

**Rural Institute**



# **Transportation Voucher Programs: An effective solution to rural transportation access**

Luke Santore & Andrew Myers



# **Transportation Access: A serious issue**

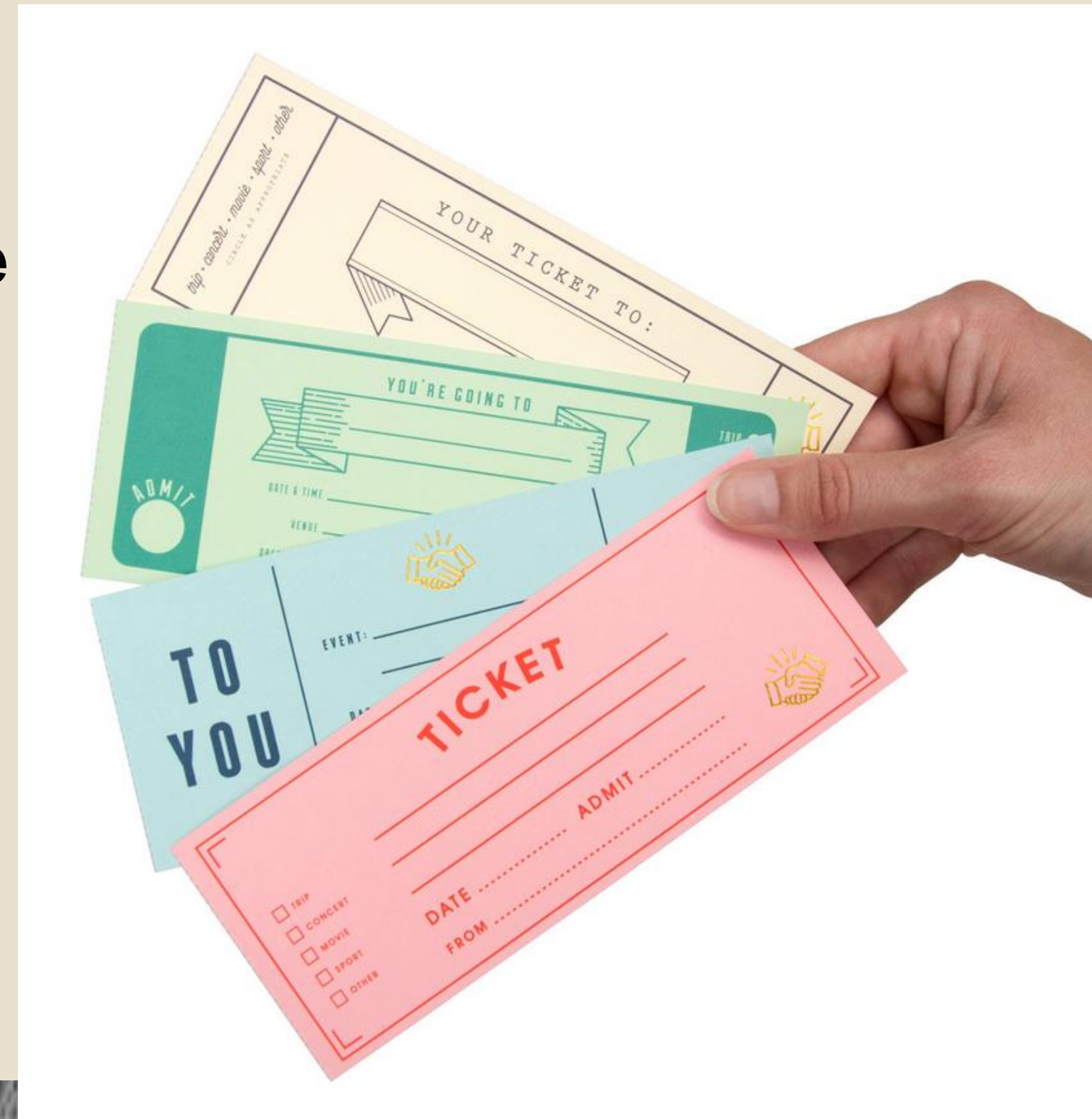
- **Everyone needs transportation to meet basic needs**
- **Solving transportation can help solve other problems**
- **Rural people with disabilities have particularly poor access to transportation**



