

Bulletin #2021-26

MUNICIPAL RELATIONS

Important Notice to all Chief Administrative Officers and Elected Officials

2021 Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program Top-up Grant – Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 2020 Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program Top-up Grant?

In recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals, municipalities, and non-profit organizations, the Government of Manitoba provided a one time grant of \$10.0K to each municipally sponsored handi-transit service funded by the Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program (MDTP).

The top-up grants are intended to assist handi-transit services in covering COVID-19 related operating costs, particularly to support the transportation of seniors and others with mobility issues to and from COVID-19 vaccination sites.

What can the top-up grant be used for?

The grant is to be used to:

- Offset the cost of drivers and use of handi-transit vehicles to and from vaccination appointments outside the home community.
- Waive/offset the per kilometre charge for providing transportation services to clients to and from COVID-19 vaccination appointments outside their home community. Handi-transit services are allowed to charge their usual flat fare to clients, but are required to waive the per kilometre charge for these trips.
- Offset the cost of PPE for drivers and passengers, and vehicle sanitization costs.

Please note that the MDTP top up grant cannot be used to waive the usual flat fee charged by handi-transit services. However, municipalities have the flexibility to provide incremental support under their unconditional Municipal Operating grant to their handi-transit services should they wish to offer lower cost rides to vaccine sites.

Can municipalities hold onto the top-up grant and distribute it as needed to the handi-transit services?

Municipalities have the flexibility to decide on how best to administer the MDTP top up grant based on how the existing handi-transit service is managed (i.e. municipalities are free to provide the full \$10K directly or manage the overall funding and distribute the amount as needed to the service provider). However, the funding must be used according to aforementioned parameters.

Can the remaining funds (if any) be placed into a reserve fund?

If the full \$10K is not flowed directly to the service-provider upfront, any remaining funds can be placed in reserve. However, the funds are to be held for ongoing/future use to offset COVID-19 related expenses as per above parameters.

What are the reporting requirements for the top-up grant?

MDTP funding recipients (handi-transit services) will be required to report on COVID-19 pandemic related financial impacts on their operations, and key outcomes as a result of the top-up grant as part of their 2021/22 year-end reporting requirements. This information will be reflected in the MDTP reporting package sent to municipalities annually.

What current health orders apply to handi-transit services?

Order 8 of the [General COVID-19 Prevention Order](#) that deals with transportation states that municipal public transportation services, taxis, limousines and other vehicles for hire may operate if measures have been implemented to ensure that all passengers are able to maintain a reasonable separation from other persons in the vehicle.

As a result, handi-transit providers are currently exempt from closure but must adhere to the distance requirements between people, the sanitization of vehicles and equipment between trips, and the use of PPE.