

## Grant Solicitation Trainings for 2019-21 Biennium Questions and Answers

### **Special Transportation Fund (STF)**

**Q: What are the protest procedures for the STF solicitation?**

**A:** The protest procedures for STF funding are outlined in OAR 732-005-0071: *The division will conduct a process to resolve protests of funding decisions made by the Oregon Department of Transportation. (1) Within 30 days of notification of a funding decision the STF Agency may file a protest of the decision: (a) The STF Agency will address the protest to the administrator of the division; and (b) The protest will identify the project or proposed project affected by the funding decision, the Recipient or proposed Recipient affected by the decision, any arguments pertaining to the protest, and the requested remedy. (2) The division will investigate the protest and will make a written statement of finding within 30 days. (3) Within 10 working days of receipt of the statement of finding, the STF Agency may request a review of the statement of finding. After a review of the statement of finding, the administrator of the division will issue a final decision.*

**Q: Can you use STF to reimburse mileage directly to an individual driver? Can STF Committee members receive travel reimbursement for attending STF meetings?**

**A:** Yes to both questions.

### **FTA Section 5310**

**Q: Can you use 5310 funds to replace non-RPTD-funded vehicles?**

**A:** Yes, as long as the vehicle being replaced is currently used in public transportation and has not previously been replaced.

### **FTA Section 5311**

**Q: We are interested in receiving 5311 funds. How does this program work?**

**A:** There is a start-up program for general public transportation services in areas that are currently unserved or not funded by 5311 funds. As an example, a senior center that currently serves only its members could possibly receive 5311 funds if it expands its program to serve the general public. Please talk to your regional transit coordinator if you are interested in this program.

**Q: What do I need to do for Department of Labor reporting?**

**A:** Department of Labor reporting is required for 5311, 5311(f), and 5339 recipients only. Providers will receive a request for information from RPTD in the spring of each year with a due date in May. Instructions are included in these requests for information.

**General Questions**

**Q: Are Coordinated Plans required to be updated every three years to get the grant funding?**

**A:** Federal transit law requires projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program be included in a locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan, or Coordinated Plan. The primary purpose of the Coordinated Plan is to establish priorities that are used to guide the allocation of federal and state moneys.

Review Coordinated Plans every three years and update your plan every five years, to reflect changes in the community.

**Q: Does a non-profit need to have a *de minimis* letter? Do they need to establish an indirect rate?**

**A:** Any entity charging an indirect cost *rate* needs either a *de minimis* rate election letter on file, or annual submission of a negotiated indirect cost rate. However, it is preferable for a recipient to use a *direct cost allocation method/plan* (i.e., *hours, square footage, etc.*) if possible as it vastly simplifies their reporting and accounting.

**Q: For a 5310 grant with multiple tasks but no 'project admin' line, where should indirect costs be accounted for? Can they be 'spread like butter' across the various tasks and built into those project lines or does indirect need to be pulled out separately?**

**A:** Indirect costs, for those agencies with an approved indirect cost rate or *de minimis* letter, can be charged in-line with each task as applicable (i.e., direct expenses + indirect rate = total request; note – *indirect costs cannot be added to capital purchases!*). In the absence of a negotiated rate or *de minimis* letter, the recipient would need to use a direct cost allocation method to include expenses within a specific line item as allowable (project administration is not an eligible expense under our STP-funded 5310 program – only under the 5310 discretionary program). If costs are not allowed within the line items on the grant agreement, they are not reimbursable.

**Q: Can you tell me about force account work?**

**A:** FTA Grant Management Circular 5010.E Chapter IV Subsection 5.d(1) reads as follows in relation to the use of a grantee's own labor forces on a capital project, also known as a Force Account: "Force account work less than \$1,000,000 can be performed without justification or a force account plan."

So, if the force account work is less than \$1,000,000 over the life of the project, no documentation is required, although we recommend that is documented. If greater than \$1,000,000, it requires submittal to FTA. Over a certain amount, the plan requires specific pre-approval from FTA.

**Q: Please describe the difference in automated vs manual accounting systems and provide examples of different accounting systems in each category**

**A:** Manual accounting is done in traditional paper registers/account books/vouchers. Automated accounting systems utilize a computerized system with established controls and rules that govern the accounting of transactions (e.g., Intacct, Dynamics GP, Denali, or a proprietary system).

