

**FY 2026**

**Application Instructions  
for  
Michigan Tribal Government Grant Program**

**Administered by  
Office of Passenger Transportation**



**Effective Oct. 1, 2025 - Sept. 30, 2026**

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## **I. Program Description**

The Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT's) Office of Passenger Transportation (OPT) provides the Michigan Tribal Government Grant Program (Tribal Program) to enhance current tribal transit programs and future transit initiatives to ensure everyone has transportation to meet basic mobility needs. The program provides Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funding to assist transportation services in rural tribal areas, providing for maximum feasible coordination with existing transportation providers.

The 49 U.S. Code § 5311 - Formula grants for rural areas includes (a) Definitions - as used in this section, the following definitions shall apply: (1) Recipient. The term "recipient" means a state or Native American tribe that receives a federal transit program grant directly from the federal government, (2) Subrecipient. The term "subrecipient" means a state or local governmental authority, a nonprofit organization, or an operator of public transportation or intercity bus service that receives federal transit program grant funds indirectly through a recipient.

If you need assistance with your application or developing a service plan, please contact your OPT project manager. OPT project manager information and listing by county can be found on pages 9 and 10. If your service area covers more than one county, you should use your tribal government's mailing address to determine the county.

If needed, this application instructions document may be made available in alternative formats such as braille, large print, audio tape, or compact disc.

### **Eligible Applicants**

Federally recognized tribal governments in Michigan. Although non-federally recognized tribal governments are also eligible, there is no state process in place to recognize or certify other tribal governments in Michigan.

### **Eligible Projects**

#### **A. Operating Assistance**

Federal funds provided to reimburse eligible operating expenses as defined by promulgated manuals such as the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Local Public Transit Revenue and Expense Manual (R&E Manual) which can be found at [Audit and Accounting Information](#) and the Code of Federal Regulations ([CFR](#)) 2 Part 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. Examples of eligible operating assistance expenses include salaries, fringe benefits, supplies, fuel, and insurance.

Tribes may provide the service directly or contract with an existing transit agency or private provider. The service must be open to the public. The FTA Section 5311 funds are eligible for up to 50 percent of net deficit. Net deficit is total operating expenses

minus farebox. If awarded, the service must be in operation for a minimum of one year. There is no obligation on either MDOT or the tribal government to continue the service beyond the first year.

Please see the "Local Match" section further down for local funding match requirements.

### **B. Capital Assistance**

Federal funding assistance for capital items include but are not limited to replacement and expansion buses, rehabilitation of existing buses, equipment for communication, maintenance and/or operational support, facility construction, renovations or repair, and mobility management.

Tribal governments can procure, own and operate the capital item or they may lease/provide the capital item to an existing transit agency or private provider. FTA Section 5311 capital funds may not exceed 80 percent of the total project cost. If awarded, the tribal government is obligated to use the capital item for rural transit service for the duration of its useful life. (See [Appendix A](#) for replacement schedule.) Projects under \$300 are not eligible for capital assistance.

Vehicle prices should be budgeted at anticipated market prices as indicated in [Appendix B](#).

Please see the "Local Match" section further down for local funding match requirements.

### **C. Planning Assistance**

FTA funds are available to develop a service plan. A service plan describes the type of service, such as fixed route or demand response, who will provide the service, the targeted population, time of day/days of the week the service should run, estimated ridership, a brief analysis of the existing service in the area and how the proposed service would coordinate and complement the existing service, a list of the capital needed to provide the proposed service, and an estimated operating budget.

The study may be conducted in-house or a consultant may be hired to develop the plan. FTA funds are eligible for up to 80 percent of the cost. There is no future obligation by the tribe or MDOT to implement the plan. If implementation is desirable, the tribal government may apply for capital and/or operating assistance in subsequent years.

Please see the "Local Match" section further down for local funding match requirements.

### **Application Alternatives**

A tribal government could apply for a planning project this year and apply for operating and/or capital assistance the next year. However, a professionally prepared plan is not needed to submit an application for operating and/or capital assistance. A tribal

government may apply for both capital and operating assistance. There is no disadvantage to applying for both.

### **Local Match**

All of these FTA assistance projects require a local match. Operating assistance requires a 50 percent match of the net deficit. Both capital and planning projects require a 20 percent match. Tribal governments will need to demonstrate their ability to match any requests. Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) funds may be available to use as match. For information regarding TTP funds, go to <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/programs-tribal>.

### **Federal Requirements**

Before federal funds can be awarded, the applicant must be in compliance with all applicable federal regulations. This includes but is not limited to:

- Procurement regulations.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including the ADA plan requirement.
- Civil Rights, including Title VI, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise requirements, including the Title VI plan requirement.
- Continuing control of federally funded assets.
- Drug and alcohol regulations.
- Reporting as required.
- Preventive Maintenance Plan.

