

Volunteer Drivers in Minnesota

Benefits and Barriers



HUMPHREY SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

2016 Study

- Better understanding of
 - Organizations who rely on volunteer drivers
 - Types of Trips
 - Challenges to providing services, including
 - Reimbursement
 - Insurance
- Prioritize
 - Which barriers would be most productively addressed
 - Suggestions for helping providers address these barriers



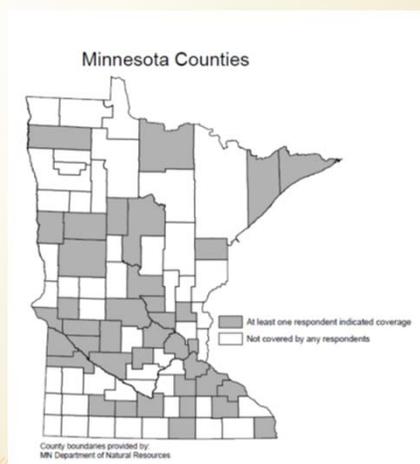
Method

- Developed list and contact information for human service providers in Minnesota
 - building on list from 2015 Vehicle Sharing study
 - Original source: provider directories available at <http://www.coordinatemntransit.org>
- Developed and administered on-line survey examining
 - organization,
 - services provided and
 - challenges faced



Respondents

- 230 Providers identified in regional plans
- Surveys sent to 188 valid e-mail addresses
- 45 responded (~24% response rate)
 - 10 metro
- 35 non-metro counties listed as served

