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## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION

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### WELCOME TO THE NEWLY UPDATED....

.....INDOT Office of Transit *Section 5311 Program Manual!* Every effort has been made to ensure that the resources and references to ensure the successful operation of your Section 5311 rural transit system have been included. One major change to this manual is the provision of electronic “links” for all documents and guidance that tend to be regularly updated, ensuring that you will be accessing the most current information available.

The manual is organized similar to the previous version, with a few additions. Following the introduction and organization of the manual here in **Chapter I**, **Chapter II** contains the Section 5311 Program Goals and Objectives. **Chapter III** describes eligible grantees, services, and funding, while **Chapter IV** contains procedures for filing Section 5311 program applications.

**Chapter V**, Financial Management, covers all aspects of financial management from allowable costs, revenues and match requirements, and force account plans, to pricing service for contracting out, audits, and preparing invoices.

**Chapter VI**, addresses Property Management requirements for all items acquired with Section 5311 funding. **Chapter VII** contains all of the requirements for conducting compliant procurements with State and Federal funding. Forms and checklists have been added that we believe will help you comply with the many procurement rules and requirements, which are often findings in the Indiana compliance

reviews. **Chapter VIII**, Facility Construction and Renovation Guidelines, will be important if you are already, or will be considering, the construction or renovation of a Section 5311-funded facility.

**Chapters IX and X** both address the many compliance areas accompanying the receipt of Section 5311 funding. And, finally, **Chapter XI** is a new chapter added to include a glossary with definitions of terms, used in this manual or which have relevance to rural transit service operation.

We believe that this manual, together with the many other documents and resources cited, will not be another document to collect dust on a shelf, but a valuable tool in your day-to-day rural transit operation. However, as carefully as we have read and re-read the manual, inevitably, something has been overlooked. So, because we view the manual as a work in progress and one that will inevitably be in a continued state of improvement, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Office of Transit has assembled the information contained in this Section 5311 Program Manual to provide the necessary tools to new and existing rural transit systems to successfully and efficiently administer public transportation service in Indiana. Each chapter begins with a general introduction of the topic followed by various sections/subsections containing specific guidance for grantees, governing boards, and third party contractors. This manual, when viewed in its entirety, provides the necessary guidance for providing rural transit service in compliance with all applicable Federal and State requirements. It is set in an electronic environment to permit a content search. Links to all applicable Federal regulations, circulars, guidance, and other resources are also provided in each chapter. You should use these links to ensure that you have accessed all of the information needed for your full compliance with Section 5311 Program requirements. The manual table of contents contains a detailed listing of all topics addressed, permitting the reader to easily choose his or her topic of interest. This manual is designed to assist Section 5311 grantees in implementing and managing rural transit projects in compliance with all applicable Federal and State rules and regulations.

## ORGANIZATION OF, AND HOW TO USE, THIS MANUAL

This manual is divided into eleven chapters that contain explanations regarding all major compliance elements associated with INDOT's administration of the Section 5311 program. Each chapter contains an introduction to the chapter topic followed by easy to understand explanations of all project administrative requirements for that particular topic.

Where INDOT forms, FTA Circulars, Federal and/or State laws, or other resource guides are referenced, a link has been inserted for immediate access and to ensure that you access the most current guidance on the topic. Chapters include:

- I. Indiana Section 5311 Program Manual: Welcome, Introduction, and Organization
- II. Section 5311 Program Summary, Goals, and Objectives
- III. Eligible Grantees, Services, and Funding
- IV. Grant Application Procedures
- V. Financial Management
- VI. Property Management
- VII. Procurement
- VIII. Facility Construction and Renovation Guidelines
- IX. Civil Rights Compliance
- X. Other Program Compliance Elements
- XI. Glossary

Use this manual as a guide and resource to research questions, issues, and or events for which you may need to develop a response or solution. The Office of Transit staff encourages you to look first in the manual for the information or guidance you need. Use the links, forms, and other documents, as applicable. Federal regulations, registers, circulars, and other documents may be difficult to comprehend at first, but they are the basis of your rural transit system. INDOT has made every effort to interpret the rules and regulations in this manual and present them in easy to understand language. However, **it is your responsibility to read both this manual AND the applicable Federal documents to be fully informed.** If, after consulting all of the documents you still have questions, please contact the Office of Transit who will help in any way they can.

## **DISCLAIMER**

This manual provides guidance on how INDOT meets and implements all applicable Federal and State requirements for administration and operation of the FTA Section 5311 Program in Indiana; as indicated above, it is not a replacement of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) circulars and regulations. Links to all of these documents and others are provided throughout the manual and should be

referred to as necessary. Every effort has been made to ensure that the electronic links are active and correct. In the event you have difficulty accessing a link, contact the INDOT Office of Transit (317)232-1483.

This document is available in accessible formats upon request. Paper copies as well as information regarding these accessible formats may be obtained by contacting the INDOT Office of Transit.