**How does  
transportation fit with  
CIL services?**

# Transportation Vouchers: What Are They?

- **Voucher:** A physical or digital ticket, coupon, or pass that can be exchanged for a ride
- **Consumers “spend” vouchers;** providers are then reimbursed
- **CILs:**
  - **Assign voucher budgets to consumers**
  - **Track voucher use**
  - **Reimburse transportation providers**
  - **Procure funding**



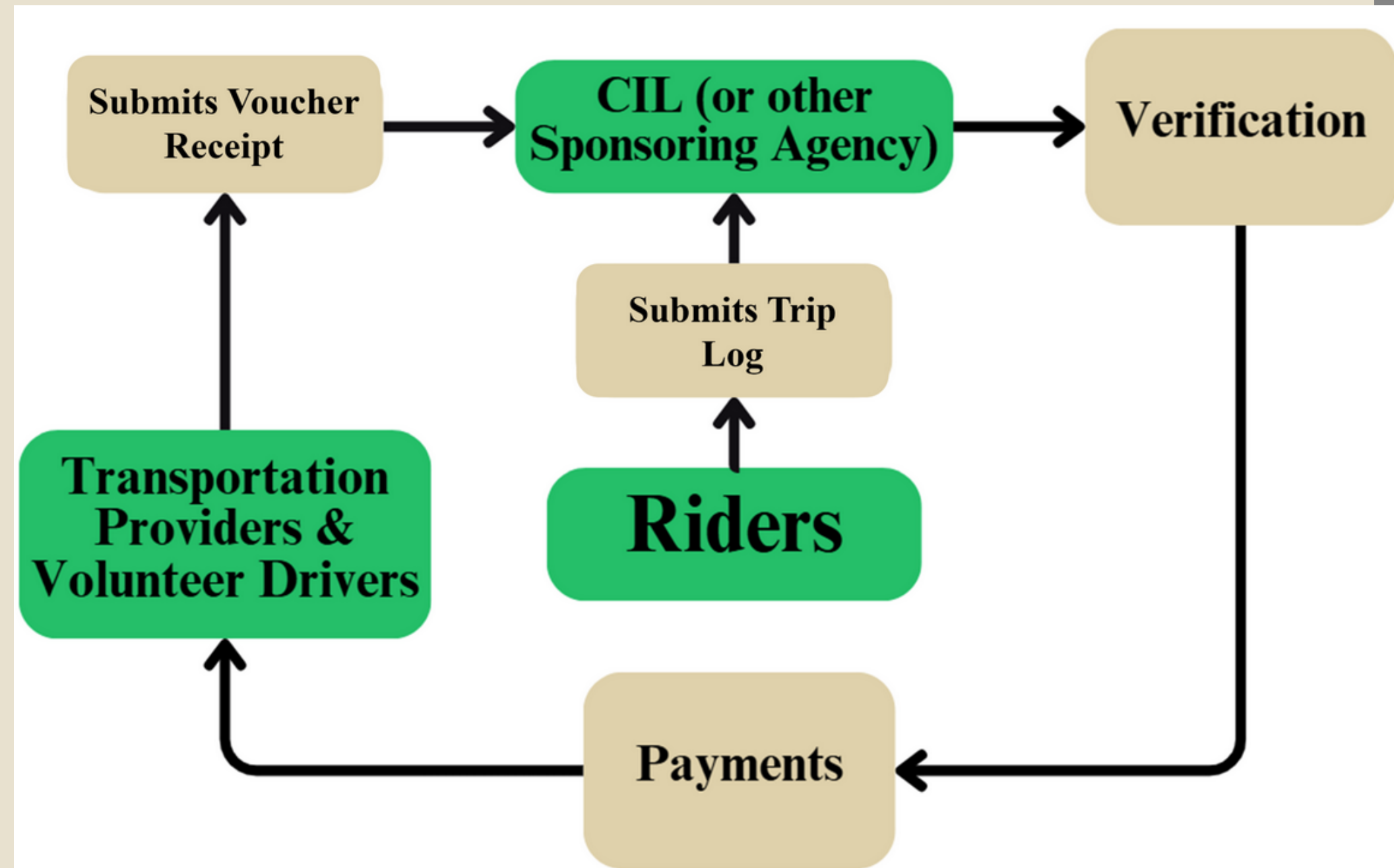
# Transportation Vouchers: How Do They Work?