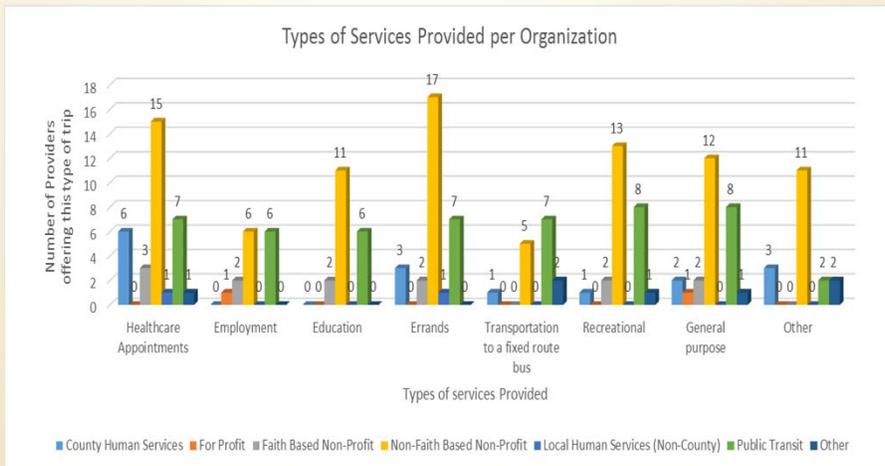


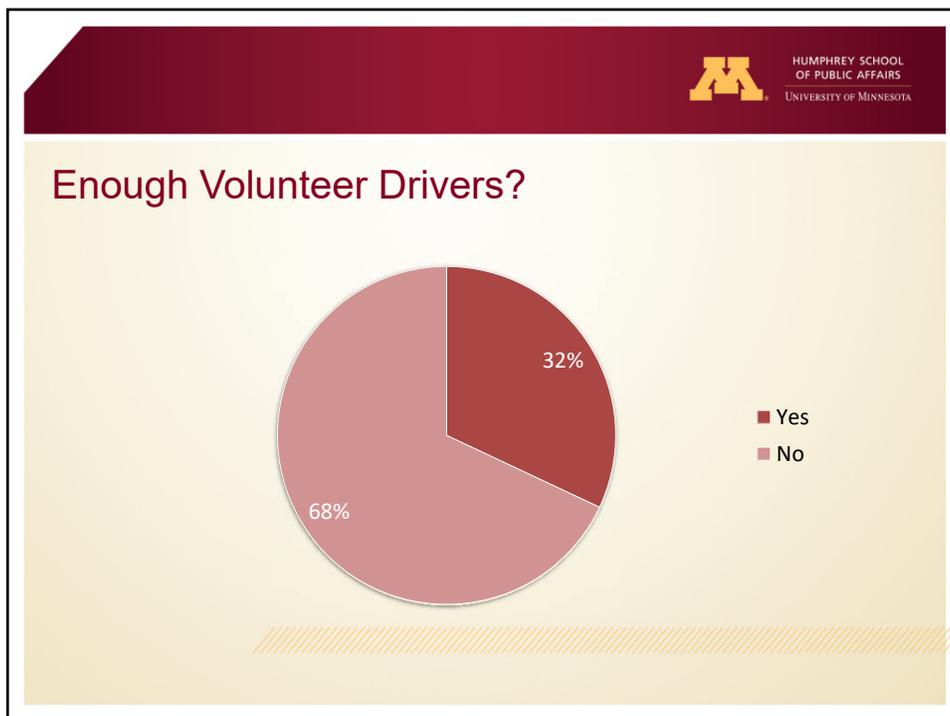


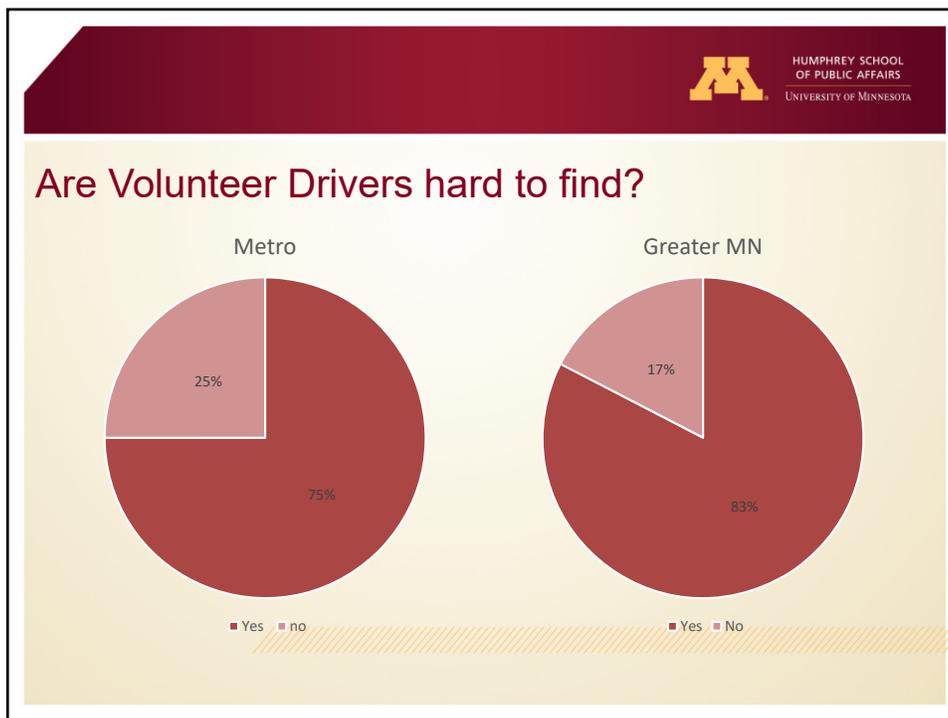
Respondents

- 30 respondents utilize volunteer drivers
 - 900 total drivers
 - 50% between ages 65 and 69
- 429 trips per month
- 32,616 volunteer hours per month
 - 36 hours per volunteer per month
 - 391,000 hours each year

