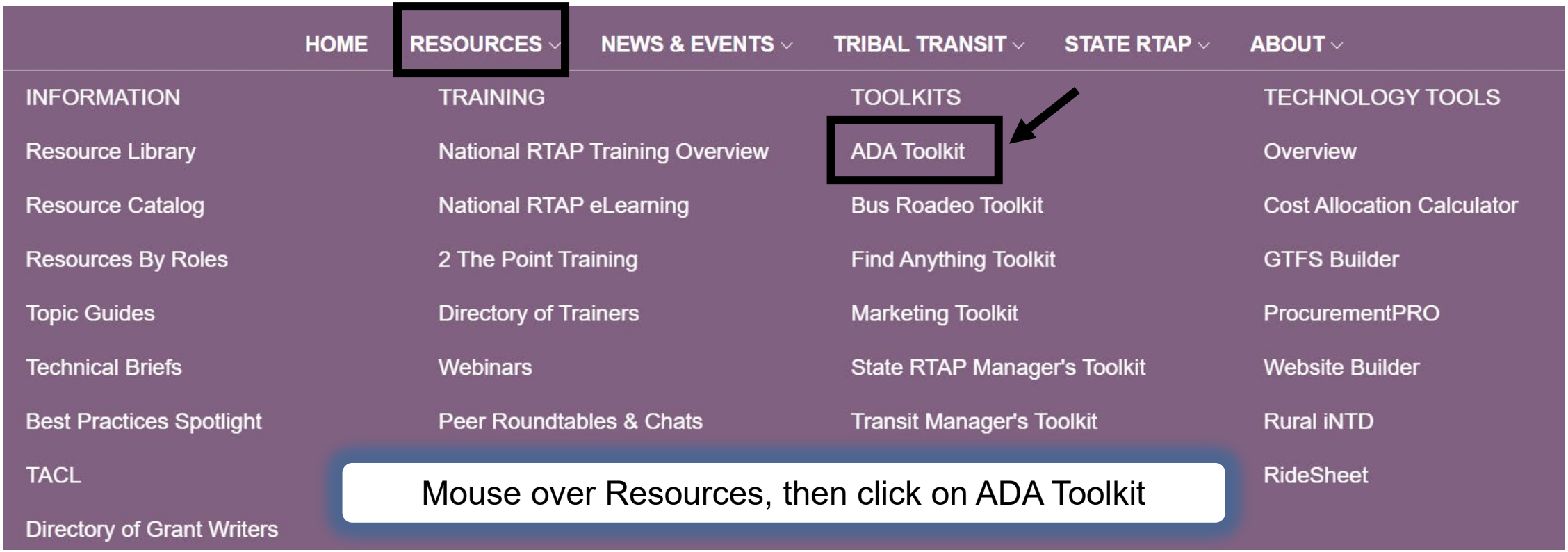
- Information, guidance, and resources for Tribal transit agencies
- All resources reviewed or replaced by more current resources
- All links checked and updated
- Q&A section deleted - topics merged into existing sections
- New examples and best practices to help transit agencies understand and comply with the ADA requirements
- New Section Sources added to all sections

About the ADA Toolkit

- Developed in 2014 for rural and Tribal transit managers
- Updated and expanded in 2020 and 2024
- Information for public bus systems and demand response services in rural areas
- “Plain language” explanations of complex regulatory language
- Good practices, links to regulations, guidance, and more information
- Provides technical assistance information, not legal advice

Accessing the ADA Toolkit

https://www.nationalrtap.org



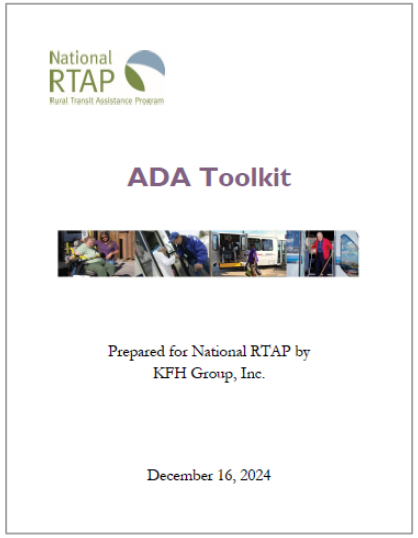
https://www.nationalrtap.org/Toolkits/ADA-Toolkit/Welcome

Welcome Section

The purpose of the ADA Toolkit is to help rural and Tribal transit managers understand the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) requirements for public transit providers under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to help them comply with the ADA requirements that apply to them.

