ExploreVR
INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, UMASS BOSTON

RURAL YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP
QUICK GUIDE

HOW TO START DEVELOPING A TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

This **Rural Youth Apprenticeship Quick Guide** is a product of the Rural Youth Apprenticeship Toolkit, an online collection on tools and resources developed for vocational rehabilitation staff interested in creating new or adapting existing apprenticeship programs for youth with disabilities in the rural communities they serve. The quick guides present strategies to address apprenticeship program development challenges and enhance inclusion and accessibility for youth with disabilities in rural areas.

Introduction

Transportation in rural areas can be a challenge. People in rural areas often need cars because they have to travel long distances to get to where they're going. People in rural areas also do not often have public transportation available to them. For many rural people with disabilities, lack of transportation options makes it challenging to get to the doctor, get and keep a job, and participate in community life. Rural apprenticeship programs should consider including a transportation strategy in their program planning. Transportation planning can help people with disabilities get to their apprenticeship sites on time. Making sure workers can reliably show up for their shifts is best for everyone! Since every rural area and business is unique, a good place to start is with our Rural Transportation Planning Checklist. This checklist will help you define your goals, find available resources, and explore options to decide the best fit for your situation.

1. Set specific goals:

a. What do you want to accomplish? Define your outcomes.
b. What is the geographic area for your transportation efforts?
c. What is the travel demand in your area? In other words, where do people need to go and how many people need transportation? How does this travel demand shift depending on days of the week, time of year, and other factors?
d. Review the safety data to figure out how people can safely travel.

2. Figure out available resources and what services people need:

a. Is there public transportation in your area?
b. Are there existing transportation partnerships in your area?
c. Are there any existing rideshare programs in your area, like paratransit or Uber/Lyft?
d. Are there Mobility on Demand (MOD) programs or initiatives in your area?
e. Do people have access to the technology they need to access public transportation?

3. Figure out who to talk to get answers, and how best to talk with them:

a. Who are the key people involved?
   i. Residents
   ii. Department of Transportation
   iii. Law enforcement
   iv. Transportation providers – public and private
   v. Public health
   vi. Emergency medical services
b. What are some potential partnerships – who can help you?
   i. Local businesses and industry
   ii. Centers for Independent Living
   iii. Community organizations



4. Find out some ways to talk to partners and key people and get the word out:

a. Stakeholder roundtables
b. Podcasts
c. Social media engagement
    i. Infographics
    ii. Research on transportation
    iii. News articles and success stories
d. Community events

5. Decide on best strategies for programming, including these options:

a. Mobility on Demand (MOD) (different options for people to get where they need to go)
b. Integrated transportation services (multimodal: cars, buses, bikes, e-scooters)
c. Bikeshares
d. Education on transportation options and safety
e. Partnerships between VR and private companies

6. Consider what you need to know before you start:

a. Contracts, fees, and regulations
b. How to start partnerships with private companies
c. Long-term goals of your project
d. Making the public aware of services

Project Partners

The RYAD Project is a project of ExploreVR at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston, in partnership with:

- Mathematica Policy Research
- Montana Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities
- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- Arkansas Career Development Center

ExploreVR offers VR agencies easy and convenient access to a range of VR research, related data, training and tools for planning, evaluation, and decision-making.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION
DeBrittany Mitchell
Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts Boston
debrittany.mitchell@umb.edu

www.exploreVR.org

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INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, UMASS BOSTON