

Affordable Transportation/Auto Services

Introduction

Transportation is a common issue for low-income students, many of whom often can't afford cars/car repairs and are forced to rely on inefficient public bus routes going to and from school. It is important for institutions to recognize these circumstances and to promote alternative transit options such as rideshare/carpool services. Institutions should also coordinate with local officials to help improve public transit, and explore auto repair discounts available in their area for students.



Student Discounts

Many companies offer student discounts and coupons for available services.



Carpool to School

Carpooling with fellow students is a proven way to reduce costs and promote energy efficiency.

Implementation

Most low-income students cannot afford cars and rely on public transportation in their commute to school. Unfortunately, this presents a problem for both schools and students that reside in more isolated locations, as public bus routes are designed to provide service to more highly-populated urban areas. Institutions with these issues should contact their local city officials and encourage them to apply for grants (see **Resources**) that would help toward funding a more effective transport system. Calling local representatives to express your concerns and spread awareness can go a long way in changing your area's infrastructure for the better.

In addition, rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft have made it easier for people to get around without their own vehicles, but it is still an expense that most low-income students cannot afford. Some institutions have examined the possibility of encouraging students with cars to sign up as Uber or Lyft drivers and then providing those students with a discount on gas in exchange for prioritizing picking up/taking home fellow students in need (who could also receive vouchers for discounts on those rides).

See our **Best Practices** and **Resources** on the right sidebar for more information on available grants, auto repair coupons and examples of successful college rideshare programs.

"For low-income rural residents, long commutes and lack of transportation are barriers, and isolate the rural poor from services and programs designed to lift them out of poverty."¹

Best Practices

- Contact automotive repair services, TCATs in your area about available service coupons/discounts for students
- Contact your local government representatives about available transportation grants
- Identify your campus need for rideshare assistance

Resources

- [Car repair assistance](#)
- [Zipcar for universities](#)
- [Everett CC Carpool](#)
- [Enterprise Rideshare-Vanpool](#)
- [RTA Rideshare Program](#)
- [Memphis Area Rideshare Program](#)
- [Austin CC Carpool](#)
- [Midas Coupons](#)
- [Good Year Auto Service](#)
- [Meineke Auto Services](#)
- [Dept. of Transportation Grants and Programs](#)

¹Madelaine Criden, National Association for State Community Service Programs (2008). [The Stranded Poor: Recognizing the Importance of Public Transportation for Low-Income Households](#)