Updated:

- Table of Contents
- Acknowledgments
- Full-Text PDF



National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

ADA Toolkit

Prepared for National RTAP by
KFH Group, Inc.

December 16, 2024

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Key Regulations, Standards and Guidance

This section introduces the various federal regulations, standards, and guidance on compliance with the ADA that are relevant to subrecipients of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas program.

Updates include:

- FTA Comprehensive Review Contractors Manual (FY 2023)
- FTA Master Agreements, FTA Master Agreement (version 31, May 2, 2024)

Key Regulations, Standards and Guidance (continued)

Updates include:

- FTA Tribal Transit Technical Assistance Assessment Guide, Tribal Transit Program (TTP) recipients can use to identify and better understand ADA requirements and prepare for an assessment.
- U.S. Department of Justice Final Rule on the Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps
- Revised 508 Standards and 255 Guidelines from the U.S. Access Board – 255 is a section of the Communications Act

General Requirements for All Service Types

There are some ADA requirements that apply to ALL transit agencies, regardless of the type of service they provide. **Updates include:**

- Policies related to specific elements or equipment
- FTA ADA Circular 4710.1, Webinar 3: The ADA and Fixed Route Service Requirements (February 17, 2016) provides examples of when policy, practice, or procedure modifications may be necessary for people based on their individual disabilities.
- National RTAP eLearning ADA Driver Training

Fixed Route Bus Requirements

This section summarizes the U.S. DOT regulatory requirements that apply to fixed route bus service.

Updates include:

- Commuter Bus Service – Updated to better define the service and include information on stop announcement requirements
- Inoperative Lift or Ramp on a Fixed Route Vehicle – Detailed example of how to respond if the bus lift is not working
- Rider Assistance and Use of Accessibility Equipment - Expanded guidance on assisting people with disabilities with boarding the bus

Demand Response Requirements

The requirements for demand response services are summarized in this section of the ADA Toolkit.

Updates include:

- What is Demand Response Service? - This topic is expanded in to include U.S. DOT ADA regulations and their relationship to locally-determined policies
- Integration of On-demand service with Fixed Route and ADA Complementary Paratransit - New section with guidance from Appendix D of U.S. DOT ADA regulations

Demand Response Requirements (continued)

Updates include:

- Shared Mobility - Contracting Service from Taxi Providers and Transportation Network Companies – This topic is expanded and renamed. It includes additional resources: U.S.DOT guidance, FTA's frequently asked questions on shared mobility guidance and ADA, and TCRP Report 188: Shared Mobility and the Transformation of Public Transit.

Route Deviation Service Requirements

This section of the Toolkit discusses aspects of route deviation service that should be considered in light of ADA compliance.

Updates include:

- Characteristics of Route Deviation Service – A reference and link to Flexible Route Service or Route Deviation in the Operations and Planning, Flexible Route section of the Transit Manager's Toolkit.

ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements

Public entities that provide fixed route services must also provide ADA complementary paratransit services. This section of the Toolkit summarizes those requirements. **Updates include:**

- Origin-to-Destination Service –
  - Guidance on “curb-to-curb” or “door-to-door” service
  - Examples of when a paratransit driver can, and should, leave the bus to assist riders with disabilities
  - Options to help with riders who need assistance above and beyond transportation

ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements (continued)

Updates include:

- Service Criteria –
  - Response time – Next-day service definition
  - Fare – How to calculate fares for paratransit trips and information on "Premium Charges"
  - Trip purpose – Additional guidance about trips for “leisure” or recreational destinations

ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements (continued)

Updates include:

- Eligibility –
  - Eligibility Determination Process – Expanded guidance related to the establishment of an appeal process
  - Eligibility Appeals – New resources for establishing processes for eligibility determinations and appeals
  - Service Across Multiple Jurisdictions – New guidance for establishing processes for riders who are ADA complementary paratransit eligible who regularly travel from their home jurisdiction to a neighboring jurisdiction

ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements (continued)

Updates include:

- Other ADA Complementary Paratransit Operational Requirements and Considerations –
  - Assistance with Items such as Grocery Bags – Guidance for establishing policies related to assistance with personal belongings
  - Minimum Age for Independent Traveler - Guidance for policy on the minimum age at which a child can ride without being accompanied by an adult

Vehicle and Facility Accessibility

This section of the Toolkit focuses on the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) accessibility standards for transit vehicles and facilities. It also presents technical assistance information and sample practices.

Updates include:

- Transportation Vehicles –
  - Vehicle Step Height Considerations – Updated resources: 2022 APTA Bus Procurement Guidelines and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Small Light-Duty Bus Specifications

Vehicle and Facility Accessibility (continued)

Updates include:

- Transportation Facilities
  - Signage and Wayfinding for People with Vision and Hearing Disabilities - TCRP Research Report 248: Tactile Wayfinding in Transportation Settings for Travelers Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices

This section of the Toolkit outlines the requirements to accommodate riders who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices on transit systems.

Updates include:

- Types of Mobility Devices – Expanded to include shared mobility devices (scooters and e-scooters) and online resources on the general topic of how ADA rules for mobility devices apply to public transit providers

Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices (continued)

Updates include:

- Operating Policies on Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices – note that there is a lift threshold of 600 pounds
  - Pushing Manual Wheelchair onto Lift or Ramp - Examples
  - Accommodating Riders Who Use Wheelchairs if the Lift and Vehicle Can Physically Accommodate Them – More Options
  - Accommodating Bariatric Riders Who Use Mobility Devices – New Guidance

Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices (continued)

- Operating Policies on Accommodating Riders Using Mobility Devices – (continued)
  - Use of Securement Devices – Examples
  - Requesting that Riders Transfer to a Seat - Guidance
  - Strollers as Mobility Devices - Guidance
  - Other Considerations for Assisting Riders Who Use Mobility Devices – Expanded guidance

Service Animals

Transportation providers must allow service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in vehicles and facilities. This section of the ADA Toolkit provides guidance, resources, and best practices.

Updates include:

- Other Considerations about Accommodating Service Animals – New guidance includes information about animals in training
- Additional Resources on Service Animals – Expanded content with new resources from the National Aging and Disability Resource Center (NADTC) and the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA)

Rider Assistance and Customer Service

This section of the Toolkit provides an overview of rider assistance and sensitivity requirements under the U.S. DOT ADA regulations, as well as good customer service practices and tips for serving riders with various disabilities.

Updates include:

- Personnel Training Requirements – Updated training resources include:
  - National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) Access Matters Video Series

Rider Assistance and Customer Service (continued)

- Personnel Training Requirements – Updated training resources include: (continued)
  - Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Passenger Assistance Safety and Sensitivity (PASS) Training
  - National RTAP ADA Driver Training and ADA Driver Training Hands-on Evaluation
  - Easterseals Project Action Sensitivity Training for Bus Drivers

Rider Assistance and Customer Service (continued)

Updates include:

- Customer Service Guidelines -
  - Communication Tips – Expanded resources include:
    - Addressing Transportation and Accessibility for All, Invisible Disabilities: Seeing the Unseen, TR News, Number 346. (July-August 2023)
    - The United Spinal Association's Disability Etiquette Guide: Tips on Interacting Respectfully with People with Disabilities (2023)

Rider Assistance and Customer Service (continued)

- Customer Service Guidelines - (continued)
  - Serving Riders with Hearing and Speech Impairments – New resource: Effective Communications with Travelers who are Deafblind, Sound Transit, Seattle, WA.
  - Serving Riders with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Other Neurodivergent Riders – New communication tips and resources to expand customer service
  - Serving Riders with Epilepsy – New resources to help serve riders with epilepsy and other hidden disabilities

Rider Assistance and Customer Service (continued)

