



LAS VEGAS TGA
PART A HIV/AIDS PROGRAM

CLARK | MOHAVE | NYE COUNTIES

**MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION RIDESHARE
PROGRAM GUIDANCE**

February 2022



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Las Vegas Ryan White Part A (RWPA) program commissioned the development of a medical transportation rideshare program guidance manual for distribution to RWPA subrecipients. Its purpose is to aid RWPA subrecipients in developing a successful rideshare program. The RWPA rideshare manual was based on the rideshare program implemented by the NARES/Trac-B Exchange. The RWPA rideshare manual highlights administrative and operational considerations and provides sample documents to initiate a successful rideshare program. The goals of the rideshare program are to improve health outcomes for eligible RWPA People Living with HIV (PLWH) and reduce medical transportation barriers.

RIDESHARE PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IF A RIDESHARE PROGRAM WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO YOUR AGENCY

Below are questions a RWPA funded subrecipient should consider when determining if a rideshare program would be beneficial to your agency's eligible RWPA clients.

1. Does your agency currently receive RWPA Medical Transportation funding?
2. Is there high utilization of medical transportation services among eligible RWPA clients?
3. Do eligible RWPA clients have limited options for medical transportation services?
4. Would eligible RWPA clients benefit from the rideshare program?

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions, a rideshare program could potentially benefit RWPA eligible clients. The following section will identify subrecipient administrative considerations for developing a rideshare program.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

There is more than one Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant rideshare partner option available in the Las Vegas area. An agency considering implementing a rideshare program should preview available partner options to determine which partner is the best fit. The LVHRC Trac-B Exchange chose to develop their rideshare program in collaboration with UBER Health, as it presented the best fit for their agency. Listed below are the recommended administrative steps for an agency to consider during the development phase of a rideshare program.

1. Research available rideshare partners
2. Request demonstrations from available rideshare partners
3. Internal discussions about rideshare partner options to obtain buy in from agency leadership
4. Involve legal counsel to review partners' contractual terms and conditions, terms of use and privacy notices to ensure coordination with agency's established policies and procedures
5. Using an agency email address, establish a business account with the preferred rideshare partner
6. Provide rideshare partner agency information including, but not limited to, tax ID number, state business license, non-profit status, and other relevant agency financial information
7. It is encouraged that the agency's contact for business accounts be the lead in establishing the partner rideshare account. The person establishing the account might need to submit proof of a valid driver's license and employment verification
8. Upon initial program setup, meet with the business account manager to obtain guidance on account establishment including best practices.
9. An agency credit card is needed to pay for charges accrued during the month. Monthly charges could be a significant expense, depending on how the program is utilized by clients
10. On a monthly basis, the agency should complete a calculation of potential program costs to ensure availability of adequate funding and ensuring agency credit card limits are not an issue for future charges
11. Agencies should contact set up checks and balances to ensure the rideshare charges are not rejected by the credit card company. In the past, Trac-B has had this happen every couple of

months. The charges may be identified by a credit card company as potential fraud due to the large amount of monthly charges.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

INITIAL PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT

Once your agency has decided to implement a Medical Transportation Rideshare program, there are many operational considerations to be decided before program implementation. This guidance manual can help your agency identify elements that need to be in place to ensure a successful program implementation.

STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

Program staff is key to the successful operations of the program. The program should have a lead and at minimum, one back up staff member.

Agency team members should be able to multi-task and problem solve to assist clients with problems such as ride cancelations or drivers not being able to locate a rider's address. In addition, the primary team member needs to be able to handle a large volume of calls and texts from clients. The team members should be able to monitor multiple rideshare appointments simultaneously and troubleshoot issues as they arise.

Team members should be technologically savvy to work in the dashboard as well as in the partner application. Most of the work is interfacing with technology including using cell phones and texting clients for information purposes and ride follow-up. There is continuous work in the partner's rideshare dashboard which is typically a web-based portal.

Team members should have focus on providing exceptional customer service. Clients have the potential of having a heightened concern if their rides get canceled while trying to be on time for an appointment. Team members need to be able to keep clients calm while assisting them with their ride.

New clients are provided a grace period if they don't call 24 hours in advance. The program lead should make the client aware of this policy.

Staff should have attention to detail and a high level of organization skills. The program lead should track client eligibility expirations through CAREWare. In addition, the program staff organizational and attention to detail skills are important to ensure charges are accurate and entered in CAREWare accurately. It is important to ensure appropriate reimbursement for quality assurance purposes relating to grant compliance.

