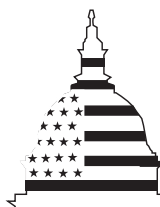


December 2000

# WELFARE REFORM

## DOT Is Making Progress in Implementing the Job Access Program



G A O

Accountability \* Integrity \* Reliability



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# Contents

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Letter	3
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Appendixes		
Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology		16
Appendix II: Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs Program Grant Recipients		18
Appendix III: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments		28

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## Abbreviations

DOT	Department of Transportation
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	fiscal year
GAO	General Accounting Office
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

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**United States General Accounting Office**  
**Washington, D.C. 20548**

December 4, 2000

The Honorable Phil Gramm  
Chairman  
The Honorable Paul S. Sarbanes  
Ranking Minority Member  
Committee on Banking, Housing,  
and Urban Affairs  
United States Senate

The Honorable Bud Shuster  
Chairman  
The Honorable James L. Oberstar  
Ranking Democratic Member  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
House of Representatives

Without adequate transportation, welfare recipients face significant barriers in moving from welfare to work. Three-fourths of welfare recipients live in central cities or rural areas, while two-thirds of new jobs are located in the suburbs. Public transportation facilities, such as buses or subways, offer limited or no access to many of these jobs. Although the jobs can be reached primarily by car, many welfare recipients do not have cars. To address this mismatch, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) authorized up to \$750 million for fiscal years 1999 through 2003 to implement the Job Access and Reverse Commute (Job Access) program. The program authorizes the Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide grants to local agencies, nonprofit organizations, transit authorities, and others to improve transportation to employment. Within DOT, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is responsible for implementing the program.

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In May 1998, we reported on how the proposed Job Access program would support reform of the nation's welfare system.<sup>1</sup> We found, among other things, that the program would bring additional resources to transport welfare recipients to work. We recommended that in implementing the program, DOT (1) establish specific objectives, performance criteria, and goals for measuring the program's progress; (2) require grantees to coordinate transportation strategies with local job placement and other social service agencies; and (3) work with other federal agencies to coordinate welfare-to-work activities. These recommendations were reflected in TEA-21. In November 1999, we reported on the implementation of the program in fiscal year 1999—its first year. We found that DOT had taken preliminary steps to implement our first recommendation and had implemented the other two recommendations in carrying out TEA-21.<sup>2</sup>

This report examines DOT's implementation of the program in fiscal year 2000. As agreed with your offices, we examined (1) the changes DOT made during fiscal year 2000 to the selection process for Job Access proposals compared with the prior year; (2) the views of the fiscal year 1999 grantees on their experiences with the program; and (3) the steps DOT has taken to measure the program's success, including establishing specific objectives, performance criteria, and measurable goals for the program, as we recommended in May 1998. Our work is based, in part, on the results of a survey we mailed to all of DOT's fiscal year 1999 Job Access grantees. We received responses from 89 percent of the grantees. The details of our scope and methodology appear in appendix I. Our survey, with the aggregated responses, is reproduced in appendix II.

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## Results in Brief

As we reported in November 1999, DOT did not consistently select Job Access proposals during its fiscal year 1999 process for awarding grants, and the basis for some selections was unclear. During fiscal year 2000, DOT took steps to improve its process for selecting Job Access proposals. Specifically, to promote greater consistency and uniformity in the data contained in the proposals, DOT developed a standard format that it suggested be used for the Job Access proposals in its March 2000

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<sup>1</sup>*Welfare Reform: Transportation's Role in Moving From Welfare to Work* (GAO/RCED-98-161, May 29, 1998).

<sup>2</sup>*Welfare Reform: Implementing DOT's Access to Jobs Program in Its First Year* (GAO/RCED-00-14, Nov. 26, 1999).

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solicitation of applications. DOT also changed its process for reviewing and scoring these proposals by, among other things, providing guidance to its reviewers that specified in more detail than for fiscal year 1999 what factors should be emphasized and how points should be assigned under each of four criteria. Finally, according to DOT officials, the Department stopped awarding bonus points for some factors—such as innovation—that had been difficult for DOT staff to score consistently in fiscal year 1999.