- **Transportation providers:**
  - **Volunteer drivers**
  - **The bus**
  - **Taxis**
  - **Church shuttle, etc....**
- **Volunteer drivers:**
  - **Not employees**
  - **Existing family/friends OR a shared pool**
    - **Mileage reimbursement is not an income, it helps drivers break even**



# Transportation Vouchers: An Example

- Rider gets on the bus
- Rider gives bus driver a voucher
- Bus driver records the trip
- Rider & provider send each of their receipts to the sponsoring agency
- The CIL verifies the trip and reimburses provider



## **How are these programs funded?**

- **Grants from State DoTs**
- **“Other” funding sources**
- **We have a ton of information about it**



## **How do voucher programs affect consumers?**

**“Being stuck in four walls for so many years, you know, it's very frustrating. I now have the freedom to do what I want, when I want, like anybody else” - Rider**

**“I didn't have access to transportation for at least 15 to 20 years... It was hard, it just sucked. When I became a quad I was only 22 and I had two and three year old girls. When they were in school I couldn't go to their performances. Now I can go see my grandkids.” - Rider**



# How do voucher programs affect consumers?

**“I don't know what I'd do without it. It has allowed me to make sure that I can make my medical appointments. It's allowed me to go out and socialize, when other times I might not have gone” -Rider**



**“It's been really important to me, personal wise, family wise, independence wise. Just feeling not left out, always being the one that's never there, never in any pictures... Being stuck in four walls for so many years, you know, it's very frustrating” -Rider**

