



2021 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Disabled Grant Program Call for Projects Orange County Transportation Authority Guidelines and Procedures

PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The Orange County Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Disabled (EMSD) Grant Program call for projects (call) is intended to enhance the mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities by providing local transportation funding to meet the transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities where public transportation service may not appropriately meet their needs. The EMSD Grant Program offers grant opportunities to non-profit organizations and local public agencies to help meet these needs.

The goals of the EMSD Program are to:

- 1) Improve the mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities in Orange County.
- 2) Support local agencies and non-profits providing service within their communities.
- 3) Augment the OCTA Senior Mobility Program, OC ACCESS, and OC Bus fixed-route service.
- 4) Provide seamless service through improved first- and last-mile connections.
- 5) Incorporate and encourage technology-based solutions to improve mobility options.
- 6) Promote non-profit and public agency outreach to seniors and disabled patrons with an emphasis in reaching disadvantaged, underrepresented, and/or diverse communities to ensure services are meeting their needs.
- 7) Prioritize funding for agencies that collaborate, which is demonstrated by:
 - Partnerships to create efficiencies and lower operating costs for service, and/or
 - Increasing vehicle revenue hours beyond the minimum ten hours.

BACKGROUND

Prior to 2014, the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 (FTA 5310) Program was jointly administered by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). In fiscal year (FY) 2015 and onward, Caltrans elected not to participate in this partnership, citing significant increases in administration and coordination with the large urban areas throughout the state. In 2016, OCTA assumed the role of designated recipient for the FTA 5310 Program in Orange County to ensure funds are used effectively, efficiently, and consistently with federal requirements.

The Orange County EMSD Grant Program replaces the FTA 5310 Program by providing local funding support, in lieu of federal funding, which allows grantees to streamline project implementation and reduce the risk of non-compliance with federal requirements. Due to the long-standing success of the Section 5310 grant program, all beneficial elements of that program have been retained.

As the regional transportation planning agency for Orange County, OCTA is responsible for conducting a call and allocating EMSD funds consistent with the priority strategies identified in the current Orange County Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan (Coordinated Plan).¹ In addition, OCTA has taken on the responsibility of developing and administering funding agreements and providing oversight monitoring of EMSD grantees throughout the useful life of the grant-funded projects.

2021 CALL

The EMSD call will provide up to \$4 million in local funds. Funding availability is based FTA 5310 amounts allocated to Orange County and is subject to change. All projects proposed and considered for funding must be included in the Coordinated Plan.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE²

July 12, 2021	Call for applications opens
July 26, 2021	Grant application workshop
September 9, 2021	Application due date
September-November 2021	Application reviews and scoring
November 22, 2021	OCTA Board of Directors (Board) consideration of EMSD funding recommendations
December 7, 2021	Awarded applicant workshop

¹ Coordinated Plan is available at: <http://www.octa.net/pdf/HumanServicesTransportation.pdf>

² Please note this schedule is subject to change.

Funding Priorities (in order of priority)

- 1) Paratransit vehicle replacement and related equipment for existing vehicles that meet or exceed their useful life.
- 2) New paratransit vehicles and related equipment that support the expansion of existing service.
- 3) Expansion of existing transportation services that address the target population’s transportation needs, which include expanding existing mobility management, and driver and travel training projects.
- 4) New transportation services that address the target population’s unmet transportation needs, including new mobility management, and driver and travel training projects, and first and last-mile trips.

Eligible Applicants

- Private non-profit organizations, and
- Public agencies where private non-profits are not readily available to provide the proposed service (a public hearing is required as documentation).

Eligible Project Categories and Availability of Funds

Funds will be available for two categories and distributed to organizations and agencies serving Orange County based on the funding priorities above.

Project Category	Funding Availability³
Capital	\$2,200,000 (minimum)
Operating	\$1,800,000 (maximum)
Total	\$4,000,000

Award Size and Matching Funds

Applicants may submit applications for both project categories. However, the total request per applicant may not exceed \$600,000 (excluding local match), as noted in the application and project type table below. The capital and operating project evaluation criteria and point distribution are provided in the Evaluation Criteria. Applicants must commit to cover any cost overruns.