- Customer Service Guidelines - (continued)
  - Serving Riders with Psychiatric Disabilities – Guidance on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a disability
  - Homeless Populations with Disabilities – New section with resources and best practices
  - Serving Difficult Riders - Guidance and scenarios
  - Personal Care Attendants, Companions, and Caregivers - New section focuses on regulations, guidance, and resources

Rider Assistance and Customer Service (continued)

- Customer Service Guidelines - (continued)
  - Additional Resources –
    - U.S. Access Board's webinar, Enhancing Accessibility Through Customer Experience describes the key aspects of the federal government's Federal Customer Experience (CX) initiative, including its relationship to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Rider Information

This section of the Toolkit focuses on communications that are accessible to people with disabilities, particularly for people with vision, hearing, and speech disabilities.

Updates include:

- Federal Requirements and Guidance on Information Accessibility –
  - Guidance that transit agencies can use to communicate rider responsibilities on their website and in their print materials.
  - U.S. Access Board - Revised 508 Standards and 255 Guidelines

Public Meetings and Outreach

This section of the Toolkit focuses on requirements and good practices for engaging people with disabilities in the public participation activities of a rural transit agency.

Updates include:

- Hosting Accessible Meetings – New Resource: U.S. DOT's Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making (2023) contains useful information meant to help U.S. DOT funding recipients comply with existing requirements.

Funding Considerations

This section of the Toolkit provides information on funding that can be used to comply with ADA requirements and enhance the accessibility of rural transit services.

Updates include:

- FTA Funding that Can Support ADA-Related Expenses -
  - Rural Areas Formula Grant Program Guidance, C 9040.1H - Replaces, consolidates and updates guidance for Section 5339(a); Section 5311; and Section 5311(c).

Funding Considerations (continued)

- FTA Funding that Can Support ADA-Related Expenses – (continued)
  - Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Guidance, C 9070.1H - Updates information.
  - Tribes as Direct Recipients – New section.

Funding Considerations (continued)

Updates include:

- FTA Funding and ADA Requirements – New guidance and resources about:
  - ADA requirements related to public transportation services under a contract that is funded by an FTA grant
  - FTA requirements related to State DOT oversight of their subrecipients on compliance requirements, including ADA
  - FTA handling of ADA complaints

Funding Considerations (continued)

Updates include:

- Coordination with Other Sources of Transportation Support for People with Disabilities –
  - Coordinated Funding – New guidance: Assurance of Transportation: A Medicaid Transportation Coverage Guide, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services /Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMS).
  - Private Sector Partner Sponsorships – Updated best practice: Paris Metro system in Paris, Texas /Texas Ark-Tex Council of Governments

Emergency Management

This section of the Toolkit provides information on Emergency Management that can be used to ensure compliance with ADA requirements.

Topics include:

- Federal Requirements and Guidance on Emergency Management
  - Federal Requirements and Standards for Emergency Management

Emergency Management (continued)

Topics include (continued):

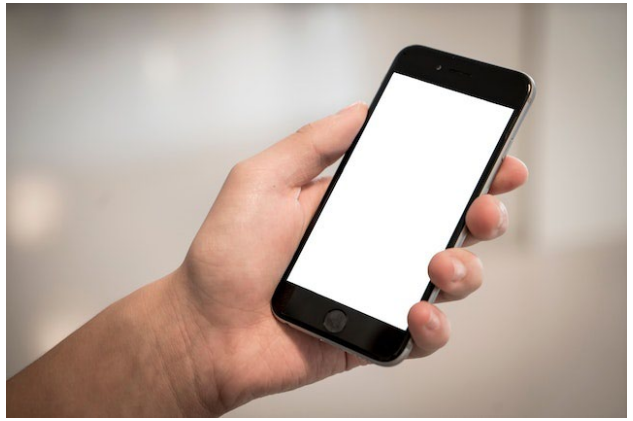
- Disaster Planning
  - Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - Recommended Reading, Training Resources, and Websites
  - Pandemic Planning

New Developments

This section of the Toolkit is dedicated to new topics and developments that relate to rural transit accessibility and the ADA requirements that apply to rural public transit providers.

Updates include:

- Apps that Support People with Disabilities –
  - Examples of web applications or “apps” that are being launched to help persons with disabilities access and use transit.