# How do voucher programs affect consumers?

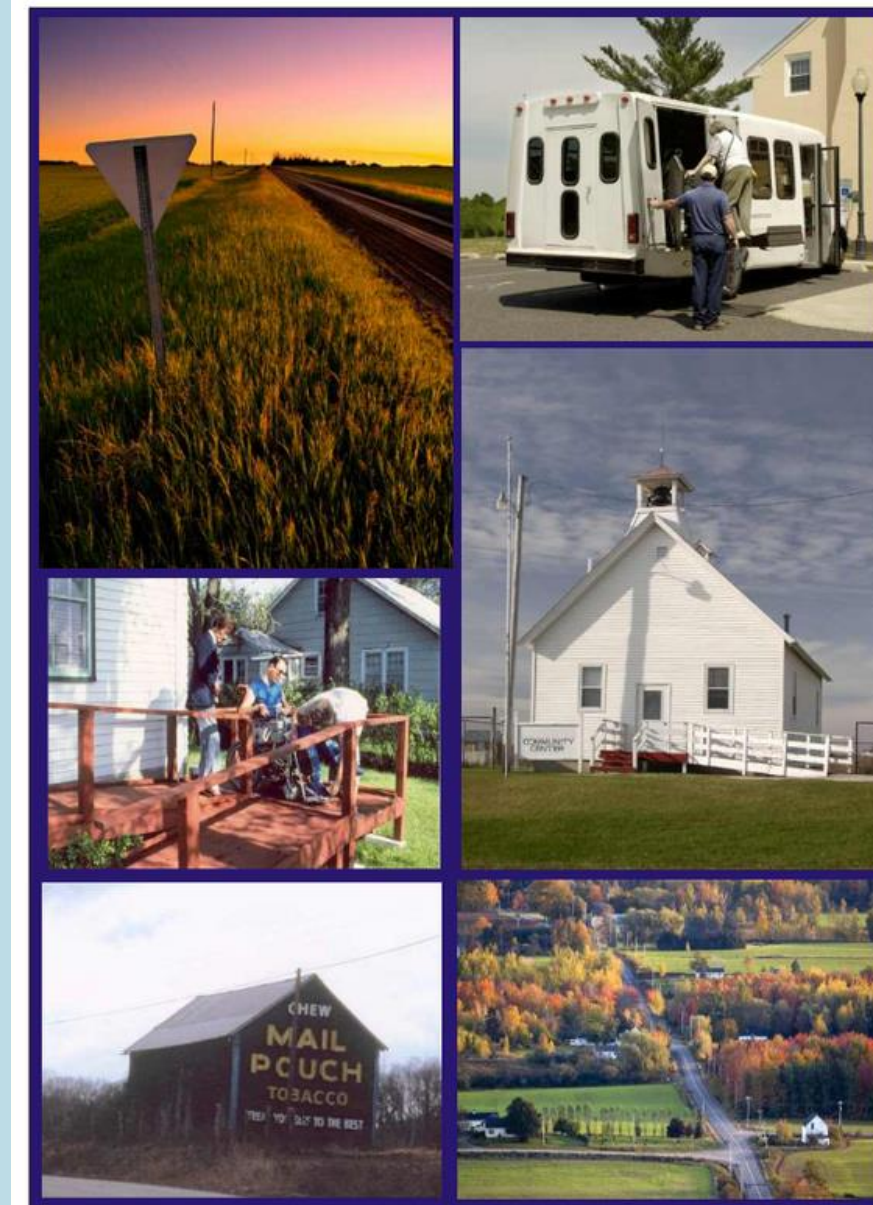


**“Every year our volunteer drivers provide between 300,000 to 400,000 miles of volunteer driver trips. That's equivalent to taking a trip to the moon and almost all the way back to Earth. That's 20,000 rides.” - Program Manager**

**“Gas costs money. Maintaining a car costs money. I don't feel right saying ‘come get me’ without giving them something, even if it's only a little bit in return.” -122 (Rider)**

# History of Transportation Voucher Programs

- 1999: The Original RTC:Rural Toolkit
- The old toolkit lead to CIL programs
- Rewriting and updating the old toolkit
- Collaborating with transportation experts



## Toolkit for Operating a Rural Transportation Voucher Program

*updated August 2017*



Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living

# The Rural Transportation Voucher Program Toolkit

- **Goal: A free resource for CILs to use**
- **We analyzed the old toolkit with our group of transportation experts.**
- **Years of feedback & guidance**
- **Interviewed consumers and managers**
- **Identified consumer preferences, best practices**



# **The Rural Transportation Voucher Program Toolkit**

- **We have a finished version of the new toolkit**
- **It is a comprehensive step-by-step guide to creating and managing a voucher program**
- **Designed for slow progress over time**
- **Includes a suite of modular tools**



# **RURAL TRANSPORTATION VOUCHER TOOLKIT WEBSITE QR CODE**



**The Transportation  
Voucher Website**

**LINK TO THE**  
**WEBSITE**

# Rider Enrollment

Section 2 of 5

## Demographic & Contact Information



This section asks about the new rider's demographic and contact information.

Email

Short answer text

Rider's Name

Short answer text

Rider's Date of Birth

Month, day, year



# The Individual Transportation Plan

3	Reason for the Ride	Destination	Potential Transportation Provider
4	Medical	Dialysis twice a week	Local Bus, need help on weekends though
5	Social	Different friends' homes, coffee shop	Dorothy drives me places
6	Shopping	Grocery store	Dorothy
7	School	Part time @ the university	Local Bus
8	Work	Work @ the university	Local Bus

# Digital Voucher Trip Submission Form

Date of Trip \*

Month, day, year



Please enter the reason for your trip \*

Social

Shopping

Medical

Personal/Business

School

Work

Religious

Other: .....