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The primary program lead should be provided a designated cell phone for the rideshare operations. This phone should be the main designated number for clients utilizing the rideshare program to call.

The program should establish designated hours of operations. Due to the large amount of potential back and forth between a client or, it is encouraged that staff are readily available to assistance clients during the designated hours of operation.

There should be a client introduction to the rideshare program. A sample client introductory letter is included in **Appendix A**.

The program should develop a rideshare agreement that is signed by all clients enrolled in the program. This ensures all parties understand the program expectations and requirements. There is a sample rideshare agreement including in **Appendix B**.

The program should establish a designated maximum amount of funding available for each client per month. This amount should be coordinated with the agency RWPA medical transportation allocation. The maximum monthly charges for clients at Trac-B is \$200. It should be noted the rides are at a higher cost at certain times of the day, mainly around rush hour or during special events. Client maximum monthly expenses need to be tracked by program staff to ensure the threshold is not exceeded.

The program should determine if there is going to be a maximum distance of miles a client can request a rideshare. The program team needs to ensure clients are making appointments at locations with the least amount of distance to travel. The program team should recommend alternative transportation resources, when available, such as bus passes or paratransit due to payor of last resort requirements.

The preferred ride selection is the standard car.

There is an option for a wheelchair accessible vehicle. However, it has shown to be a significant challenge to obtain these vehicles. In addition, drivers do not assist clients getting into a car.

CLIENT CONSIDERATIONS

Rideshare appointments can be scheduled for eligible medical appointments. This is defined as any appointment that a client is going to receive services from a licensed service provider.

The rideshare should be booked 24 hours in advance of the appointment. It was found that when the scheduling time was left open, at times, the call volume was not manageable. This limits the numbers of calls coming in while managing the daily scheduled rideshares. This timeframe has proven to be manageable based on 260 clients, with one full time team member supporting the program.

Rideshare drivers are required to take clients to the scheduled destination. The locations cannot be changed without going back to the scheduling agency.

Clients are responsible for any of their own items that are lost while using the rideshare program. Clients are encouraged to keep track of their personal items while using the rideshare program. Should additional trips be needed to return items, the client is responsible for any additional costs incurred. In addition, clients are responsible for any costs should the rideshare car need any special cleaning.

A client is permitted to take a caregiver with them to an appointment. Other riders are highly discouraged to ride with a client.

Service animals are permitted without making it a pet friendly ride. Please caution this is only for service pets not emotional support animals. It is not permitted to use the rideshare to take the client's animal to the veterinarian's office.

A client cannot request a rideshare as a substitute for an ambulance. Clients should call 9-1-1 in the event of a medical emergency.

A client can be transported to certain surgeries if it meets the required definition, however, it should be noted that clients are not usually allowed to be discharged using the rideshare program unless another person is with them. The rideshare driver does not meet this requirement.

A client can report an incident regarding a driver to the rideshare agency. This is required to be coordinated with the agency. In addition, the rideshare driver can report a client if the program's terms and conditions are not followed. While this has not occurred many times, it is important that a policy is established for the issue. A client may be unenrolled in the program for violating the rideshare terms and conditions. In this case, the agency will send a letter to the client with notification that this service is no longer available. There is a sample letter included in **Appendix C**. While this is not a frequent occurrence, the expectation should be made clear to all clients. At that time, the client can continue to use other eligible transportation resources.

SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Clients must have a completed and current Ryan White eligibility on file in CAREWare. In addition, the client must have a completed program referral signed by the client or the case manager if deemed allowable by the Ryan White Part A program.

Once the client has these two items completed, the client is eligible to access the program.

A client is encouraged to call the program to schedule their first rideshare appointment. This initial encounter explains the process and serves as a personal introduction to the team lead. Additionally, the first appointment allows for program expectations to be discussed with each client and answer any questions the client might have pertaining to the program. The initial encounter allows for a successful program implementation.

SETTING UP THE 1ST APPOINTMENT

The UBER Health dashboard has a two-step privacy verification to meet HIPAA compliance standards. The information is entered into the web-based system and is displayed in the dashboard's format. The cell phone dedicated to the program is used to communicate with clients.

Following are the steps to follow when setting up the client's first appointment.

Verify if the client has a cell phone. If so, follow the steps below:

Client must provide the following information: first and last name, phone number, address of pick up, address of drop off and verification of the appointment date and time.