³ Capital Projects will be awarded a minimum of \$2,200,000 under this Call if the \$4 million maximum is reached. Operating Projects will be awarded a maximum of \$1,800,000 under this Call.

Additional Guidance		
1.	Local match, match, or local matching funds, or any variation thereof, refers to the match funding that an agency is pledging through the competitive process. The match must be local agency contribution and may not be made up of soft match or in-kind services.	
2.	The local match has been temporarily reduced during the 2021 call to allow applicants to restore service and subsequently recover from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.	
Application and Project Type	Maximum Grant Request	Minimum Match Requirement
Capital: New or replacement vehicle purchases, leases, and supporting equipment (Stand Alone Application)	\$600,000	10%
Operating: Operating Assistance, COVID-19 Restoration of Service, and/or Expansion of Service, and/or first and last-mile trips	\$250,000	25%
Operating: Mobility Management, Driver/Travel Training, and/or COVID-19 Response Equipment (when combined with Operating Assistance in a single application)	\$350,000	10%
Operating: Mobility Management, Driver/Travel Training, and/or COVID-19 Response Equipment (Stand Alone Application)	\$600,000	10%

Additional Guidance	
Capital Projects	
1.	If capital purchases (vehicles, equipment, software, etc.) are purchased with EMSD funds, these items must be used for their entire useful life and/or through termination of the service or lease (see timely use of funds). If termination occurs prior to the completion of the capital item's useful life, lease, and/or grant term, the applicant shall repay OCTA the same percentage of the sale price [or estimated value of the asset(s)] based on straight line depreciation of the asset(s) consistent with the EMSD percentage of initial purchase. Useful life shall be based upon OCTA's policy for service life, where applicable.
2.	Leasing of vehicles will be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Applicants should submit a cost-benefit analysis demonstrating the cost of leasing the vehicle and associated equipment is the same cost or better.
3.	Awarded vehicles must be ADA accessible and provide a minimum of 10 hours of service per week per vehicle or more by the awarded applicant or in coordination with other agencies.
4.	A vehicle proposed for replacement must meet or exceed its useful life and be actively in service during the applicant's normal days and hours of operation.

Additional Guidance	
Capital Projects	
COVID-19 Response Equipment eligible projects include personal protective equipment, sanitization products, and plexiglass barriers to ensure adequate social distancing and safe operations.	
Operating Projects	
1.	For applicants requesting funds to expand existing and ongoing service, applicants must be able to document that the proposed service will serve additional persons or trips, expand the service area or hours, and/or increase the number or frequency of trips beyond the service that is already being provided. Applicants must explain basis for growth and trip projections.
2.	Potential awards for COVID-19 Restoration of Service will only support service for up to six months. Documentation of the reduction of service is required to be attached to the application.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Capital and operating projects will be scored using the evaluation criteria and point distributions shown below.

Capital Projects	Points	Bonus Points⁴
A. <i>Goals and Objectives</i> – Project is consistent with overall EMSD Program goals and objectives and meets all consideration factors.	16	-
B. <i>Ability of Applicant</i> - Evidence of the applicant's experience providing existing transportation service or social services for elderly or disabled individuals. Scored questions will also include points for agency programs/plans including driver/travel training ⁵ , dispatching, California Highway Patrol Inspections, annual budget/fund sources, and proposed budget.	20	-

⁴ Bonus points are in addition to the maximum total in each category. If bonus points are awarded, the application score will not exceed a maximum of 100 points.

⁵ Travel training is one-on-one individualized training that gives people with seniors and individuals with disabilities the skills required to travel safely on fixed-route public transportation.

Capital Projects	Points	Bonus Points
<p>C. Coordination Planning - Assessment of available services that (1) meet the needs of seniors and disabled individuals and (2) identify gaps in service or equipment needs. Scored questions will ask how the applicant provides strategies, activities, and projects to identify these gaps and achieve efficiencies in service. There are also specific questions on coordination planning with other agencies.</p> <p><i>Five bonus points are available for partnerships that create efficiencies in lowering operating costs.</i></p>	12	Up to 5
<p>D. Outreach and Feedback - Assessment of how the applicant has conducted outreach with senior and disabled clients to ensure their needs are being met and adjustments to service are made accordingly.</p>	10	-
<p>E. Transportation Service - Evaluation will be based on project type - replacement, expansion vehicles, and/or equipment. Replacement and expansion vehicles will receive ratings based on mileage, service hours per week, and number of people served. Equipment will be scored based on number of vehicles within the fleet which are coordinated and service efficiency enhancement with the new equipment.</p> <p><i>Five bonus points available (scaled) for applicants that increase vehicle revenue hours beyond the minimum ten hours.</i></p>	32	Up to 5
<p>F. Emergency Planning and Preparedness – Evaluation is based on standards for emergency planning and preparedness, extent to which emergency plans and drill activities are provided, and whether applicant is included in County Office of Emergency Services (OES) response plan.</p>	10	-
Total Points	100	10

