

WISCONSIN RTAP

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Program Goals

- To further the development of the skills and abilities of persons involved in providing passenger service to the state's rural areas (under 50,000 in population).
- To encourage the development of professional networks among Wisconsin transportation providers.
- To offset some of the costs of attending national, state, and local transit training and educational programs.

Applicant Eligibility

Any agency or organization within the state responsible for providing transit service to the state's rural areas are eligible to apply. Training of drivers, dispatchers and mechanics is encouraged.

Eligible Events & Reimbursement Rates

Scholarships are available for certain events and in-house/group trainings. Scholarships under \$100 are not eligible. Agencies may apply with one application (through the downloadable scholarship packet) for up to four people, from the same agency or multiple agencies, to attend one event.

Scholarship Rates for Events

Event Type	Reimbursement Rate	Approval
Annual Statewide Event for Transportation Associations (WIPTA, WRAPP, WAMM)	100%	Automatic
WisDOT-Sponsored Training	100%	Automatic
WisDOT-Sanctioned training through RLS & Associates	100%	Automatic
FTA/NTI Training	80% In-State 70 % out-of-state	Discretionary
CTAA/APTA/Other Conference or Training	80% In-State 70 % out-of-state	Discretionary
Other event (must be directly related to the provision of service)	80% In-State 70 % out-of-state	Discretionary

Scholarship Rates for In-House/Group Trainings

Scholarships for in-house/group training will be available for reimbursement of 80% of the eligible expenses of the training.

Application

Application forms can be submitted online at: wisconsinrtap.com, under the Training section of the website, or scholarship packets can be downloaded, completed and emailed to: dtennant@rlsandassoc.com.

With the online form you will get an immediate notification that your application has been received, and you will get an email confirmation with the approval decision within 10 business days.

Scholarship applications should be submitted to the RTAP Scholarship coordinator no later than 30 days prior to the start date of an event.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by the RTAP Scholarship Coordinator on a first-come, first-serve basis and will be evaluated by the following:

1. The applicant's eligibility.
2. The training/conference eligibility and type; and
3. The balance remaining in the RTAP Scholarship fund.

The RTAP Coordinator will approve or deny the application by returning the electronic scholarship packet with a completed approval tab within 10 business days from the date of receipt.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Registration, lodging, travel expenses, and meals not covered by the registration are all eligible for scholarship reimbursement.

Among the expenses that are not eligible for scholarship reimbursement are charges for room service, alcohol, personal care items, etc.

Gifts of any kind are not eligible e.g., drivers, volunteers, or conference attendees.

In cases of unforeseen travel disruptions (e.g., inclement or extreme weather events or other safety issues), WIRTAP may provide approval for the additional costs on a case-by-case basis. Please provide documentation explaining these expenses. Reimbursement is subject to approval of justification, WIRTAP's remaining scholarship budget, and applicable funding percentages.

Allowable Expense Maximums

Allowable expenses are covered at the state allowable rates. In-state rates are defined in Section 8-6 of the Transportation Administrative Manual and can be made available in electronic format upon request. The most commonly used current allowable in-state rates are defined below. Out-of-state rates are defined in the Office of State Employment Relations Compensation & Labor Relations Bulletin OSER-0155-CLR/TSA and can be made available in electronic format upon request.

Allowable meals are determined by time-of-day restrictions for departures and return to home. Based on a working schedule of 7:45 am to 4:30 pm, the timeframes are:

- Breakfast, provided the employee leaves home before 6:00 am
- Lunch, provided the employee leaves his or her headquarters city before 10:30 am and returns after

2:30 pm

- Dinner, provided the employee leaves directly from work and gets home after 7:00 pm

These time periods are modifiable to the extent necessary for employees whose normal work schedule deviates from the hours specified. For example, if the normal work schedule is 6:00 am to 2:30 pm, shift the above times back two (2) hours, e.g., breakfast, provided the employee leaves home before 4:00 am.

Maximum allowable reimbursement rates for meals not provided as part of a conference or training are:

Meal	In-State	Out-of-state
Breakfast	\$11.00	\$12.00
Lunch	\$13.00	\$18.00
Dinner	\$24.00	\$28.00

The maximum allowable tip is 15% of the meal claim.

Allowable **mileage** reimbursement rate is:

In-state travel: \$0.725 per mile

Out-of-state travel: \$0.725 per mile **or** the total of airfare + ground transportation, whichever is less

In-state **lodging** rates are:

\$101/night maximum **or** not over the special conference rate. **(As of 2/2026)**

\$106/night maximum in Milwaukee, Racine, and Waukesha counties. **(As of 2/2026)**

Out-of-state **lodging**:

Because rates vary from city to city, contact the RTAP scholarship Coordinator for the current allowable out-of-state hotel rate for specific cities/destinations.

When reserving a hotel room, request the "State rate", or if applicable, the special conference rate. If there are extenuating circumstances surrounding a hotel's inability to meet the State rate or to offer a special conference rate, please contact the RTAP Coordinator.

Annual Statewide Events for Transportation Associations (i.e., WIPTA, WRAPP, WAMM) lodging rates:

The maximum lodging rate used by the host hotel for any annual statewide event for transportation associations will be reimbursed. However, applicants must first check with the host hotel for room availability at the conference rate. If there is room availability at the conference rate, applicant should book with that host hotel. If the host hotel is 100% booked at the conference rate, the same maximum conference lodging rate at another hotel will be reimbursed. Please provide the date and time you requested availability from the host hotel.

Reimbursement Requests

Reimbursement requests must be submitted **within 30 days** of the conclusion of a conference or training event. If reimbursement is not requested within that time period, the scholarship may be voided and no reimbursement issued.

Reimbursement requests can be completed through an online form at: wisconsinrtap.com, or can be completed on the form contained within the scholarship packet.

The following documentation must accompany the completed reimbursement forms:

1. Detailed expense information
2. **Itemized receipts for all eligible expenses**
3. A copy of the training/conference agenda