After obtaining the needed information to input into the dashboard, the staff member walks the client through a series of three text messages while on the phone. The first two texts are informational purposes for the client. There is no confirmation or text back confirming receipt required. The third text requires a response to activate the ride the following day. The three text messages pertain to the following:

1. These are UBER terms and conditions. There is a link provided and the link is reviewed verbally by the NARES/Trac B team member to include information such as not to be abusive to driver and wearing a seat belt.
2. Masking requirement due to COVID (this will change based on local and CDC guidelines).

3. How the client activates the ride before going to the appointment. Reply 1 when ready to activate the rideshare.

After the three text messages have been received by the client, the rideshare is considered scheduled. The activation text message displays the date the rideshare is scheduled and the pickup address. The client replies 1 when ready for pick up. It is encouraged for each client to redeem the ride share an hour before their appointment. For example, for a 10:00 a.m. appointment, the client should reply 1 at 9:00 a.m. to ensure timely arrival at the appointment. Once the reply is complete, the client receives a text with the driver's name, car type, license plate number and how many minutes until the rideshare arrives at the pickup location. The following text is that the driver is arriving. The same process is repeated for the ride share on the return from the appointment.

AFTER INITIAL RIDESHARE

When the client has used the rideshare program and is familiar with the process, the program allows the client to request appointments via text messages. The client can request a rideshare via text 24-hours in advance of the appointment. It is highly encouraged for clients to utilize the text messages to schedule ongoing appointments. This has proven to be a significant time saver for program staff as well as clients. Clients not comfortable with this process can always call the agency to schedule a rideshare.

CLIENT WITHOUT A CELL PHONE

When a client does not have a cell phone, the client can still access the rideshare program. However, the client needs access to a landline, friend, family members or doctor's office phone to activate the ride to and from their scheduled appointment. This process maybe harder without a cell phone but not impossible. The steps are as follows:

Client identifies they do not have a cell phone but want to schedule a rideshare.

The client calls the program lead 24-hours in advance of the appointment.

Client provides the following information: first and last name, phone number, address of pick up, address of drop off and appointment date and time.

The program lead schedules the rideshare appointment using the dashboard. The rideshare appointments are entered into the system and the activation occurs at a later time.

The day of appointment the client calls the program to let them know they are ready to be picked up.

The ride is activated by the staff member.

The program lead communicates to the client the driver is in route. The program lead provides the client the driver's name and car information and tells them to wait outside, providing the arrival time. This is communicated while the client is on the phone with the program lead.

The program lead monitors the rideshare to ensure the client is picked up or if the ride needs to be rescheduled. The client is instructed to call the program lead after 10 minutes past the scheduled arrival time if the ride has not arrived.

The same process is used on the return appointment. The client calls the program lead when ready to be picked up. The program lead activates the rideshare and monitors the driver to ensure the client is picked up.

RIDESHARE WITH RAPID START

For a Rapid stART client, the program lead can initiate a rideshare appointment at any time during the designated business hours. The provider contacts the rideshare program to immediately schedule the rideshare for the client to an additional site as needed. CAREWare includes a separate delineation when entering a Rapid stART client for documentation purposes. The program leads will coordinate with the client's case manager to ensure eligibility is completed for future rideshare services.

The program lead works with the medical provider to get the rideshare scheduled immediately for the client to get labs completed and back to a doctor's appointment for medications.

CAREWARE CONSIDERATIONS

The client referral is sent through CAREWare. This is required to be on file for a client to use the rideshare program along with the eligibility. The program lead checks CAREWare for the referral agreement and contacts the case manager if documentation is needed.

The dashboard does a breakdown with cost. The program lead inputs all rideshares into CAREWare once a week and adds all the rides totals. The rideshares to and from the appointments are combined for simplicity in CAREWare. There is a dropdown to select where the exact rideshare amount is added into CAREWare. The information is double checked to ensure no rides are missed.

This data is double checked using an "all services" report in CAREWare to ensure costs are accurate for each client. The rideshare totals are tracked for each client monthly to ensure the client does not exceed the design maximum program amount of two hundred dollars a month.

