

## Fare and Schedule Changes

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Changes in fares, service hours or schedules for 5311/85.20 grantees must be approved by a WisDOT Program Manager before they are enacted or brought before a governing body of the grantee.

If a third-party vendor operates the service, changes to the transit system schedule must be consistent with the service level advertised in the original RFP used to hire the vendor. If they are consistent, then small increases or decreases may (or may not) be approved by WisDOT. Repeated increases or decreases over the course of a 5-year agreement may be denied to maintain that consistency. Any mid-year changes in service provided by a third-party vendor must be reflected in a written amendment to the annual contract between the local public body and the vendor.

The general public must also be notified via a public meeting before implementation of fare changes or significant service increases or decreases. Public input can be gained through a City Council or other open, regularly-held meeting or at a separate public meeting solely for transit.

In addition, at least one public notice must be published in local newspaper(s) 21-30 days before the meeting date. It must list the fare/schedule change as a topic or agenda item. All council/public comments and responses occurring during the meeting must be fully documented, with a copy of those comments, meeting notes, and other pertinent information to be uploaded into the Resources section of the BlackCat system (with file names making their contents obvious).

WisDOT has planning grants available for grantees looking to evaluate changes to their operations. Contact the WisDOT Section 5304 Program Manager for more information. WisDOT does not, however, have additional operating assistance grants available to subsidize new service added after the funding distribution has been finalized for the current year.

Changes in agency rates - the rate charged to a human/social service organization for rides instead of fares to individuals - are not subject to the public notice review. WisDOT suggests that agency rates be set lower than or equal to the average expense per passenger; this allows the human service organization to receive a lower transportation expense than going through a private provider while the transit system can cover its costs for that rider.