A substantial majority (almost 90 percent) of the fiscal year 1999 Job Access grantees that responded to our survey were satisfied with the goals and intent of the program. In addition, a majority of the respondents (55 percent) were pleased with DOT's responsiveness in helping them meet standard FTA grant requirements applicable to Job Access grantees. However, about half (51 percent) said it took too long to satisfy these requirements. On average, it took about 9 months from the time DOT announced that an applicant had been selected for the Job Access program until the time the applicant had satisfied these grant requirements and could receive its grant. Over one-third of the respondents (37 percent) said they had experienced problems in obtaining matching funds because of the time they needed to satisfy these requirements. Despite these concerns, 81 percent of the respondents planned to apply for grants again in fiscal year 2000.

In our May 1998 report, we recommended that DOT develop specific objectives, performance criteria, and measurable goals for the Job Access program. Taking such steps would enable DOT to determine, among other things, the extent to which the program helped welfare recipients without duplicating the welfare-to-work efforts of other federal agencies. DOT has taken steps to implement this recommendation. Notably, during fiscal year 2000, it developed an evaluation plan that included the suggested components and requested specific information from the grantees for use in evaluating the program. DOT reviewed a draft of this report and generally agreed with our presentation of the facts.

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## Background

TEA-21 authorized the Job Access program through which DOT provides grants to local agencies, nonprofit organizations, transit authorities, and others to improve the mobility of welfare recipients and low-income individuals seeking work. DOT's two major goals for the program are to (1) provide transportation services in urban, suburban, and rural areas to assist welfare recipients and low-income individuals with access to

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employment opportunities and (2) increase collaboration among such parties as transportation providers, human service agencies, employers, metropolitan planning organizations, states, and communities in providing access to employment.

TEA-21 authorized up to \$150 million each year for fiscal years 1999 through 2003 for the Job Access program. The Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999—the first year of the program—provided \$75 million for the Job Access program, and DOT announced competitive awards of about \$71 million for 179 projects. The Congress also provided \$75 million for fiscal year 2000, and the conference report accompanying the appropriations act directed DOT to distribute \$49.6 million to identified states, localities, and other organizations. DOT solicited proposals to competitively award about \$29.6 million, including \$25.4 million provided for fiscal year 2000 and about \$4.2 million carried over from fiscal year 1999. DOT also requested project proposals that conformed with the requirements of the Job Access program and documentation on standard FTA grant requirements from the organizations and localities identified in the conference report. For fiscal year 2001, the Congress provided \$100 million, and the conference report directed the distribution of about \$75 million to identified states, localities, and other organizations.

To award Job Access grants in fiscal year 1999, DOT first issued a solicitation of applications in the *Federal Register* and, in response, received and reviewed 266 project proposals. It selected 179 projects<sup>3</sup> for the program on the basis of four criteria: (1) the degree of local coordination exhibited when a project was being designed; (2) the demonstrated need of an area for Job Access services; (3) a project's effectiveness in providing those services; and (4) the ability of an applicant to obtain resources to continue operating a project after the Job Access grant ends. Each proposal could receive up to 100 points, depending on how well it met these four criteria, plus up to 10 bonus points for such factors as the use of innovative approaches in providing services and the use of employer-based strategies.

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<sup>3</sup>This number has grown to 194 because some proposals were consolidated and some organizations chose to have their own grants rather than participate as subgrantees under consolidated grants.



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Once DOT announced the selected Job Access proposals, the applicants were required to provide assurances and documentation of compliance with standard FTA grant requirements, such as those concerning drug and alcohol testing, federal procurement standards, and state and regional transportation planning. After those grant requirements were met, an FTA regional administrator approved the grant. TEA-21 requires that the Job Access grantees provide at least 50 percent matching funds from other sources, including other federal funds available for transportation services—for example, funds from the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

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## DOT Has Improved the Project Proposal Selection Process

DOT has improved its project selection process to make its selections more consistently. In November 1999, we reported that during fiscal year 1999, DOT did not select Job Access proposals consistently and the basis for its selections was not always clear. DOT staff who reviewed the Job Access proposals did not uniformly apply the program's criteria for ranking and selecting proposals, in part because the applications were not standardized. Hence, the information provided in the applications was not consistent, making the applications difficult to review. In addition, the guidance given to the reviewers was not sufficiently specific, leading them to interpret and apply the criteria for ranking the proposals inconsistently. DOT officials agreed with these findings and said they would take corrective action.