Respondents: Types of Services Provided

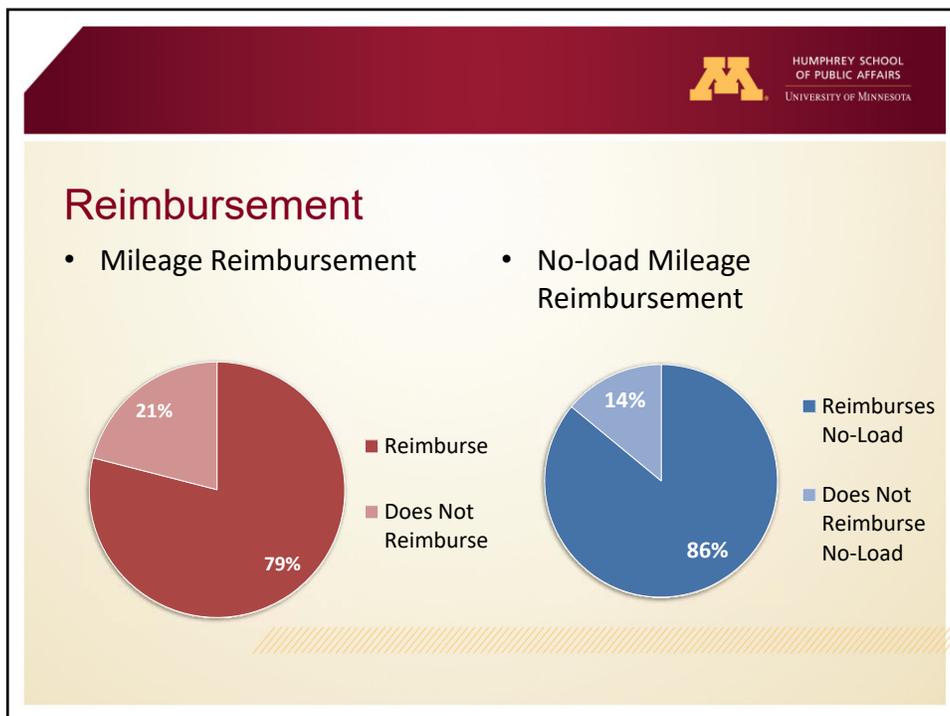


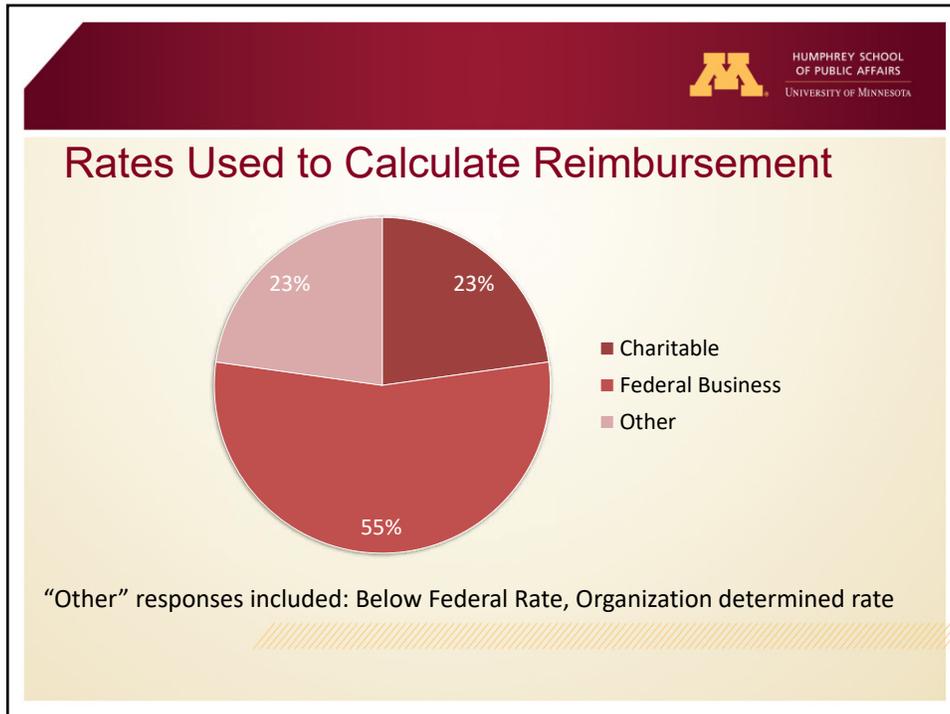




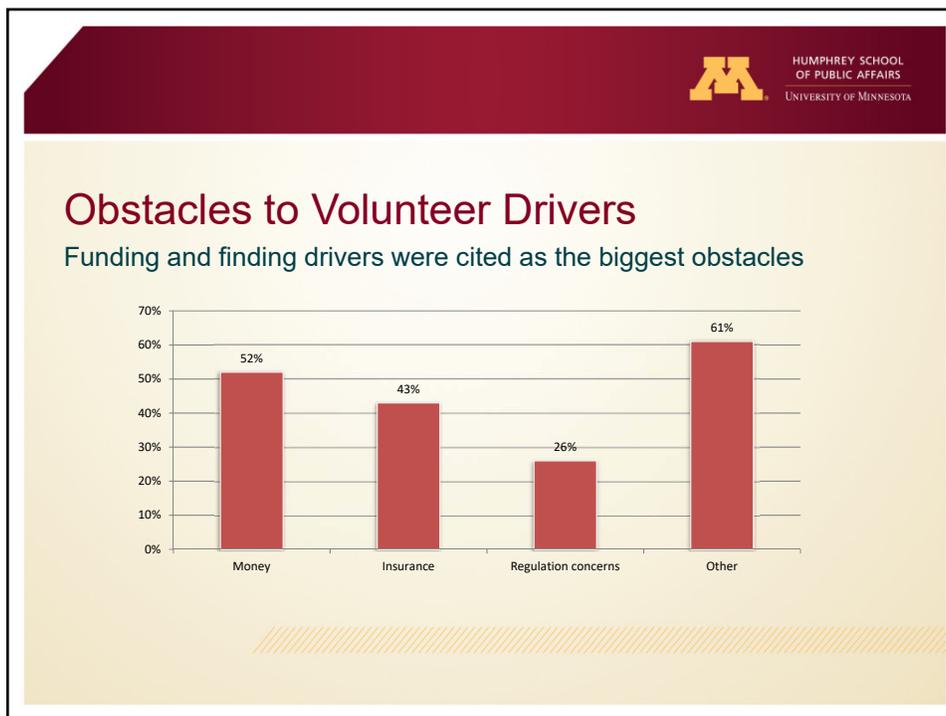
Cancelling Trips Due to Lack of Drivers

		Is It Hard to Find Volunteer Drivers?	
		Yes	No
Have you Had to Cancel Trips Due to Lack of Drivers?	Yes	15	0
	No	8	5





- ### Reimbursement Recommendation
- Consider additional incentives for attracting volunteer drivers, such as allow reimbursement to organizations that pay for no-load miles.



Insurance Barriers

- “We are hearing concerns from insurance companies regarding if volunteer drivers needing more than just personal coverage. Also costs insurance costs continue to rise for our umbrella policy for coverage.”
- Drivers feel nervous using their own coverage and want to be covered by organization
- Drivers are afraid their rates will go up
- Some volunteers are told they need special insurance to volunteer
- Insurance companies treating reimbursement as compensation (i.e. as if employees)



Legal / Insurance Issue

- Volunteer Drivers largely unregulated
 - Mn Stat 174: sets out regulations for providing these services, and specifically exempts volunteer drivers
 - Rise of transportation network companies (Uber / Lyft) created confusion over whether MN Stat 65b.472 included volunteer drivers



