

AFSCME Facts

New COVID-19 Funding for Transportation January 14, 2021

The lame duck legislative deal passed by Congress, known as the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA), 2021, includes additional federal financial support for transportation as part of the nation's COVID-19 response. This fact sheet describes this new funding.

What does the CAA do for transportation workers?

The CAA provides \$45 billion in supplemental funding to airlines, airports, transit agencies, state DOTs and other transportation providers. Roughly one third of the funds (\$15 billion) are reserved for airlines to support payrolls. The general purpose is to provide immediate assistance to help cover revenue losses and expenses associated with the pandemic. In most cases, these funds can be used directly to cover payroll for employees and contractors.

How much relief is available for transit providers?

The act provides \$14 billion total in transit aid, with \$13.3 billion reserved for urban areas and about \$700 million reserved for rural areas.

Table 1 — Transit Funding by Urbanized Area

Urbanized Area	Appropriation	Urbanized Area	Appropriation
Atlanta, GA	\$33,524,951	Milwaukee, WI	\$60,271,997
Austin, TX	\$67,226,289	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	\$185,891,087
Baltimore, MD	\$79,823,120	New York-Newark, NY-NJ-CT	\$5,579,991,976
Boston, MA-NH-RI	\$309,545,280	Orlando, FL	\$11,020,307
Charlotte, NC-SC	\$52,345,661	Philadelphia, PA-NJ-DE-MD	\$323,700,300
Chicago, IL-IN	\$486,197,475	Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	\$85,260,499
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	\$42,151,887	Pittsburgh, PA	\$164,497,941
Cleveland, OH	\$74,285,540	Portland, OR-WA	\$217,513,937
Columbus, OH	\$55,032,807	Sacramento, CA	\$42,862,700
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	\$128,511,228	Salt Lake City-West Valley City, UT	\$30,597,668
Denver-Aurora, CO	\$190,905,243	San Antonio, TX	\$61,804,487
Detroit, MI	\$42,605,294	San Francisco-Oakland, CA	\$822,676,366
Houston, TX	\$153,492,780	San Jose, CA	\$144,159,107
Indianapolis, IN	\$21,135,976	San Juan, PR	\$29,105,286
Jacksonville, FL	\$33,706,928	Seattle, WA	\$565,953,787
Kansas City, MO-KS	\$35,638,773	St. Louis, MO-IL	\$68,310,769
Las Vegas-Henderson, NV	\$59,810,647	Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	\$30,757,288
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	\$954,900,781	Virginia Beach, VA	\$10,063,388
Memphis, TN-MS-AR	\$6,643,462	Washington, DC-VA-MD	\$830,710,573
TOTAL			\$12,307,702,880

Funding for urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 to under 200,000 is disbursed by state governors or a governor’s designee. For urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 or greater, funds are apportioned and flow directly to a designated recipient selected locally to apply for and receive federal funds. In most cases, this would be the largest transit provider in the region. Table 1 breaks down the appropriations by urbanized area, which could include a metro region spanning multiple states.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is encouraging CAA funding to be used for operational costs in urbanized areas, a departure from typical practice. Funds can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including payroll.

How much money is available for rural transit providers, and how do I find out if my employer is eligible for CAA funding?

Table 2 — Transit Funding for Rural Providers

STATE	APPORTIONMENT
Alaska	\$55,709,437
California	\$74,423,500
Colorado	\$78,165,029
Delaware	\$21,521,957
Florida	\$32,242,023
Guam	\$1,978,866
Hawaii	\$20,305,252
Illinois	\$21,175,341
Iowa	\$16,000,554
Kentucky	\$11,647,464
Maine	\$22,904,653
Maryland	\$9,105,457
Massachusetts	\$7,261,894
Michigan	\$55,426,193
Minnesota	\$14,696,885
New York	\$6,493,500
Oklahoma	\$387,479
Oregon	\$2,455,100
Rhode Island	\$578,520
Utah	\$4,964,065
Vermont	\$26,725,119
Washington	\$164,001,414
TOTAL	\$648,169,702

Amounts vary by state, as outlined in Table 2. Rural transit grants can be used for capital, planning or operating assistance to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000. Eligible recipients include states and federally recognized Indian Tribes. Subrecipients could include local government authorities, nonprofit organizations and operators of public transportation or intercity buses. Rural transit providers should contact their state DOT to inquire about funding availability.

What other transit aid is available?

About \$50 million is dedicated to formula funding to states to assist private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities where the transportation service provided is unavailable or insufficient. Paratransit operators are likely eligible, but specialized COVID relief funds are limited. Employers should contact state DOT leadership to request funds.

How much CAA funding is available for highways, and are there eligibility restrictions?

Approximately \$9.8 billion can be used for highway spending and is broadly available for operations such as preventative and routine maintenance, personnel including employee salaries and contractor salaries, debt service and coverage for other revenue losses. State DOTs will receive the funds and disburse them to sub-recipients as applicable.

My members work for a country road authority, or a state DOT maintenance crew. How do we know how much highway aid is available for my state or county?

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is required to submit detailed allocations by state within 30 days of passage, which means detailed allotments should be available by the end of January. Local government employers should contact state DOT leadership to determine funding availability.

Approximately 14% of total highway funds are reserved only to localities 200,000 or more in population. In some cases, state funds can also be transferred to public tolling and ferry agencies.

What relief is available to US airports, and how will it be distributed?

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is responsible for distributing \$2 billion through the Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program (ACRGP). Primary commercial service airports — defined as airports with more than 10,000 passenger boardings annually — will share \$1.75 billion according to the formula established by the Airport Improvement Program. In addition, airport parking, in-terminal concessions and car rental facilities are eligible for an additional \$200 million to provide relief from rent and minimum annual guarantees. The FAA will release detailed allocation amounts under each formula when they are finalized in early February.

What about small commercial airports and general aviation airports?

Forty-five million is reserved for non-primary and commercial aviation airports, with \$5 million of that reserved for those airports participating in the FAA Contract Program.

Is any other funding available?

Approximately \$1 billion is designated for Amtrak: \$655 million for the Northeast Corridor and \$345 million for the rest of the Amtrak network. In addition, \$2 billion is reserved for the intercity motorcoach, school bus and ferry industries. Details on allotments and eligibility have not yet been released.