To improve the consistency of its fiscal year 2000 selections, DOT revised its selection process by requesting more standard information in the project proposals. Specifically, DOT suggested a standard format for the proposals in its solicitations for applications published in March 2000 in the *Federal Register*. This solicitation also improved on the solicitation for the fiscal year 1999 selections by identifying more clearly what information applicants should include in their proposals.

To further promote consistency in the selection of proposals in fiscal year 2000, DOT changed its processes for reviewing and scoring Job Access proposals.

- First, DOT provided guidance to its reviewers that specified in more detail than in fiscal year 1999 what factors they should emphasize and how they should assign points under each of the four criteria.

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- Second, DOT eliminated the bonus points that, according to a DOT official, DOT reviewers did not award consistently in fiscal year 1999. This action reduced the maximum number of points that could be awarded to any one proposal from 110 to 100.<sup>4</sup> As an alternative to bonus points, the Secretary of Transportation, in making the final selections for fiscal year 2000, plans to weigh such factors as a proposal's innovation in providing services or the geographic distribution of awards.
  - Third, DOT instituted a system for reviewing Job Access proposals that included FTA staff from both the regions and headquarters in review teams. This system drew on the experience of both groups of staff, thereby helping to minimize any differences between them in evaluating and scoring grant proposals.

According to a DOT official, proposals were ranked on the basis of the scores assigned by the review teams. In August 2000, the rankings were forwarded to the Acting FTA Administrator and the Secretary of Transportation for final selection.

DOT officials said they made these changes to their selection process in response to the findings of our November 1999 report and believed the changes would produce more consistent selections. The FTA regional staff that participated in the process said that the revisions reduced the time needed during fiscal year 2000 to complete reviewing and scoring the Job Access proposals, compared with fiscal year 1999. DOT officials received 364 proposals for fiscal year 2000—more than they received in fiscal year 1999. On October 14, 2000, DOT announced the selection of 216 projects for fiscal year 2000 funding.

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<sup>4</sup>DOT made other changes in how points were awarded to proposals in fiscal year 2000. DOT decreased the weight given to one selection criterion—a proposed project's effectiveness in providing Job Access services—from 35 points in fiscal year 1999 to 30 points in fiscal year 2000. At the same time, DOT officials increased the weight for another criterion—the ability of an applicant to obtain resources to continue operating a project after the Job Access grant ends—from 10 to 15 points because their fiscal year 1999 experiences indicated that firm financial commitments would enhance a project's chances for success over the long run. DOT did not change the weights for the other criteria—the degree of local coordination exhibited when a project was being designed (25 points) and the demonstrated need of an area for Job Access services (30 points).

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## Grantees Praise the Program for Transporting Welfare Recipients to Work but Maintain That Satisfying the Grant Requirements Takes Too Long

To determine the views of Job Access grantees, we surveyed all of the applicants for the 194 projects selected for the Job Access program in fiscal year 1999. We received responses from 89 percent of them. These respondents were generally satisfied that the program was achieving one of its main goals of transporting welfare recipients to work. Furthermore, a majority of them praised DOT's responsiveness in helping them to meet standard FTA grant requirements applicable to Job Access grantees. However, a majority of the respondents also indicated that it took too long to meet these requirements. Over one-third of them stated that, because of the time it took to satisfy these requirements, they had experienced problems in obtaining matching funds. Despite these concerns, 81 percent of the respondents decided to apply for grants in fiscal year 2000.<sup>5</sup>

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## Grantees Praise Program's Success in Transporting Welfare Recipients to Work

Almost 90 percent of the respondents said they were satisfied with the goals and intent of the Job Access program. In addition, in narrative responses to open-ended survey questions, 55 percent of the respondents wrote that the Job Access program was helping them get people to work—a primary objective of the program. A number of respondents indicated that the program created new transportation services where none were previously available or expanded existing services. For example, officials from one county noted that the program allowed them to establish transit routes that were not previously covered by any public transportation. These routes allowed the county to provide individuals with new access to training, education, and employment. Another respondent expanded transportation to employees on the second and third work shifts. The new Job Access projects also provided work for some former welfare recipients. One respondent hired former welfare recipients as drivers and dispatchers for a Job Access project.

Twenty-three percent of the respondents commented that the Job Access program improved coordination among different organizations involved in getting people to work—another program objective. One respondent—a county—stated that the program promoted closer, better-coordinated relations between social and human services agencies. FTA's experiences with the program generally validated the respondents' observations. In our

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<sup>5</sup>The percentages reported in this letter are based on valid responses, which exclude those respondents who checked "not applicable" or "don't know" and those who did not answer the question. In contrast, the percentages displayed in app. II include these responses.