New Developments (continued)

- Apps that Support People with Disabilities – (continued)
  - The Arc of Northern Virginia's Tech for Independent Living Team creates free, fully customized, virtual lessons that support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to create full participation in the community.
- Autonomous and Connected Vehicles –
  - FTA's Strategic Transit Automation Research Plan 2.0: 2023-2028 (Report 0264) is a successor to the original 2018 STAR Plan published by FTA.

New Developments (continued)

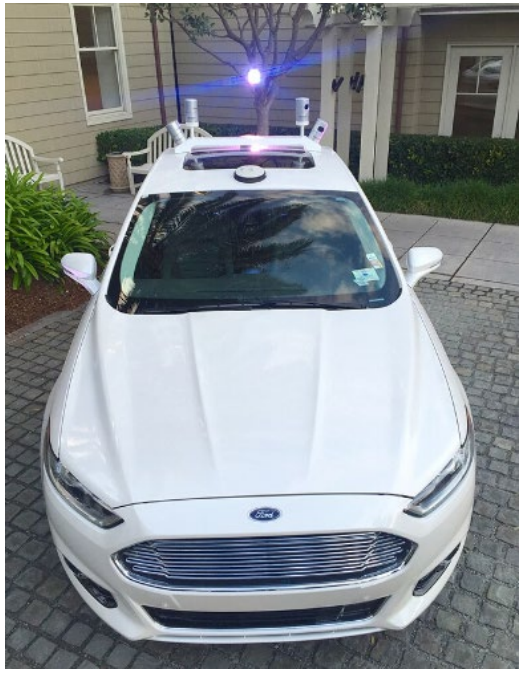


Photo Credit: Autonomous test vehicle by Steve Jurvetson, Creative Commons

- Autonomous and Connected Vehicles – (continued)
  - Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF), Letter for the Record, Autonomous Vehicles: Promises and Challenges of Evolving Automotive Technologies (February 2020)

Glossary

The Glossary is intended to assist rural transit agencies with understanding terminology introduced in this ADA Toolkit.

Updates include:

- The glossary has been expanded to include updated terminology and links to online resources and information.

Q&A

Upcoming National RTAP Events

Books in Transit Discussion Group – The Lost Ticket

February 20, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

Digital Accessibility for Transportation Providers

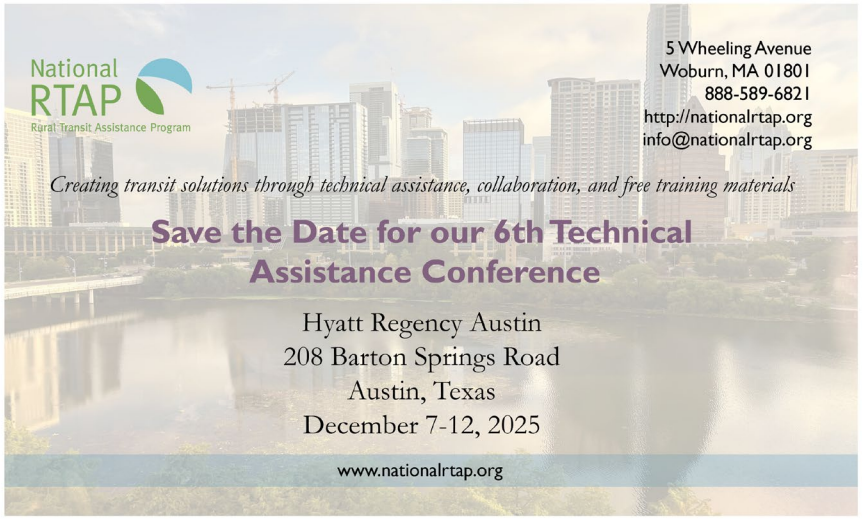
February 26, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

Learn About TACL, the Transportation Technical Assistance Coordination Library

February 28, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET

Spring into New National RTAP Resources

March 20, 2025, 2:00-3:00 PM ET



To register or to access recordings, slides, or summaries, go to:

nationalrtap.org/Training/Peer-Roundtables-and-Chats and nationalrtap.org/Webinars.

Thank You

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Webinar Survey

National RTAP
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FTA

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