The Provision of Alternative Services by Transit Agencies: The Intersection of Regulation and Program

DRAFT WORKSHOP CURRICULUM

Prepared for
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Workshop Curriculum

Introduction and Goals

One of the products of the TCRP research project is a curriculum for a one-day workshop on alternative services. The target audience is transit agencies that have an ADA paratransit obligation and that wish to implement or re-design an alternative service. It is anticipated that organizations such as the National Transit Institute, or APTA (at its Mobility Conference), and/or regional/state transit associations may be interested in conducting such a workshop.

The goals of the workshop are to:

- Support transit agencies working to plan or develop alternative services for paratransit customers.
- Discuss key considerations for designing an alternative service program.
- Underline the importance of customer needs and regulatory requirements as integral parts of the alternative service.
- Help transit agencies determine the best fits for service solicitation, types of providers, and alternative service policies.
- Highlight the importance of performance monitoring and evaluation of the alternative service.
- Walk attendees through the ASET tool for planning a potential alternative service or evaluating the cost savings from an existing service. The ASET tool is described in detail in Chapter 6 of the Guidebook.

The workshop logistics – scheduling, invitations, and delivery – will be incumbent on the organizing entity.

Workshop Organization

The workshop is comprised of five modules and is planned for a total of eight hours.

Workshop Modules

- **Module #1:** Introductions and Expectations
- **Module #2:** Design and Considerations
- **Module #3:** ADA Requirements and Customer Needs
- **Module #4:** Planning and Estimation
- **Module #5:** Agreements, Implementation, and Evaluation
Workshop Curriculum Outline

Module #1 Introductions and Expectations (0:30 minutes)

- **Topic #1**  Course Overview and Instructor Introductions (15 minutes)
  - Course schedule and topics
  - Expectations and technology needs
  - Instructor backgrounds
- **Topic #2**  Participant Introductions and Expectations (15 minutes)
  - Participant background and services
  - Expectations for the course
  - Key questions about alternative services

Module #2 Design and Considerations (1:30 minutes)

- **Topic #1**  What are Alternative Services (20 minutes)
  - Definition of alternative services
  - Types of alternatives services
  - Available transportation providers
- **Topic #2**  Designing an Alternative Service (25 minutes)
  - Provider vs. user-subsidies and levels of subsidy
  - Consideration of available providers
  - Service area and service span
- **Topic #3**  Considerations for Service Parameters (45 minutes)
  - Trip limits and initial fares
  - Advisory groups and stakeholders
  - Customer feedback and input in service design
  - Goals for alternative services
  - Wheelchair accessible vehicles, trip requests, and payment options

**Break (0:15 minutes)**
Module #3 ADA Requirements and Agency Needs (1:30 minutes)

- **Topic #1 ADA and Other Key Regulations (30 minutes)**
  - ADA criteria and applicability
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Title VI equity considerations
  - Drug and alcohol testing requirements

- **Topic #2 Insurance and Service Requirements (30 minutes)**
  - Determining adequate insurance levels
  - Determining risk tolerance for service
  - Working with legal and risk management departments

- **Topic #3 Financial Budgeting (30 minutes)**
  - Grant applicability
  - Local revenue sources available
  - Developing and estimating budget impacts

Lunch Break (45 minutes)

Module #4 Planning and Estimation (1:30 minutes)

- **Topic #1 Agency Goals and Objectives (15 minutes)**
  - Customer needs as agency goals
  - Setting achievable, measurable objectives
  - Determining data needs for planning and estimation

- **Topic #2 ASET Planning Calculator (45 minutes)**
  - Introduction to ASET
  - Purpose of the planning tool
  - Data needs
  - ASET planning outputs
  - Examples for different alternative service types
  - Usefulness in planning an alternative service

- **Topic #3 ASET Cost Savings Calculator (30 minutes)**
  - Purpose of cost savings tool
Data needs
○ ASET estimated cost savings outputs
○ Usefulness for service evaluation

Break (15 minutes)

Module #5 Agreement, Implementation, and Evaluation (1:30 minutes)

- Topic #1 Solicitations and Procurements (30 minutes)
  ○ Differences in RFPs and direct negotiation
  ○ RFP considerations
  ○ Single versus multiple providers
  ○ Negotiation of agreement parameters

- Topic #2 Agreements and Implementation (20 minutes)
  ○ Implementation planning
  ○ Soft launches, pilots, or scaling down
  ○ User information and marketing materials

- Topic #3 Evaluation (40 minutes)
  ○ Establishing evaluation processes and frequencies
  ○ Roles and responsibilities
  ○ Data needs and linkages
  ○ Monitoring and service adjustments
  ○ Customer and nonrider feedback
  ○ Connecting to goals and objectives

Wrap-Up and Final Q&A (15 minutes)