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discussions with officials from all 10 FTA regions, some officials also observed that coordination had improved among local transportation and human service agencies. Officials from one FTA region stated that FTA is also working more with the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at the regional level to provide funding for transporting low-income individuals.

Most respondents were pleased with FTA's help in meeting standard FTA grant requirements. Specifically, about 55 percent of our survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied, compared with about 13 percent who were generally or very dissatisfied, with the assistance FTA provided when they requested information on satisfying grant requirements. A number of respondents specifically praised the good information that FTA regional offices gave to help them develop and submit their Job Access grant documentation. One respondent praised as responsive and knowledgeable, and another characterized as "wonderful," the efforts of the FTA regional staff who provided the requested guidance. Over 47 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the written guidance on grant requirements that FTA gave them; 32 percent were dissatisfied with this guidance.

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### Most Said That Satisfying Grant Requirements Took Too Long but Plan to Reapply for Grants in Fiscal Year 2000

Most of our survey respondents indicated that it took too long to satisfy the standard FTA grant requirements and to receive their grants. Over 51 percent of the respondents were not satisfied with the length of time it took to receive their grants, while 38 percent were satisfied.<sup>6</sup> About 58 percent of the organizations in rural areas and medium-sized cities and 46 percent of those in large urban areas were dissatisfied with the length of time it took to comply with standard FTA grant requirements. In addition, about 57 percent of the transit organizations and 39 percent of the nontransportation organizations were dissatisfied. According to an FTA official, once the agency became aware that applicants were having difficulty in meeting the standard grant requirements, FTA initiated a series of seminars to provide them with technical assistance.

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<sup>6</sup>See also *Transit Grants: Need for Improvements in Predictability, Data, and Monitoring in Application Processing* (GAO/RCED-00-260, Aug. 29, 2000).

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Overall, from May 13, 1999 (the date that DOT announced the projects selected), applicants took an average of about 9 months to complete the standard FTA grant requirements.<sup>7</sup> For individual applicants, this time ranged from 2 to 17 months. According to DOT's grant application system data, the length of time needed to meet these requirements did not vary greatly among different types of organizations or locations. For example, projects in rural areas and those operated by nontransit organizations took 273 days to the date of their grant approvals, compared with 265 days for transit organizations in urban areas, including large and medium-size cities.

Despite these concerns about how long it took to satisfy standard FTA grant requirements, over half of the survey respondents did not report that difficulties with the grant approval process affected their ability to obtain state, local, and private matching funds. However, about 34 percent of the respondents said that DOT's grant approval process caused problems with the availability of their project's matching funds. In addition, seven projects were withdrawn (about 4 percent of the Job Access projects) for varied reasons. For example, one grantee reported withdrawing from the program after losing its matching funds. Another reported that DOT took too long to approve its grant application. Officials for another said it withdrew because the relatively small grant amount did not justify the efforts needed to satisfy the grant requirements. Despite concerns about satisfying grant requirements, about 81 percent of the respondents decided to apply for grants in fiscal year 2000.

In our survey, we asked respondents to identify which grant requirements caused them difficulty. Most respondents did not report problems satisfying specific grant requirements. For example, 28 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied with their ability to meet the statutory requirement to establish arrangements certified by the Department of Labor to protect employees who might be adversely affected by federal assistance to transportation providers. About 49 percent were satisfied with their ability to meet this requirement and about 23 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. In addition, only 5 percent of the respondents reported being dissatisfied with their ability to meet federal

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<sup>7</sup>This average time is computed from May 13, 1999, the date DOT announced its selection of applicants for the program. It includes the grants approved as of Sept. 30, 2000, and does not include 16 projects (about 8 percent of all selected projects) that had not yet received their grant approval as of that date.

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grant requirements related to (1) environmental impact assessments and (2) drug and alcohol testing.

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## DOT Continues Its Efforts to Evaluate the Job Access Program

In May 1998 we reported that DOT lacked specific information for assessing how the Job Access program would improve mobility for low-income workers and contribute to national welfare reform objectives. We recommended, among other things, that DOT establish specific objectives, performance criteria, and measurable goals for the program. DOT could then determine the extent to which the program assists welfare recipients and avoid duplicating other welfare programs.

