

Training & Technical Assistance

ILLINOIS DOWNSTATE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF PUBLIC & INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION (IDOT)

RLS & Associates, Inc. provides staff support to the Illinois Department of Transportation/Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation (IDOT/DPIT) to assess how downstate rural and small urbanized grantees comply with Federal (Federal Transit Administration (FTA)) and State program requirements under FTA Section 5311, "Nonurbanized Area Formula Program;" FTA Section 5316, "Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program;" FTA Section 5317, "New Freedom Program;" FTA Section 5310, "Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program;" Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Program; Illinois DOT transit capital grant program; and other Federal or State programs that may be authorized by Congress or the Illinois Legislature to support public, specialized, or human services transportation in downstate Illinois.

The RLS Technical Assistance Consultant also provides a wide range of technical assistance and transit planning functions to DPIT, including providing guidance and support to DPIT staff on state DOT grants management responsibilities under all FTA state-administered programs; providing technical assistance to downstate area grantees on all matters relating to Federal and state program compliance; assisting DPIT develop and document policies and procedures to comply with Federal requirements; assisting DPIT create and develop a downstate rural transit planning infrastructure to fulfill Federal requirements to establish an on-going process of transit and human service agency coordination planning; providing technical assistance and expertise to the IDOT Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) contractor on the coordination planning process, technical assistance and training needs (gleaned from execution of all duties under this engagement); developing, and providing training, as necessary, on model coordination planning strategies proven effective in other areas of the United States in response to SAFETEA-LU mandates; conducting specialized assessments of grantee compliance based on established guidelines employed by DPIT; providing technical expertise on transit planning and operations, as necessary, to downstate transit systems who request/require such assistance; and providing in-house professional development training to DPIT staff on Federal program requirements. Some of the specific responsibilities include documenting the state's procedures in a State Management Plan; notifying eligible local entities of the availability of the program funds; soliciting applications, developing project selection criteria, and reviewing and selecting projects for approval; forwarding an annual program of projects and grant application to FTA; certifying eligibility of applicants and project activities; ensuring compliance with Federal requirements by all downstate grantees; monitoring local project activity; and oversee project audits and closeouts. Other responsibilities include transit development planning; coordination strategies and plans; indirect and central services cost allocation plans; long range capital and facilities planning; financial capacity planning; safety and security planning; drug and alcohol program administration; Americans with Disabilities Act compliance; updating the various field guides



used for assessing grantee compliance, facility maintenance planning; procurement standards and policies; new starts; Title VI and Environmental Justice issues; and operational evaluations of existing transit programs. The Technical Assistance Consultant is also responsible for overseeing the SAFETEA-LU coordination requirements for FTA Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 recipients.

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