How did you get there? \*

Ride from a friend, family member, etc...

Taxi

# Automated Voucher Trip Tracking Sheet 1

Timestamp	Email Address	Rider ID	Would you like to receive an email record of your remaining voucher Budget?	Date of Trip	Please enter the reason for your trip
3/6/2025 11:08:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Social
3/6/2025 11:08:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Social
3/6/2025 11:08:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Social
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Shopping
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Medical
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Personal/Business
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	School
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	tc00016 mistake	Yes	11/24/2024	Work
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Religious
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	Other
3/6/2025 11:12:14	TestRidermistake1@gmail.com	ftc00016	Yes	11/24/2024	School
3/6/2025 11:18:14	TestRider2@gmail.com	tht00032	Yes	11/25/2024	School
3/6/2025 11:18:14	TestRider2@gmail.com	tht00032	Yes	11/25/2024	Work
3/6/2025 11:18:14	TestRider2@gmail.com	tht00032	Yes	11/25/2024	Religious



# Automated Voucher Trip Tracking Sheet 3

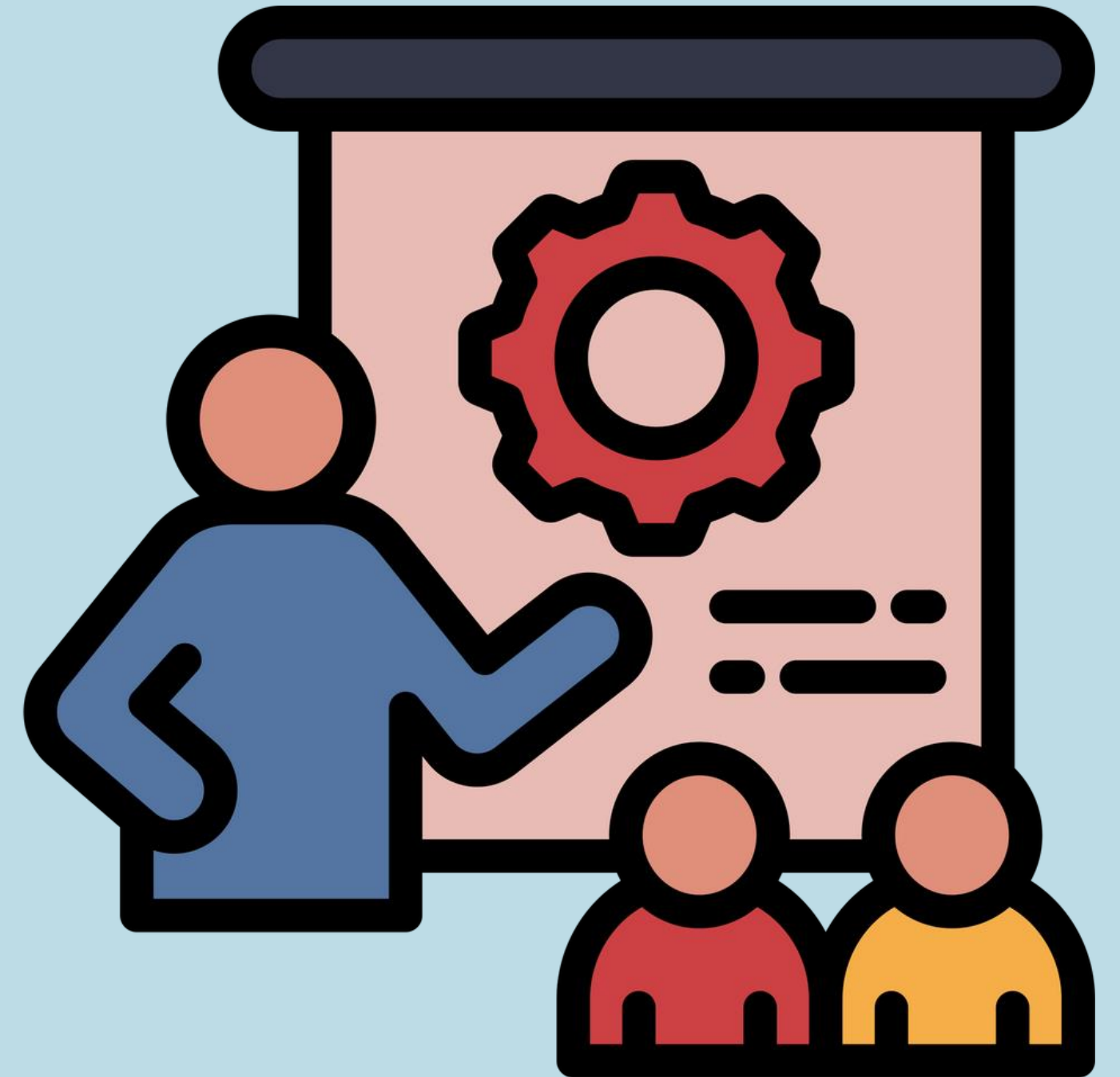
Date start	11/1/2024	All Purple Text is a formula- <i>DO NOT TOUCH</i>				
Date end	12/31/2024	<-----CHANGE THESE DATES TO MATCH THE CURRENT BUDGET PERIOD				
Email Submitted	Rider ID Submitted	Date of Trip	Volunteer Driver Submitted	Valid Email?	Valid Rider ID?	Valid Volunteer Driver?
TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016	11/24/2024	Test Driver Mistake2	Valid Email	Valid ID	Invalid Driver
TestRider1@gmail.com	ftc00016 mistake	11/24/2024		Valid Email	Invalid ID	N/A
TestRidermistake1@gmail.com	ftc00016	11/24/2024		Invalid Email	Valid ID	N/A
TestRider2@gmail.com	tht00032	11/25/2024	Test Driver Mistake	Valid Email	Valid ID	Invalid Driver
TestRidermistake2@gmail.com	tht00032	11/25/2024	Test Driver3	Invalid Email	Valid ID	Valid Driver
TestRidermistake2@gmail.com	tht00031 mistake	11/29/2024	Test Driver Mistake3	Invalid Email	Invalid ID	Invalid Driver
TestRider3@gmail.com	zsl00048	11/25/2024	Test Driver Mistake	Valid Email	Valid ID	Invalid Driver
TestRidermistake3@gmail.com	zsl00048	11/25/2024	Test Driver3	Invalid Email	Valid ID	Valid Driver
TestRidermistake3@gmail.com	zsl00049 mistake	12/5/2024	Test Driver Mistake3	Invalid Email	Invalid ID	Invalid Driver
ruraltranspo@gmail.com	ioc00064	11/25/2024	Test Driver Mistake	Valid Email	Valid ID	Invalid Driver
ruraltranspomistake@gmail.com	ioc00064 mistake	11/25/2024	Test Driver Mistake4	Invalid Email	Invalid ID	Invalid Driver

**Think of a consumer at your  
CIL who struggles to run  
errands, make medical  
appointments, or see friends.**

**How could transportation  
vouchers help this consumer?**

# Recruiting Pilot Sites

- Recruiting two pilot sites
- Plan for, create, & manager your own transportation voucher program
- \$14,750 in seed funding
- Two years, starting early 2026
- Applications open now