DOT officials have agreed with the need to evaluate the results of the program and have responded positively to our recommendation. In a November 1998 *Federal Register* notice and subsequent guidance, DOT informed Job Access applicants that they should monitor the performance of their projects and provide specific information to DOT on a quarterly basis. This information includes detailed measurements of (1) new or expanded Job Access services; (2) increases in welfare recipients' access to jobs; (3) the usefulness and efficiency of the new Job Access services; and (4) collaboration between various agencies in providing Job Access services. Moreover, DOT provided additional instructions on its Internet site, which refined the reporting requirements set forth in the November 1998 *Federal Register* notice.

In November 1999, we reported that DOT was still determining how to evaluate the program and had not yet developed and implemented a complete set of evaluative measures or established goals or benchmarks against which the collected data could be compared.

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Since we issued our November 1999 report, DOT has implemented our recommendation. It has developed specific objectives, performance criteria, and measurable goals, which are reflected, in part, in the Department's fiscal year 2000 and fiscal year 2001 performance plans, prepared under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (the Results Act).<sup>8</sup> These plans established a specific goal of increasing the number of new employment sites that are made accessible by the Job Access program by 4,050 in fiscal year 2000 and 8,050 in fiscal year 2001.<sup>9</sup> According to a DOT official, the Department will use the evaluation plan in conjunction with data collected from the quarterly reports to study the program and prepare the report to the Congress that TEA-21 required to be submitted in June 2000.

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## Agency Comments

We provided copies of a draft of this report to DOT for its review and comment. DOT officials, including the Coordinator of the Job Access program, generally agreed with the facts presented in the report. The Department provided additional information, which we added to the report, about the technical assistance FTA provided to assist grantees in meeting standard FTA grant requirements.

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## Scope and Methodology

To obtain the information for this report, we interviewed DOT and FTA officials, examined Job Access program documentation, conducted a mail survey of all of the fiscal year 1999 Job Access program grantees (see app. II), and reviewed the strategic plans and reports that DOT filed under the Government Performance and Results Act. The rate of response to our survey was 89 percent. A detailed description of our scope and methodology appears in appendix I.

We conducted our review from March 2000 through November 2000 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

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<sup>8</sup>The Results Act aims to improve the effectiveness of and accountability for federal programs and requires agencies to identify annual performance goals and measures for their program activities.

<sup>9</sup>An employment site is considered accessible if it is located within ¼ mile of services provided by the grantee.

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We are sending copies of this report to the cognizant congressional committees; the Honorable Rodney E. Slater, Secretary of Transportation; Ms. Nuria Fernandez, Acting Administrator, Federal Transit Administration; and other interested parties. We will make copies available to others on request. If you have any questions about this report, please call me at (202) 512-2834. Key contributors to this report are listed in appendix III.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phyllis F. Scheinberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'P' and 'S'.

Phyllis F. Scheinberg  
Director, Physical Infrastructure Issues



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# Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

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The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) requires us to report on the implementation of the Job Access and Reverse Commute (Job Access) program by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and its Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Accordingly, this report examines the Job Access program in fiscal year 2000, including (1) the changes DOT made during fiscal year 2000 to the competitive selection process for Job Access proposals compared with the prior year; (2) the views of the program's fiscal year 1999 grantees on their experiences with the program; and (3) the steps DOT has taken to measure the program's success, including establishing specific objectives, performance criteria, and measurable goals for the program, as we recommended in May 1998.

To describe the steps DOT has taken to select Job Access proposals in fiscal year 2000 compared with the prior year, we reviewed *Federal Register* notices and procedures used to review Job Access proposals. We interviewed Job Access program officials in all 10 of FTA's regional offices on the methods used to review, score, and rank the Job Access proposals submitted in fiscal year 2000. We then compared the process used for fiscal year 2000 with the process used for fiscal year 1999.

To examine the views of the parties selected by DOT for the Job Access program, we conducted a mail survey of all organizations that DOT selected in fiscal year 1999 for the program. (See app. II for the questionnaire and the results.) FTA identified 194 Job Access projects for fiscal year 1999.<sup>1</sup> We mailed questionnaires to each of the parties responsible for the Job Access projects and received responses from organizations representing 173 projects selected for award, for a response rate of 89 percent.