Operating Projects	Points
A. <i>Goals and Objectives</i> – Project’s consistency with overall EMSD program goals and objectives and meets all consideration factors.	20
B. <i>Project Implementation</i> – Extent to which applicant provides a well-defined and detailed operations plan with defined routes, schedules, current/project ridership, key personnel, and marketing strategies with supporting documentation for carrying out the project.	30
C. <i>Program Performance Indicators</i> – Extent to which applicant provides clear, measurable, and outcome-based performance measures and indicators, which show a logical, reasonable, and quantifiable methodology to track the effectiveness of the project.	20
D. <i>Coordination, Outreach, and Sustainability</i> – Extent to which applicant identifies communications and outreach plans and goals to target populations that benefit from EMSD program. Evaluation also based on applicant’s efforts and accomplishments in coordination with other transportation and/or social services in the project area and extent to which applicant identifies plans to sustain the program beyond the two-year funding cycle.	20
E. <i>Emergency Planning and Preparedness</i> – Extent to which applicant identifies standards for emergency planning and preparedness and provides emergency plans and drill activities, and whether applicant is included in County Office of Emergency Services (OES) response plan.	10
Total Points	100

PROVISIONS OF USE CRITERIA

- Upon approval by OCTA’s Board, awarded applicants will be notified and will be required to enter into an agreement with OCTA to start the project and receive funding. The agreement will remain in effect throughout the project’s service period or the equipment’s useful life.
- Grantees are responsible for the proper use, operating costs, and maintenance of all vehicles and project equipment, and must be prepared to comply with all applicable regulations and requirements.
- Applicants must have management oversight and control over the operations of contracted service and purchased equipment. Backup documentation must also be maintained and provided upon request during the project term and the extended audit period.
- For non-profit applicants, non-profit status must be documented as “active.”
- Public agencies are required to complete a public hearing prior to the application deadline of September 9, 2021.

TIMELY-USE OF FUNDS

Applicants may request programming funds for FY 2021/22 or FY 2022/23 (ending June 30).

For **Capital** projects, applicants will be required to award a contract or execute a purchase order by June 30 of the programmed FY. Applicants would then have 24 months from the award, or purchase order to receive and/or install the equipment. The contract award or purchase order date will serve as the start of the 24-month period of performance.

For **Operating** projects, awarded applicants will be required to show evidence that they have entered into a cooperative or service agreement, as applicable to the funded project, and will start service based on the schedule provided and by June 30 of the programmed FY. For existing operating agreements, applicants may request funds to continue service. The date of the cooperative or service agreement or continuation will begin the 24-month period of performance.

For all project types, funds are required to be expended within 24 months to be eligible for reimbursement. Applicants may request a one-time extension not exceeding a total of 12 months per project grant. Scope changes and extension requests must be received no less than ninety (90) calendar days prior to the OCTA cooperative agreement deadline.

EXTENSION REQUESTS, SCOPE CHANGES AND COST SAVINGS

Scope changes and extension requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and requests must be submitted via email to Jennifer Farinas at jfarinas@octa.net. Scope change and extension request templates will be made available on the [EMSD website](#) following project award. Applicants must provide an explanation and justification for the change. Please note that project extensions are not guaranteed, and OCTA encourages awarded applicants to complete projects within the original period of performance of the grant.

OCTA will complete a thorough evaluation of the scope change and/or extension request and the potential impact to the project score prior to making a recommendation. Major scope changes which significantly impact the application score will require approval by the OCTA Board of Directors.