When a client misses a ride, this charge needs to be accounted for in CAREWare so there is a drop-down option for the missed ride and the amount can be put into CAREWare. A program can implement a warning or a limit to the number of missed rides. The program leads contact clients when they notice a client has missed more than one ride as to try and address the issue. The missed ride charges are counted toward the monthly maximum allotment of funding per client. Please note a drivers can state the client missed a rideshare, but it may be untrue. Therefore, the program lead only contacts a client after more than one missed ride to discuss the circumstance. There should be a quality assurance process built into the system by leadership to ensure charges are accurate.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Should large scale events be occurring in town, expect a significant reduction in drivers as well as the need to rebook clients due to clients being canceled. It is important for the time frame of service be when a program lead is available due to ride cancellations.

Clients cannot rate drivers or tip. Each rideshare program should implement a policy on rating and troubleshooting issues such as lost items. In addition, there should be a policy on tipping developed by each program.

If a client is only a Ryan White Part B client, the case manager for the client needs to ensure Ryan White Part A eligibility is complete as well as the referral.

The program lead needs to be able to communicate with community partners to get clients the services. The program lead needs to have attention to detail.

The program should develop a policy for client removal of the program as well as consideration if a client could be reinstated in the future.

The two biggest complaints are the restricted hours as well as the rideshares being canceled by the drivers. It is important to acknowledge that the rideshare drivers are private contractors.

Rideshares booked early in the morning or around rush hour times are more expensive. Clients that book during the day can maximize the two-hundred-dollars monthly allocation by scheduling mid-day appointments.

To remain compliant with the Las Vegas TGA's Medical Transportation Service Standard, the rideshare partner should have a section to enter internal notes for each client. This will allow the program lead to enter the type of visit into the internal notes for program compliance.

APPENDIX 1

SAMPLE RIDESHARE PROGRAM - LETTER

(Agency Name) is pleased to announce that we have been able to continue the rideshare (UBER) program that can be used by Ryan White Part A eligible clients for transportation to and from their home to medical appointments. For clients to use rideshare, they must sign up with their case manager and agree to program rules as stated on the attached rideshare agreement. Please have clients complete and sign the rideshare agreement and upload it to CAREWare along with a referral for Medical Transportation so that we can have a starting address for each client, as well as know that they are RWPA eligible. Please note this program is not to replace bus passes. Clients should only be referred if they are unable to use other transportation means.

The rideshare hours are Monday thru Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, closed all weekends and federal and state holidays. We ask that clients request rides 24 hours in advance; the day before during business hours. Monday rides should be requested Friday as we are closed on weekends. This helps ensure each client can access rides in time for their appointment. We also recommend the client's appointments start and end during business hours, this is due to issues that sometimes arise with using rideshare services. At times the client might miss a ride, the driver may not show up, or there may not be any drivers in the area, if that occurs the client will need to contact us to be able to assist with the issues. If the client's appointment/ride is before or after business hours and any of the above issues occur, there will not be anyone to assist the client. If the client insists on booking appointments before or after hours it is highly recommended, they have another form of transportation as a backup, i.e., bus pass or friend/family.

Client rides will begin and end at the client's home. Clients cannot ask the driver to take them to another location or ask us to pick them up from a location (unless it is a Ryan White provider) or unless they receive prior permission from someone at **(Agency Name)**.

The clients are allotted \$200 per month in rides. We will update the client throughout the month on the amount used once it gets close to the allotted amount. This amount resets on the 1st of each month. Exceptions to this rule can be made in certain circumstances, but we ask clients to also look into/utilize other transportation programs too, i.e., para transit or contacting their health insurance to see what transportation services may be available to them.

Clients that require assistance from a caretaker or have a service animal are also welcomed to use the rideshare service. Clients may have one caretaker ride with them. Also, because these are private vehicles, all animals riding must be service animals; unfortunately, this does not cover emotional support/therapy animals. Wheelchair assisted vehicles are not plentiful so clients may need to wait longer to get a ride.

Clients can call or text to book their transportation. Once the ride has been booked the client will receive a text message from Uber, they will use that text message the day of their appointment to activate their ride. Once activated clients will be called or texted directly by their UBER driver prior to pick-up. If clients do not have a cell phone, this process will be more difficult but not impossible.

Most importantly, clients will need to speak with me by phone prior to their first ride.

INSERT NAME

Phone:

Email:

APPENDIX 2

RWPA RIDESHARE AGREEMENT

This agreement describes the process, procedure and rules that must be followed for Ryan White Part A (RWPA) eligible clients to participate in the Agency Name rideshare (Insert selected Ride) program for transportation to and from Ryan White Service appointments. By signing below, you agree to all the rules listed in this agreement.