Insurance Recommendation

- Develop a definitive definition of “Volunteer Driver” that can be exempted from “for hire” classification (to clarify 65b.472 issue)
 - Reimbursement rate
 - Trip Purpose


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Thank You - Questions?

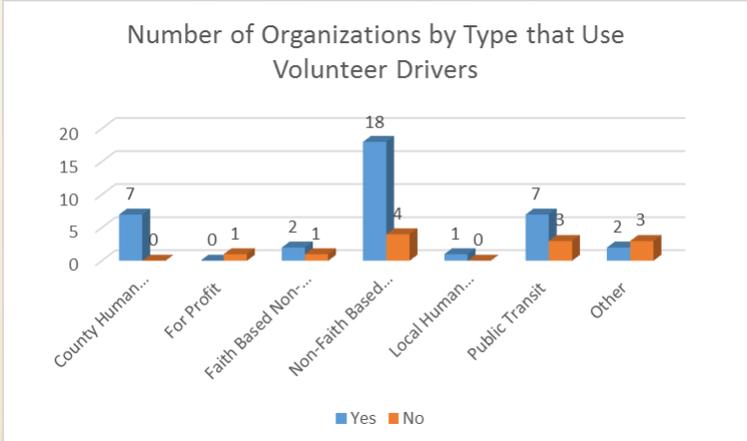
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- Report available at:
<http://www.cts.umn.edu/Publications/ResearchReports/pdfdownload.pl?id=2768>


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Respondents

Number of Organizations by Type that Use Volunteer Drivers



Organization Type	Yes	No
County Human...	7	0
For Profit	0	1
Faith Based Non...	2	1
Non-Faith Based...	18	4
Local Human...	1	0
Public Transit	7	3
Other	2	3



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- “Other” Obstacles to Volunteer Drivers**
- “Not enough drivers”
 - “need accessible appropriate vehicles”
 - “Having money to pay for expenses before the trip and waiting for reimbursement”
 - “Billing procedures for transit reimbursement are cumbersome and vary with each county and insurance company”
 - “We are hearing concerns from insurance companies regarding if volunteer drivers needing more than just personal coverage. Also costs insurance costs continue to rise for our umbrella policy for coverage.”