Cost Savings. If the applicant reduces the scope of an approved project or if the project experiences cost savings, a reduction in EMSD funds must be applied proportionally to maintain the approved local match percentage. Scope reductions are not considered cost savings.

INVOICES AND REIMBURSEMENTS

Applicants are expected to finance their projects as they proceed. Costs will be administered on a reimbursement basis, with exception to vehicle purchases over \$100,000 as noted in the table below. Reimbursements will be dispersed upon review and approval of a complete expense report, performance report, and consistency with the cooperative agreement requirements and specifications. Invoices must be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of the month in which the expenditure occurred, with the exception to vehicle purchases over \$100,000 as noted below.

Applicants must submit a final invoice within 90 days of project completion.

Project Type	Reimbursement Process
Capital: Vehicles \$100,000 or more	OCTA pays 65% of the award amount (OCTA's share) of the cost up front, based on verifiable purchase order. Remaining 35% will be paid upon applicant's delivery and acceptance of the vehicle. Applicants must submit an invoice no later than 30 days after the end of the month following vehicle acceptance.
Capital: Vehicles less than \$100,000 and Equipment	Applicants incur the expense and request reimbursement from OCTA once the vehicles and/or equipment have been delivered and accepted at the agency.
Operating: Operating Assistance (including COVID-19 Restoration of Service and Expansion of Service), Mobility Management, Driver/Travel Training, COVID-19 response equipment, and/or first and last-mile connections.	Applicants submit invoices to OCTA on a monthly basis, less required match.

If awarded, successful applicants will enter into a cooperative agreement with OCTA specifying all regulations and requirements of the grant.

QUARTERLY AND FINAL REPORTING

Awarded applicants will be required to submit a quarterly report to allow OCTA to monitor progress on the project and ensure that the project will be completed within the period of performance of the grant. Quarterly reporting forms will be available on the [EMSD website](#) following the project award. Forms will request monthly data to be submitted on a quarterly basis. Reports should be submitted according to the reporting schedule below:

Performance Period	Quarterly Report Due Date
Q1: January-March	April 30 th
Q2: April-June	July 30 th
Q3: July-September	October 30 th
Q4: October-December	January 30 th

Once the project is complete, the applicant must submit a final report package 90 days following issuance of final payment. Final report templates and instructions will be available on the [EMSD website](#) following the project award.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A completed application will contain the following documents:

- 1) Completed capital and/or operating application with corresponding attachments;
- 2) Non-profits must submit a private nonprofit status inquiry;
- 3) Local cities or county agencies must submit documentation of public hearing;
- 4) Resolution from governing body or similar confirming match commitment and legal authority to submit.
- 5) Any other required documents, such as documentation of reduced service (if applicable), most recent financial statement/single audit, vehicle photos, etc. (refer to application for required documents).

Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding, so please ensure that all submittals contain all the required documentation.

The following documents are available on the [EMSD website](#):

- Fact Sheet
- Capital Project Application Instructions
- Capital Project Application
- Capital Project Scoring Sheet
- Operating Project Application Instructions
- Operating Project Application
- Operating Project Scoring Sheet

Online applications for the EMSD program must be received by OCTA no later than 4:00 PM on Thursday, **September 9, 2021**, via the [EMSD website](#).

Late applications will not be accepted or considered, so please ensure that you have uploaded all required documentation ahead of the application deadline. ***It is suggested to upload documents at least 48 hours ahead of the submittal deadline to allow for time for troubleshooting if needed.***

Although online submittal is preferred, applicants may submit hard copy applications. Three unbound hardcopies of the application and any supporting documentation must be submitted if electing to submit in person or by mail, along with an electronic copy (USB or Dropbox). Applications sent by mail and hand delivered ***must be received by 4:00 PM on September 9, 2021***, at the following address (postmarks will not be accepted):

Mailing Address:

OCTA

Attention: Jennifer Farinas

550 S. Main Street

P.O. Box 14184

Orange, CA 92863-1584

Hand-delivered hardcopy applications may be delivered to:

OCTA

Attention: Jennifer Farinas

600 S. Main Street

Orange, CA 92868

After the applications are reviewed by OCTA for eligibility, an advisory panel will review and rank projects. A recommended priority list of projects will be developed and forwarded to the OCTA Board for consideration in late fall 2021.

OCTA CONTACTS

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