

RCW 47.66.140 Transit support grant program. (1) The department shall establish a transit support grant program for the purpose of providing financial support to transit agencies for operating and capital expenses only. Public transit agencies must maintain or increase their local sales tax authority on or after January 1, 2022, and may not delay or suspend the collection of voter-approved sales taxes that were approved on or before January 1, 2022, in order to qualify for the grants.

(a) Grants for transit agencies must be prorated based on the amount expended for operations in the most recently published report of "Summary of Public Transportation" published by the department.

(b) No transit agency may receive more than 35 percent of these distributions.

(c) Fuel type may not be a factor in the grant selection process.

(2) To be eligible to receive a grant, the transit agency must have adopted, at a minimum, a zero-fare policy that allows passengers 18 years of age and younger to ride free of charge on all modes provided by the agency. Transit agencies must submit documentation of a zero-fare policy for 18 years of age and under by October 1, 2022, to be eligible for the 2023-2025 biennium. Transit agencies that submit such fare policy documentation following the October 1, 2022, deadline shall become eligible for the next biennial distribution. To the extent practicable, transit agencies shall align implementation of youth zero-fare policies with equity and environmental justice principles consistent with recommendations from the environmental justice council, and ensure low-barrier accessibility of the program to all youth.

(3) The department shall, for the purposes of the "Summary of Public Transportation" report, require grantees to report the number of trips that were taken under this program.

(4) For the purposes of this section, "transit agency" or "agency" means a city transit system under RCW 35.58.2721 or chapter 35.95A RCW, a county public transportation authority under chapter 36.57 RCW, a metropolitan municipal corporation transit system under chapter 36.56 RCW, a public transportation benefit area under chapter 36.57A RCW, an unincorporated transportation benefit area under RCW 36.57.100, or any special purpose district formed to operate a public transportation system. [2023 c 431 s 12; 2022 c 182 s 422.]

Intent—2023 c 431: See note following RCW 46.17.015.

Intent—Effective date—2022 c 182: See notes following RCW 70A.65.240.