# **RURAL TRANSPORTATION VOUCHER PILOT SITE APPLICATION**



# **Recruiting Workgroup Advisors**

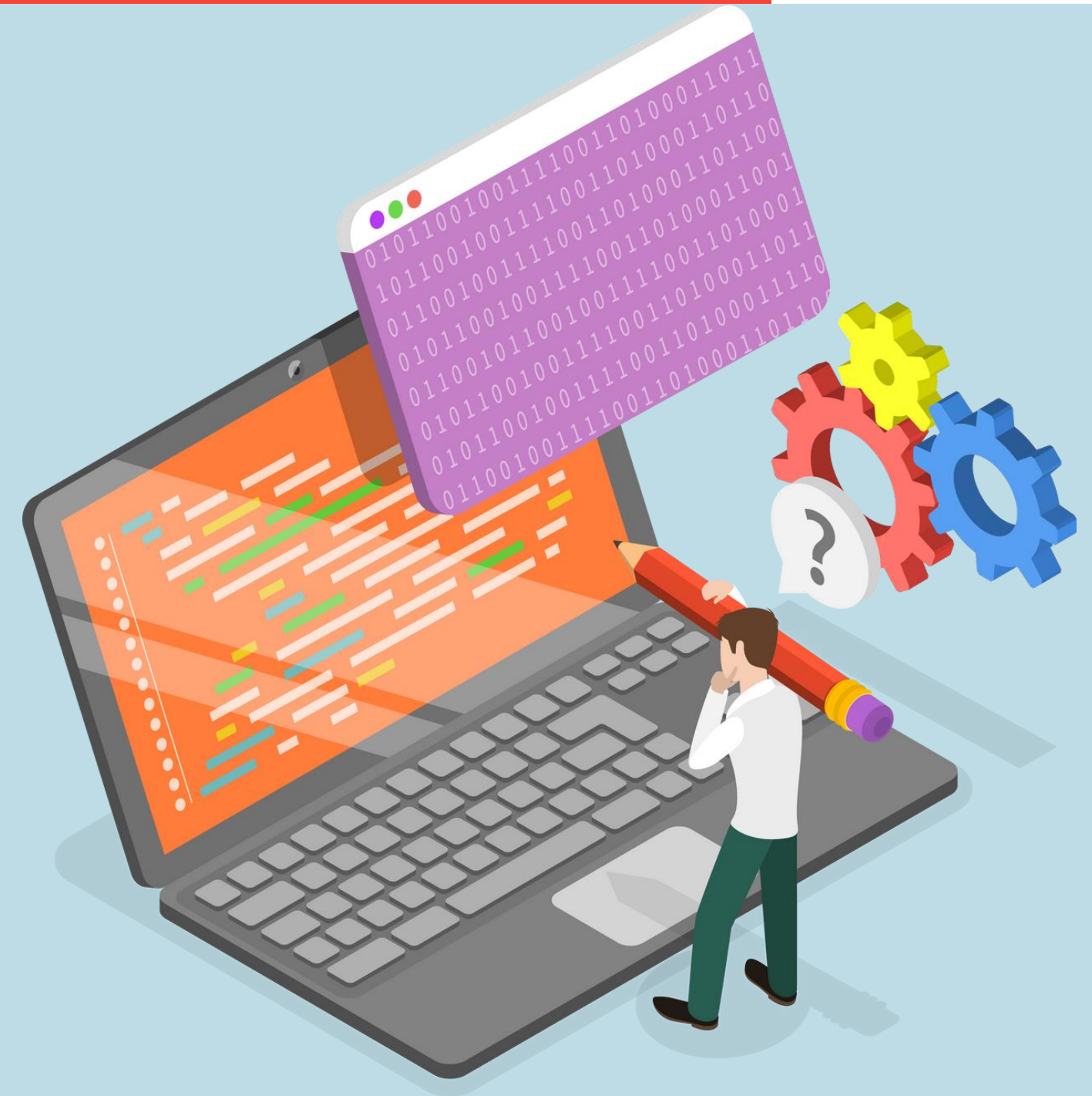
- **Recruiting transportation experts**
- **Participate in the refinement of this tool**
- **Monthly meetings, \$50 per meeting**

**Email [luke.santore@umt.edu](mailto:luke.santore@umt.edu) OR  
[andrew.myers@umt.edu](mailto:andrew.myers@umt.edu)**



# How can your CIL establish a voucher program?

- **Apply to be a pilot site**
- **Review the toolkit as we improve it based on pilot feedback**
- **Slowly prepare, build connections**



## Questions? (~20m)

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# THANK YOU