

## **CAPS Quick Facts**

### ***What is CAPS?***

“CAPS,” which stands for Coordinated Access to Paratransit Service, is a small series of pilot grant programs currently being explored by a joint intergovernmental effort including the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).

### ***Why is CAPS necessary?***

WMATA, like many transit providers nationwide including MTA, faces increasing paratransit ridership needs and escalating costs for customers eligible for federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant services with special needs that exceed ADA mandates. According to federal ADA mandates, paratransit agencies may not have “capacity constraints” and cannot deny trips to eligible riders. In FY 2014, WMATA budgeted \$54 per MetroAccess trip, and Maryland accounted for 60 percent of MetroAccess service. MDOT and WMATA agreed to coordinate efforts on a CAPS pilot program to determine if alternate transportation services were feasible and could save money. Every dollar saved through a CAPS trip could be reinvested in serving the larger MetroAccess community through fixed rail and traditional MetroAccess paratransit services.

### ***How has MetroAccess grown and what does it cost the State of Maryland?***

MetroAccess ADA paratransit service averaged 15 percent growth each year for the last ten years. MetroAccess’ specialized market needs increased from 24 to 40 percent in Maryland. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, MDOT’s subsidy to WMATA for MetroAccess was \$64 million and Metrorail service was \$78 million, despite a 70:1 ridership ratio.

### ***What does CAPS do?***

CAPS is intended to provide participants with an alternative transportation delivery option to MetroAccess. Through various pilots and the ability to test the feasibility of a larger competitive grant program, MDOT seeks to demonstrate that the travel experience for a group of individuals in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC can be equal to or better than MetroAccess while providing a significant cost savings to the State of Maryland.

### ***How does CAPS work?***

MDOT works with WMATA and MetroAccess to identify potential human service agencies (HSA) willing to participate in a pilot program. By its nature, a pilot program is temporary and, in this case, small in scope. MDOT aims to continue implementing a series of small pilots throughout FY 2015 to explore appropriate uses of this grant funding, develop an implementation plan for HSAs, and test performance measures to report the outcomes to various groups and governmental oversight bodies. The HSA is key to a successful CAPS pilot program because it must be willing to accept the burden of declaring participant eligibility, survey participants, participate in weekly progress conference calls, provide monthly and quarterly reporting, subcontract with third-party transportation providers, dispatch calls, and communicating with all parties involved. While the HSA’s administrative costs are reimbursable under the grant agreement, not every HSA will possess the resources and ability to implement a successful program.

### ***Is there currently a CAPS pilot program?***

Yes. MDOT and an HSA in Montgomery County entered into a FY 2014 CAPS Pilot Program Secretary’s Grant Operating Agreement. The pilot started October 21, 2013 and ends December 31, 2014. The pilot involves 45 participants required to be MetroAccess eligible and using MetroAccess at the time the pilot began. By week 26, a CAPS trip cost \$32 per trip. The actual average cost per MetroAccess trip for the same period was \$51.60. With a total of 6,771 trips during the 26 week period, the cost avoidance to the State of Maryland was \$166,567.

### ***What is the future of CAPS?***

Since MDOT executed only one grant agreement for 45 participants with highly specialized needs, MDOT is cautiously optimistic about the results to date. In addition to cost avoidance savings, preliminary qualitative data indicates high satisfaction with the service provided. MDOT is in the process of determining what questions remain for a large scale competitive grant program and plans to use the FY 2015 timeframe for additional small feasibility pilots of different transportation delivery options. These additional pilots will seek to answer questions about the ability to replicate results, reporting methodology, and performance measures for various pilot models.