



ASK Transit

Inquiry on a Force Account

Information compiled on March 17, 2010.

The Question: Have you ever used a Force account to track labor expenses for a grant? If so, did you set up a new account in an existing department or did you create a new department for the grant related labor costs? Also, what did you charge to the force account? Labor, benefits, other?

Asotin County says ...No.

Ben Franklin says ...No.

Columbia County Public Transportation says...We have never used a force account.

Community Transit says... We are currently dealing with force account issues and I believe that the question may stem from the FTA's new emphasis on Force Account Plans:

The updated FTA Circular 5010.1D (11-1-08) redefined what type of work is considered Force Account to now include Preventive Maintenance. Force Account includes wage/salary & benefit costs of your own labor force (no materials or supplies).

We are in the process of developing a Force Account Plan to justify using our in-house labor for Preventive Maintenance grant projects.

The requirement is that we calculate the "cost of force account work to be performed under the grant" (FTA C 5010.1D page IV-35). This calculation is for the purpose of determining if the grant project will be over \$10,000,000 in which case the Force Account Plan must be pre-approved by the FTA before any expense is incurred.

We will not be tracking Preventive Maintenance Force Account work in our financial system because we only need to know the value of the grant project. Since we only charge labor & benefit expenses to the grant, we know the value of our force account work through our grant billing records. Even if we did charge materials & supplies, the labor portion should already be separated as part of the grant records, so it should be easy to pull out.

I hope that this helps. We do not have a fully FTA approved plan at this time, but will be willing share the document in the future.

Everett Transit says... we do have a method for applying internal costs to a grant. I believe we have a force account document in place with FTA. Generally, we job cost grant expenditures. Our job cost

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reports capture hours, gross pay and benefits as well as any other expenditures that we pay under the job cost number. It's a neat system that takes care of summarizing general ledger activity for grant purposes.

Grant Transit says... Does not apply to GTA

Grays Harbor Transit says...Grays Harbor Transit has never used one.

Intercity Transit says... Never used one of these accounts

Island Transit says...Island Transit does not use force accounts for Labor

Jefferson Transit says....Jefferson Transit does not use Force account to track labor expense.

Pierce Transit says...Pierce Transit has identified separate cost center codes to track all maintenance expenditures. The cost centers include the following divisions: maintenance bus, maintenance auto and support, maintenance facilities, maintenance administration and maintenance training. We include expenditures for all object codes including wages, benefits, supplies, services, utilities, repairs and maintenance, rentals, service contracts, and miscellaneous. If you have additional questions, please let me know. We would be interested in know what other transits are doing to track force account expenditures.

Spokane Transit says...Yes, for term employment only. We set up separate general ledger accounts for labor and benefits, under a capital grant. I don't recommend doing it, unless it's the only way to consume the grant. It brings additional audit scrutiny, especially if the talents and services are used for any other transit business other than the specific scope of the grant. Splitting time requires additional reviews and certifications. All labor and benefits were charged to the force account general ledger accounts.

Twin Transit says...No.

Whatcom Transit says...We have never had to use force accounts for either capital projects or operating expenditure tracking for grant purposes.

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