To clarify issues raised by respondents to the survey, we interviewed FTA Job Access program officials. In all 10 FTA regional offices, we interviewed officials who processed the documents that are needed to make Job Access grants. We reviewed data collected by FTA's Transportation Electronic Award and Management system. We also reviewed FTA's guidance and standard FTA grant requirements applicable to various types of FTA grantees, such as those under sections 5307, 5310, and 5311 of title 49 of the

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<sup>1</sup>When we issued our November 1999 report on DOT's Job Access program, FTA had selected 179 projects from among 266 applications and awarded almost \$71 million in grants. This number has grown to 194 because some proposals were consolidated and some organizations chose to have their own grants rather than participate as subgrantees under consolidated grants.

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*U.S. Code.* We discussed with FTA officials the differences in the requirements and the impact of these differences on Job Access grantees.

To describe the steps DOT has taken to measure the program's success and determine whether they satisfy the recommendation we made in our May 1998 report,<sup>2</sup> we interviewed FTA program officials. We reviewed FTA's quarterly reporting requirements and quarterly reports submitted by Job Access grantees to identify the types of information collected. We also reviewed FTA's strategic plans and reports filed by DOT in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act. Finally, we obtained information from the consultants hired by FTA to conduct a survey of grantees that had begun operations by December 1999.

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<sup>2</sup>*Welfare Reform: Transportation's Role in Moving from Welfare to Work* (GAO/RCED-98-161, May 29, 1998.)

# Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs Program Grant Recipients

**GAO**

**U.S. General Accounting Office  
Survey of FY 1999 Access to Jobs Program Grant Recipients**

**Introduction**

The General Accounting Office (GAO) is an agency of the legislative branch of Government that performs studies of federal programs. We have been mandated by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) to periodically examine how the Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is implementing the Access to Jobs Program.

To obtain perspectives on how FTA is implementing this program, we are asking all organizations that were selected to receive FY 1999 project grants from the Access to Jobs Program (Job Access/Reverse Commute Program) to complete a short questionnaire.

**Instructions**

Please review the label above and respond to the questions in this questionnaire as they relate to the project named. If you have a question about the above information or it is incorrect, please call one of the GAO contact persons listed below.

In addition, when responding to these questions, please coordinate with the appropriate members of your staff as well as any subrecipients or subgrantees, as appropriate.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to the address below within 10 working days. We have provided a postage-paid business reply envelope to facilitate the return of your questionnaire. In the event that the return

envelope is misplaced, please send or fax your completed questionnaire to:

U.S. General Accounting Office  
Attn: Frank Taliaferro  
200 W. Adams Street, Suite 700  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-5219

FAX #: (312) 220-7726

If you have any questions, please call Frank Taliaferro on (312) 220-7715 or Ruthann Balciunas on (312) 220-7624.

Please provide the following information for the person we should contact if we have any questions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Questionnaire responses were received from 173 organizations; however, not all responded to each question. The number of responses are noted in ( ). These responses include those who checked "not applicable" or "don't know." Percentages reported in the body of the report are based on valid responses, which exclude those who checked "not applicable" or "don't know" and those did not answer the question.**

ID: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix II  
Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs  
Program Grant Recipients**

**General Information About Your Project**

1. What is the relationship of the project named on the label on page 1 to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)? *(Please check one.)* (N=160)

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Grantee                 | 85.0% |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Subgrantee/Subrecipient | 11.9% |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify)  | 3.1%  |
| <hr/>   |       |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know              | 0.0%  |

2. Which of the following best describes your organization? *(Please check one.)* (N=172)

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> State Department of Transportation    | 25.0% |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Other state agency                    | 5.8%  |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Regional government                   | 4.1%  |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Local government (county, city, etc.) | 16.3% |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Local/Regional transit agency         | 32.6% |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Private, non-profit organization      | 4.7%  |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Private, for profit organization      | 0.0%  |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please specify below)</i>   | 11.6% |
| <hr/>   |       |
| <hr/>   |       |

3. In which of the following areas does this organization primarily conduct its work? *(Please check one.)* (N=171)

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                | 88.3% |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Housing                       | 0.6%  |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Employment and training       | 0.6%  |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Education                     | 0.6%  |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Human services                | 5.8%  |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Health                        | 0.0%  |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please specify)</i> | 4.1%  |

4. How many subgrantees/subrecipients of the following types, if any, does this project have? *(Enter number; if none, enter '0'.)* (N=170)