Some of these federal requirements may include documents or plans that require MDOT's approval. If you are a federally recognized tribe and receive Section 5311 funds as a subrecipient from MDOT via the Michigan Tribal Government Grant Program application process, you are required to follow **all** the requirements as mentioned above and should contact your assigned MDOT OPT project manager to ensure that you are in compliance. If you receive Section 5311 funds directly from FTA as a recipient, you will need to contact the [FTA Region V Office](#) regarding federal requirements that apply to you.

## II. Application Requirements

### A. Required Application Forms

The following application forms can be found on OPT's website at [Public Transportation](#) under [Annual Application for Funding](#) or simply go to the [Required Application Forms for Section 5311 Tribal Application](#). The purpose of each form is provided below; however, please review the forms specifically for directions on how to fill them out. Complete the forms and return them to your MDOT OPT project manager at the address on page 9 of this application instructions document.

#### [Budget Data - Form 3157:](#)

This form is required for capital and operating projects only. The form lists the anticipated revenues and expenses associated with the service, as well as sources of revenue. The information provided in the form must be related to your transportation program and the budget must be balanced. The completed form will help MDOT determine if you have the financial capacity to implement the request(s).

#### [Certification of Local Match for Section 5311 Tribal Program Application – Form 3156:](#)

This form identifies and certifies that local match is guaranteed for all requests.

**Note:** Farebox revenue cannot be used as local match. Farebox revenue refers to Passenger Fare collected from transportation service.

#### [Project Summary – Tribal Program - Form 3152:](#)

This form requires specific information on the project(s). Provide letter(s) of support from local transit agencies and/or local coordination committees.

#### [Vehicle Inventory - Form 3035:](#)

This form is required for applicants applying for vehicle purchases and/or operating projects (if the applicant is planning to provide the transportation services themselves). List all vehicles to be used for public transportation. This form is required to be signed or stamped by the applicant's authorized signer of the applicant's contract with MDOT or the applicant's fleet manager.

### B. Required Forms for Federal Compliance

#### [ADA Complaint Information - Form 3175:](#)

Titles II and III of the ADA of 1990 provide that no entity shall discriminate against an individual with a disability in connection with the provision of transportation service. The law sets forth specific requirements for vehicle and facility accessibility and the provision of service. Provide the responses to the questions on the form and ensure that compliance reviews by either MDOT or FTA are shown on the submitted form.

### [Contract Clauses Certification - Form 3076:](#)

Contract clauses certify compliance with federal requirements. It is an annual certification process. While the clauses are referenced in the MDOT contracts, they are not attached to the MDOT contracts; instead, they can be accessible via a link in Form 3076. The form must be signed by an authorized signer of your contract and returned to your MDOT OPT project manager. Obtain and review the set of clauses via the link in Form 3076 or from OPT's website at [Public Transportation](#) under [Annual Application for Funding](#).

### [FTA Certification and Assurances - Form 3079:](#)

A list of the annual certifications and assurances is available by clicking on the link at the top of the form or through accessing the OPT's website at [Public Transportation](#) under [Annual Application for Funding](#), Application Resources. This list details the requirements of the FTA programs. Obtain and review the set of Certifications and Assurances for FTA Assistance, then complete and return the signed form to **your** MDOT OPT project manager.

### [Section 5333\(b\) Labor Warranty - Form 3093:](#)

The warranty is a certification required by federal transit law that protects transit employees who may be affected by federal transit funding. The law requires employee protections be in place and certified by the Department of Labor before federal transit funds may be released to a transit provider.

Completion of the form requires a list of the unions representing your employees, the third-party transportation provider that you hire to perform public transportation services and their union representation, and a list of other public transit providers and their union representation within your jurisdictional service area. You may need to use resources such as the Internet to locate other public transit providers and contact those providers for union information.

**Note:** Only include public transportation providers receiving FTA funds on the Section 5333(b) Labor Warranty form.

### [Title VI Information - Form 3067:](#)

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the federal law that protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

There are many forms of illegal discrimination based on race, color, or national origin that can limit the opportunity of minorities to gain equal access to services and programs. Among other things, in operating a federally assisted program, a recipient cannot, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, either directly or through contractual means:

- Deny program services, aids, or benefits;
- Provide a different service, aid, or benefit, or provide them in a manner

- different than they are provided to others; or
- Segregate or separately treat individuals in any matter related to the receipt of any service, aid, or benefit.

Organizations must ensure that the level and quality of service will be provided without regard to race, color or national origin and that there is not a disparate impact on groups protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations. This is especially important if the same service has been provided for several years and demographic changes may have occurred in the community or if service changes have been made.

Provide response to the questions in this form.