**Q: I thought I submitted my quarterly report but I guess I didn't. How long does it normally take to be approved?**

**A:** RPTD does not approve APRs; we review them after they are submitted in OPTIS.

The workflow of agency periodic reports (APR) varies based on how each agency wants the process to work. At some agencies, one person creates and finalizes (submits) the report using an eResponse keyword. At some agencies, for their internal businesses processes, one person (or sub-agency) creates the report and another person (or sub-agency) finalizes (submits) the report. If your report is not complete, contact the people at your agency involved in the process. You can also check the workflow history in OPTIS to see who worked on it last.

**Q. Who can dispose of Non-RPTD-funded asset in OPTIS? Is the grant recipient responsible for disposing Non-RPTD-funded asset in OPTIS?**

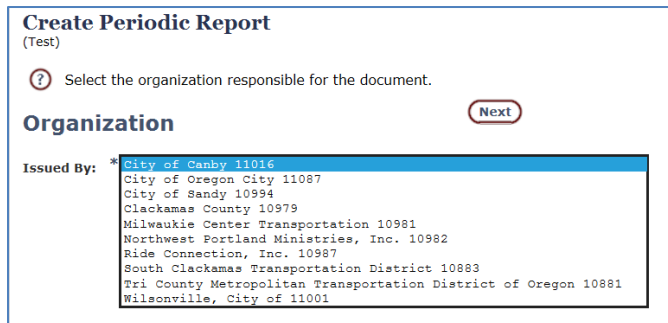
**A.** A non-RPTD user with the correct privileges and an eResponse keyword can mark a non-RPTD-funded vehicle as disposed in the OPTIS asset register. He or she may need to create an amendment to the asset to do this, depending on current the asset register stage or step.

**Q: Please share how grant subrecipients may use OPTIS to monitor performance related to pass-through funding?**

**A:** Agencies in OPTIS are established in a hierarchical schema which displays the lead agency and affiliated organizations. Each organization may be under only one organization, but may have multiple organizations below it. (If you are a lead agency with sub-agencies below you in the hierarchy you may at times want to search for documents just for your agency and at other times for documents for all agencies associated with you. The Find by Organization Hierarchy option in OPTIS allows you to see a master list of all documents, including documents associated with all agencies in your hierarchy.) The lead agency is established when it is entered into the system originally and can be modified at any time.

A lead agency may ask sub-agencies to provide reporting data to them, but the sub-agency can only create a report for itself. For instance:

**TriMet can create APRs for any of their sub-agencies.**



**Create Periodic Report**  
(Test)

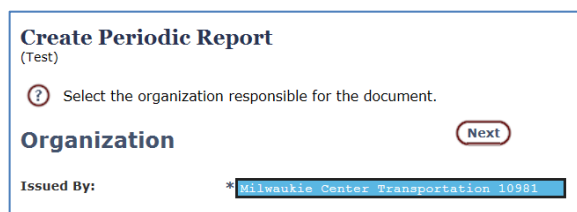
? Select the organization responsible for the document.

**Organization** Next

Issued By: \*

- City of Canby 11016
- City of Oregon City 11087
- City of Sandy 10994
- Clackamas County 10979
- Milwaukie Center Transportation 10981
- Northwest Portland Ministries, Inc. 10982
- Ride Connection, Inc. 10987
- South Clackamas Transportation District 10883
- Tri County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon 10881
- Wilsonville, City of 11001

**But Milwaukie can only create an APR for itself.**



**Create Periodic Report**  
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**Organization** Next

Issued By: \* **Milwaukie Center Transportation 10981**

**Q. Can ODOT provide more Procurement Training?**

**A.** Yes. You may request training.

**Q. What are the current Procurement Thresholds (updated in 2018)?**

**A.** The updated FTA procurement thresholds are:

- Micro purchases increased from \$3,000 to \$10,000
- Small Procurements increased from \$150,000 to \$250,000

The new thresholds do not affect Buy America thresholds.

**Q. Can RPTD provide an RFP template for software or technologies?**

**A.** RPTD has hired new Technical Resource staff; they will conduct research on this issue. Any transit agency may use the RTAP ProcurementPro web application. This provides a template for technology purchases and includes all of the federal clauses. ProcurementPro 2.0 will be released in February 2019.

<https://www.nationalrtap.org/Web-Apps/ProcurementPRO>

**Q: Can RPTD provide a matrix outlining pros and cons of different technologies and specifically fleet management software and scheduling software?**

**A:** An explanation of existing/emerging technologies is planned to be on the Technical Resource web page in February/March 2019.