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable-- do not have any subrecipients or subgrantees | 37.6%         |
| <hr/>  |               |
| 1. State Department of Transportation  | N=4; sum=6    |
| 2. Other state agency  | N=7; sum=15   |
| 3. Regional government   | N=6; sum=6    |
| 4. Local government  | N=49; sum=142 |
| 5. Local/Regional transit agency   | N=43; sum=132 |
| 6. Private, non-profit organization  | N=48; sum=78  |
| 7. Private, for profit organization  | N=9; sum=15   |
| 8. Other organization(s) <i>(Please specify)</i>                                       | N=28; sum=57  |

**Appendix II  
Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs  
Program Grant Recipients**

5. What was the population of the area which this FY 1999 project covered/will cover? (Please check one.) (N=170)

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Over 1 million (large urban area)  | 30.0% |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 200,001–1,000,000 (medium urban area)  | 21.8% |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000– 200,000 (small urban area)   | 24.7% |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural area with towns, cities, municipalities, etc, each with less than 50,000 | 17.6% |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Grant covers more than one of the above areas (Please specify areas)           | 5.9%  |

**Experiences With Access to Jobs Program**

6. After your project's selection was announced, did your project submit a grant application to the FY 1999 Access to Jobs Program? (Please check one.) (N=173)

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                                      | 94.8% |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> No, not yet (Go to Question 10)          | 3.5%  |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> No, withdrew project (Go to Question 10) | 1.7%  |

7. Has this project's FY 1999 Access to Jobs grant agreement been signed by FTA? (Please check one.) (N=168)

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | 88.7% |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> No, not yet → (Go to Question 10)          | 10.1% |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> No, withdrew project → (Go to Question 10) | 1.2%  |

**Reimbursements**

8. When did this project send in its first claim for reimbursement from FTA for this project's FY 1999 grant? (Please enter date or check box.) (N=149)

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| /__/__/--/__/__/--/__/__/  | 54.4% |
| <b>Month Day Year</b>  |       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable -- not a grantee (Go to Question 10) | 2.0%  |

Not yet requested reimbursement (Go to Question 10) 44.3%

9. When did this project receive reimbursement from FTA for the above claim? (Please enter date or check box.) (N=102)

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| /__/__/--/__/__/--/__/__/                               | 71.6% |
| <b>Month Day Year</b>                                   |       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet received reimbursement | 28.4% |

**Appendix II  
Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs  
Program Grant Recipients**

10. Prior to receiving its FY 1999 Access to Jobs grant, has this project used the pre-award spending authority to start the operations of this project's Access to Jobs program? *(Please check one.)* (N=170)

- 1.  Yes 64.1%
- 2.  No *(Please explain below the reason(s) you have not used this authority)* 33.5%

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 3.  Don't know 2.4%

11. Has this project begun providing services to this Access to Jobs project's beneficiaries? *(Please check one.)* (N=168)

- 1.  Yes -->About when did it start? 83.3%  
*(Enter date)*

Start Date: 1/98 TO 12/2000  
*(Month/Year)*

- 2.  No --> When is it expected to start?*(Enter date or check box)* 16.7%  
(N=28)

a. Expected start date:  
7/2000 to 1/2001 (N=15)  
*(Month/Year)*

- b.  Unable to determine start date (N=10)

12. What are the sources of this project's matching funds? *(Please check all that apply.)* (N=173)

- 1.  State general funds 23.1%
- 2.  TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) funds 54.9%
- 3.  Local government 48.6%
- 4.  Employers 10.4%
- 5.  Other *(Please specify)* 49.7%

\_\_\_\_\_

13. How satisfied or not are you with the goals and intent of this project? *(Please check one.)* (N=167)

- 1.  Very satisfied 40.7%
- 2.  Generally satisfied 48.5%
- 3.  Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 5.4%
- 4.  Generally dissatisfied 1.2%
- 5.  Very dissatisfied 4.2%

**Appendix II  
Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs  
Program Grant Recipients**

14. Please assess your level of satisfaction with the following items related to the administrative processes for this project for the FY 1999 Access to Jobs Program. *(Please check one for each row.)*