**Note:** For information regarding Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Environmental Justice (EJ), see FTA Circular [4702.1B](#), “Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients,” and FTA Circular [4703.1](#), “Environmental Justice Policy Guidance for Federal Transit Administration Recipients.”

For related information, refer to the FTA’s Title VI Guidance page at [www.transit.dot.gov/title6](http://www.transit.dot.gov/title6).

### **C. Other Requirements**

#### **Proof of Public Notice:**

The application(s) must be made available to the public for review and comment. The public notice must be published in a major newspaper of the applicant’s nearest service area and must invite comment. A minimum of 30 days response time must be provided relative to the actual date of publication.

The following information must be included in the public notice. For a sample of the public notice, click on this [link](#). Please reference the website for the published public notice requirements: [Michigan Legislature - Section 691.1051](#).

- Applicant name: Provide the name of the tribal government making the application to MDOT.
- Funding amount: Identify the total amount for each type of project (operating, capital, and/or planning) for which the applicant is submitting the application.
- Program name: Identify the program name as the Michigan Tribal Government Grant Program.
- Capital description: Identify specific capital items being requested.
- Public review and comment: Indicate where the application(s) can be reviewed or how a copy may be obtained. Include the period of time the document(s) will be available for review and how comments may be submitted to the applicant. If requested, a public hearing must be scheduled.



- Title VI Information: Indicate the applicant's compliance with the Title VI requirement.
- Provide a mailing address and an email address for public comments to be submitted to.

Send the affidavit provided by the newspaper or a copy of the **published** public notice and all comments received to the MDOT OPT project manager. It is recommended for agencies to send the proof of public notice to their OPT project manager for review before publication.

**Note:** While you may use a different format than the sample we provide, you must ensure that all seven elements as stated above are included in the public notice. If a project in a prior year's public notice was not funded and is being requested again in the current application, it should be included in the current public notice.

### III. Review/Selection Criteria

MDOT will review and evaluate all applications utilizing the following criteria:

- Vehicles and equipment must meet the replacement schedule in [Appendix A](#) by Oct. 1, 2026.
- Financial/local commitments made for match.
- The request helps meet the transportation needs in the service area.
- Completeness of the application, certifications, and forms.

Projects applied for through the tribal assistance program will be selected through a statewide competitive review process. If there are insufficient funds for all eligible projects that have met the above criteria, contracts will be awarded based on the following priorities:

- First priority is the continuation of existing service funded through a tribal transit program (operating or capital).
- Second priority will be to expand on current service or start new service (operating, capital or planning). The need for expansion service will be evaluated in terms of:
  - Level of existing public transit in the service area of the proposed new service.
  - Level of coordination with other transit providers in the service area of the proposed new service.

OPT will provide comments and recommendations to the applicant within 60 days after the application due date.

#### Project Managers

Send the completed application to the appropriate MDOT OPT project manager at the address below by **Feb. 1, 2025**. Applications received after this date may not be considered. (See list and the link for the map on next page for county assignments.)

OPT Project Managers	Mailing Address
Ryan Egres Fred Featherly Michael Valverde Sherry Vandevender	Mailcode: B425 MDOT Office of Passenger Transportation Van Wagoner Building 425 W. Ottawa P.O. Box 30050 Lansing, MI 48909
Deanna Donahoo	MDOT Detroit TSC 1060 W Fort St. Detroit, MI 48226
Tina Hawley Jacob Porath	MDOT Grand Region Office 1420 Front Ave NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Brian Kass	MDOT Houghton Garage 51750 Industrial Drive Calumet, MI 49913
Dave Moliterno	MDOT Gaylord North Region Office 1088 M-32 East Gaylord, MI 49735
Alex Simonetti	MDOT Cadillac TSC 7915 South US-131 Highway Cadillac, MI 49601

**Office of Passenger Transportation Project Managers by County**

[See map](#)

**Transportation Service Section Contact Information**

Valerie Shultz, West Unit Supervisor	517-242-8615
Tina Makarewicz, East Unit Supervisor	517-275-1424

Project Managers

Deanna Donahoo	517-275-1088
Ryan Egres	517-388-5718
Fred Featherly	517-281-7582
Tina Hawley	517-281-7876
Brian Kass	906-280-6574
Dave Moliterno	231-340-3225
Jacob Porath	517-614-7287
Alex Simonetti	517-643-0061
Michael Valverde	517-614-1276
Sherry Vandevender	517-930-3859

**Appendix A**

[Replacement Schedule for Capital Items \(Effective Oct. 1, 2025\)](#)

**Appendix B**

[Estimated Vehicle Prices \(Effective Oct. 1, 2025\)](#)

**Appendix C**

[Metropolitan Planning Organizations \(MPOs\) Contacts](#)