Client ID: (For office use)
First Name:
Last name:
Birthdate: (MM/DD/YYYY)
Home address:

The client agrees to the following procedure for requesting rideshare:

Client must request the rideshare at least 24 hours prior to the appointment via phone call or text message. Clients that have last minute appointments must call to request their appointment. Rideshares will only be arranged Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm. If this is your first time using the rideshare program, please call to schedule your first ride. Rideshare is only for RWPA eligible clients. If eligibility is lost, you will not be able to request rides. Also, clients may only bring 1 person with them if necessary due to the number of people that can fit in a car. Clients may only use rideshare to travel from your home to an eligible appointment (medical, dental, vision, behavioral health including counseling) and returned to their home. Clients may not request additional stops or direct the driver to drop them off elsewhere. Clients are allotted \$200 per month in rides, this resets on the 1st of each month. Clients must follow the UBER and Lyft rules including rules regarding service animals. Accessible vehicles cannot be guaranteed. Clients are responsible for any lost or forgotten items; any fee for return of item is the client's responsibility. Violation of any of these policies can have you removed from eligibility in the rideshare program.

Date signed:
Client Name:
Signature:
Agency referring:

APPENDIX 3

SAMPLE PROGRAM RELEASE LETTER

(Date)

AGENCY Rideshare Program
617556 Las Vegas Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89146

Dear (Client's Name),

I regret to inform you that due to failure to follow policies and act in a manner consistent with the best interests of the Agency Program, you are being removed from the program indefinitely. This is effective as of (Date).

This program requires cooperation and mutual respect. Based on your actions, these have been violated.

Recent actions have demonstrated an unwillingness to follow our programs (example: hours of operation, as well as an unwillingness to work cooperatively with us, and a failure to recognize staff authority and the role and responsibility they have for managing the Agency Rideshare Program. You have also indicated an unwillingness to follow the suggestions of staff in relation to helping you navigate our program effectively and efficiently.

Though you are unable to continue the use of the Agency Rideshare program, you may receive bus passes from our program. If you would like to receive more information about how the bus pass program works, please feel free to call 702-861-1234 for more information.

Attached are also recommendations on other programs and agencies that provide transportation services. We encourage you to reach out to them. If you need any assistance navigating these options, we highly recommend reaching out to your Case Manager for help.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE SCRIPT

The program lead answers phone:

Thank you for calling the _____ Rideshare program. I want to start off by reviewing some important information with you about our program. This Ryan White Part A Medical Transportation resource is available to eligible clients to get to and from medical appointments. A good rule of thumb if you ever have a question about what types of appointments you can use the service for is any appointment that the service provider has a license so doctors, dentists, counselors etc. It is going to be important to keep your eligibility current so you can utilize this service. I can help remind you as well. You must have a signed rideshare agreement on file with us that your case manager can coordinate for you. Please note this program is not to replace bus passes. All other transportation means need to be utilized before the rideshare program.

Rideshares need to be scheduled 24 hours in advance the day before during business hours. The times to schedule are Monday thru Friday between 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. We are closed on weekends and federal and state holidays. Monday rides should be requested Friday as we are closed on weekends. The reason we ask for all appointments to be scheduled during business hours is to ensure we are available to support you in case anything goes wrong with a scheduled rideshare like a driver canceling the ride. We do not want you to be stranded anywhere without a ride. If this does happen, I immediately schedule you another ride and communicate the new driver's information to you. I encourage you to activate your ride share at least 1 hour in advance of your appointment to allow enough time.

The rideshare takes you to and from your appointment with the address you provide me. You cannot change the address once I schedule the rideshare. You are allowed a maximum of \$200 dollars a month for the program. You cannot exceed this amount. However, the amount resets the 1st of every month.

Should you need a caretaker to accompany you to an appointment this is permitted. Service animals are allowed but emotional support animals are not allowed. Wheelchair assisted vehicles are not plentiful so clients may need to wait longer to get a ride.

I encourage you, now that we have reviewed the process, to send a text with the needed information whenever you need to schedule a rideshare.

Thank you for using our program. Let me know if you have any further questions.

APPENDIX 5

SAMPLE PROGRAM LOGO

As part of the Medical Transportation Ride Share Guidance, Collaborative Research developed sample logos for Las Vegas Transition Grant Area (TGA) agencies to utilize for rideshare programming. Please contact the Clark County Social Service, Office of HIV for the samples.

LOGO #1



LOGO #2



LOGO #3



LOGO #4



LOGO #5

