

Monmouth County Division of Transportation

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Senior Citizen and Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

Grant Application

County of Monmouth

- 1) The Monmouth County Division of Transportation offers a demand response service which operates 7:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. We are a curb to curb service with fully handicapped accessible vehicles. Our drivers are trained using the PASS system, in-house driver safety classes and client sensitivity courses, and refresher training for wheelchair tie downs are done on a regular basis. Background checks are performed on all drivers and they are subject to random drug testing on a monthly basis. We provide service to seniors (60 years of age and over) and to our disabled residents whose disability is either temporary or permanent.
- 2) The Division provides transportation services to doctor and medical appointments, life sustaining treatments such as dialysis, chemotherapy and radiation, trips to senior centers, grocery shopping, food pantries, barber shops, hair and nail salons, and other general shopping and socialization trips. We also provide services to the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation and the Monmouth County Division of Workforce Development. The Division also provides service to our Veterans, with twice a month transportation offered to the various Veterans Clinics and Hospitals in Brick, East Orange, and Lyons. We also offer service to the Tinton Falls Veterans Clinic by request.

The needs of each and everyone of our clients is important to us and we realize that not every client's situation is the same. We do our best to adjust and provide the best possible service to each client. Our services are available on a first come, first service basis. We will take requests up until the day of requested service; however, we strongly recommend that trips are scheduled as far in advance as possible as we do tend to book up about a week out. If we are unable to accommodate a request, we will put the client on a wait list and notify them if a cancellation occurs. We do charge a fare for our services and it must be paid directly by the client at the time of service unless other arrangements have been made.

- 3) Monmouth County operates all of these services in-house with a fleet of over 22 ADA accessible vehicles. We are currently in the process of adding to our fleet and are actively looking for new vendors. We currently employ 14 full time Motor Vehicle Operators, which is up from last year, and we are constantly and aggressively recruiting new drivers for our various openings. There is a nationwide shortage of CDL drivers which has affected recruitment. The County has taken multiple steps to address this issue by purchasing multiple

smaller vehicles that do not require CDLs and by offering to send new recruits through the CDL school and licensing process in exchange for a two-year commitment to the County.

Our local CAC committee is a mixture of representatives of both the senior and disabled population, with representatives from CVR, various senior centers, county government and our clients.

For the 2025 we are making an application to NJ Transit in the amount of \$2,588,135.00 for SCDRTAP funding and \$306,385.00 from the FY2025 5311 Grant which will have a County match of \$153,192.50.

- 4) The Division of Transportation has two main goals for 2025. The first is to continue to expand by hiring new drivers and purchasing new buses. We plan to continue actively recruiting for both CDL and non-CDL drivers through advertising, recruitment at public events, and by holding job fairs. While a CDL is preferred, we will continue to take advantage of the County's education policy and recruit non-CDL drivers whom we can train internally. With 14 current drivers our goal for 2025 is to reach 20 full time drivers. In addition to drivers, we plan to add several buses to our fleet in 2025. With over 22 vehicles currently in our fleet, our goal for 2025 is to add 4-5 more handicap assessable buses, bringing our total vehicles to over 25.

By adding more drivers and vehicles we will be able to begin accomplishing our second major goal of 2025, which is to expand our services. While we currently take trip requests up to the day of a ride, due to demand we are usually booked over a week out. By adding more drivers and buses we will be able to cut that down and hopefully offer more of an on-demand service. In 2024 the Division made strides forward in many areas, including increasing the number of rides on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. In July of 2024 we saw an increase of over 670 rides compared to July of 2023. Along the way we have learned that besides keeping up with this demand, our clients would benefit greatly from expanded hours, specifically expanding our days and adding weekend availability. Currently we close at 4:00 P.M., which means that depending on the location our last pick up time is 3:00 P.M., something that is not always convenient for our riders. By simply expanding our hours until 5:00 P.M. or 6:00 P.M., adding only an hour or two a day, we could significantly impact the quality of life for many of our clients. In addition, offering limited weekend service would allow our clients greater access and participation in our communities which would benefit the County overall.

The Monmouth County Division of Transportation plays a vital role in the community. Providing transportation to those who might not otherwise have the ability to get to medical appointments, or the grocery store, or be able to participate as an active member of the community. We look forward to continuing to move forward in 2025, offering expanded and enhanced services to our riders by improving our operations so that we are as efficient and effective as we can be for the residents of Monmouth County.