

# You Are Familiar with Kansas RTAP... But What is National RTAP?

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**The National Program has a wealth of resources your agency can use.**

## **Background**

Soon after FTA's Section 5311 Program was created to establish and maintain rural transit systems, the program's founders recognized that drivers, dispatchers, maintenance workers, managers, and board members needed special skills and knowledge to provide quality transit service to their diverse customers. As a result, the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) was created in 1987, with funding also from Section 5311. A portion of the funding is set aside for National RTAP; the remainder is distributed to the states by formula.

The national program provides peer support to the state RTAPs (like Kansas RTAP) for serving transit agency needs in their states. National RTAP also has resources that transit agencies like yours can access directly. In this article you will learn more about those resources and how to access them.

## **Goals of National RTAP**

The overarching mission of National RTAP is to address the training and technical assistance needs of rural and tribal transit operators across the nation, and to support the state RTAP programs. Specific objectives focus on training and technical assistance needs, encouraging peer networks, promoting transit service coordination, and building a database of information about the rural transit industry.

## **Review Board provides guidance**

National RTAP operates today under a cooperative agreement between FTA and Oregon's Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association. Much of the work of National RTAP is overseen by a Review Board, composed of rural and tribal operators and state transit officials from around the country. The Board provides in-depth expertise and local perspectives to help ensure that products and services are of the highest quality and are accessible and usable by transit operators and state programs.

## **Partners help create efficiency and increase reach**

National RTAP works with almost 20 organizations nationwide that provide technical assistance, training, research, and advocacy services to transit industry stakeholders. National RTAP works with their partners to develop co-branded materials and resources, coordinate efforts to avoid duplication, and promote each other's products and services. National RTAP's partners are listed at the website, [nationalrtap.org](http://nationalrtap.org).

## **What types of products does National RTAP provide?**

1. **Training modules:** Traditional hard-copy training modules suitable for self-learning and/or instructor-led training. Many include discs with videos and/or presentations.
2. **Technical briefs:** Short, informative guides on topics relevant to rural and tribal transit.
3. **eLearning:** Self-guided, interactive online training hosted on National RTAP's learning management system (LMS).
4. **eNews:** An email newsletter published every-other-Thursdays with industry news, resources, training, legislation and opportunities. Archived on the National RTAP website.

5. **Web apps:** Web-based applications to help transit organizations with procurement compliance, building a website, and getting route and schedule data into online trip planners like Google Maps.
6. **Toolkits:** Comprehensive information and guidance on transit topics in e-textbook format.
7. **Topic guides:** Lists of links to recommended full-text resources on transit topics.
8. **Webinars:** one to one-and-a-half--hour-long online training from subject matter experts, with presentations and Q&A. The recordings and handouts are posted on the National RTAP website.
9. **Peer roundtables:** Informal discussion of issues affecting various stakeholder groups and an open information exchange. Summaries are posted on the National RTAP website.
10. **Twitter chats:** Interactive one-hour Twitter sessions on a transit topic with one or more subject matter experts. Transcripts and summaries are posted on the National RTAP website.

### But there's more!

In addition to the above resources, if you have a question about a transit topic, or need resources to answer a question, contact National RTAP. Services include help finding regulations, reports, and other types of information, as well as connecting you to experts in the field.

All National RTAP products and services are free of charge to rural and tribal transit agencies. You have much to gain by browsing their website for resources. Go to [www.nationalrtap.org](http://www.nationalrtap.org).

### Source

Adapted from information from [nationalrtap.org](http://nationalrtap.org).

The screenshot shows the National RTAP website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About, News, Resource Center, Training, Toolkits, Web Apps, Webinars, Technical Assistance, Tribal Transit, and State RTAP. The main content area is titled "ADA Toolkit" and features a banner image of people using a wheelchair on a bus. Below the banner, there is a "Table of Contents" section listing various resources such as "New Developments", "Service Type Requirements", "Fixed Route Requirements", "Demand Response Requirements", "Deviated Route Requirements", "ADA Complementary Paratransit", "Physical Standards", "Mobility Device Rule Change", "Service Animals", "Customer Service and Sensitivity", "Public Meetings and Outreach", "Rider Information", "Resources", and "ADA 101 Webinar Q&A". A "Suggest a Topic" button is located at the bottom of the page.