	Very satisfied	Generally satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Generally dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not Applicable
1. Length of time in which this project received its signed grant and Notice to Proceed from FTA (N=172)	12.2%	23.8%	9.9%	18.6%	30.2%	5.2%
2. Length of time in which this project received reimbursements for the initial claim (N=165)	19.4%	18.8%	4.8%	2.4%	4.2%	50.3%
3. Helpfulness of FTA's post-award, written guidance (including stipulations) for completing grant documentation requested by FTA (N=172)	8.1%	33.1%	17.4%	18.0%	9.9%	13.4%
4. Having to meet recordkeeping and other administrative requirements for general and administrative expenses (N=170)	5.9%	30.0%	28.2%	15.3%	12.4%	8.2%
5. FTA's responsiveness to communications regarding questions or problems that arose (N=172)	19.8%	33.1%	30.2%	10.5%	1.7%	4.7%
6. Quality of the technical assistance provided by FTA staff (N=172)	21.5%	40.7%	13.4%	16.3%	2.9%	5.2%
7. Ability to meet federal labor protection certification requirements, commonly referred to as section (13c) requirements (N=171)	15.2%	31.0%	21.1%	12.9%	13.5%	6.4%
8. Ability to meet federal requirements related to disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE) (N=171)	11.1%	31.6%	42.7%	0.0%	1.2%	13.5%
9. Other federal grant requirements (e.g., environmental impact or drug testing) <i>(Please specify)</i> (N=154) _____ _____	7.1%	26.6%	35.7%	3.2%	0.0%	27.3%
10. Other items <i>(Please specify the item and indicate your degree of satisfaction using the scale at the right for each item.)</i> (N=51) _____ _____						



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**Appendix II**  
**Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs**  
**Program Grant Recipients**

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15. Please describe any examples of positive or negative experiences this project has had with the items listed in question 14 above as part of the FTA grant approval process.

We are particularly interested in any best practices, problems, or difficulties experienced in meeting federal requirements, and the effects these requirements have had on the ability of your project to provide services.

(N=131 comments)

16. What effect, if any, has the FTA grant approval process had on this project's ability to obtain matching funds from state or local government or private sources? (N=162)

No effect on obtaining matching funds 57.4%

(N=77 organizations provided comments)

17. Please describe any examples of positive or negative experiences this project has had with federal labor protection certification requirements, commonly referred to as section (13c) requirements. Specifically,

- your project's level of understanding of these requirements,
- your project's ability to meet these requirements, and
- the requirements' effect on the services provided.

(N=100 organizations provided comments)

18. How has this Access to Jobs project affected, if at all, your organization's overall operations (e.g., services, other activities)? (*Please check one.*) (N=169)

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**Appendix II**  
**Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs**  
**Program Grant Recipients**

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1. [ ]	Very positive	30.8%
2. [ ]	Generally positive	39.6%
3. [ ]	No effect	23.1%
4. [ ]	Generally negative	5.3%
5. [ ]	Very negative	1.2%

19. Please briefly describe the reason for your response to question 18 above. Add additional pages, if necessary.

N=142 grantees provided comments

**Appendix II**  
**Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs**  
**Program Grant Recipients**

20. Consider the implementation process for this Access to Job Grants project. Based on your experience with this project, overall, how would you assess the costs and benefits of this program? *(Please check one.)* (N=167)

- 1.  Benefits far exceed costs 24.0%
- 2.  Benefits moderately exceed costs 21.0%
- 3.  Benefits somewhat exceed costs 7.2%
- 4.  Costs and benefits are about equal 10.8%
- 5.  Costs somewhat exceed benefits 9.0%
- 6.  Costs moderately exceed benefits 4.8%
- 7.  Costs far exceed benefits 3.0%
- 8.  No basis to judge 20.4%

21. Has your organization applied for FY 2000 funding from FTA's Access to Jobs program? *(Please check one.)* (N=169)

- 1.  Yes 81.7%
- 2.  No--> Please explain below the reason(s) your organization has not applied. 18.3%

N=13 organizations provided comments

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**Appendix II**  
**Survey of Fiscal Year 1999 Access to Jobs**  
**Program Grant Recipients**

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**Comments**

22. What suggestions, if any, do you have for improving this program?

N=123 organizations provided comments

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23. In addition to comments regarding specific questions, please feel free to share any other information that you wish with us regarding DOT's Access to Jobs program or the questions in this survey. Please use the following space or attach additional sheets as necessary.

N=23 organizations provided comments

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*Thank you for your help!*

07/14/2000

# GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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## GAO Contact

Phyllis F. Scheinberg (202) 512-2834

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