

FTA National Transit Workforce Development Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028

PREPARED BY

Transit Workforce Center
International Transportation Learning Center



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration



AUGUST
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23

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FTA Report No. 0251

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Transit Workforce Center (TWC)
International Transportation Learning Center
(ITLC)

SPONSORED BY

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Metric Conversion Table

| SYMBOL | WHEN YOU KNOW | MULTIPLY BY | TO FIND | SYMBOL |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| LENGTH | | | | |
| in | inches | 25.4 | millimeters | mm |
| ft | feet | 0.305 | meters | m |
| yd | yards | 0.914 | meters | m |
| mi | miles | 1.61 | kilometers | km |
| VOLUME | | | | |
| fl oz | fluid ounces | 29.57 | milliliters | mL |
| gal | gallons | 3.785 | liters | L |
| ft³ | cubic feet | 0.028 | cubic meters | m ³ |
| yd³ | cubic yards | 0.765 | cubic meters | m ³ |
| NOTE: volumes greater than 1000 L shall be shown in m ³ | | | | |
| MASS | | | | |
| oz | ounces | 28.35 | grams | g |
| lb | pounds | 0.454 | kilograms | kg |
| T | short tons (2000 lb) | 0.907 | megagrams (or "metric ton") | Mg (or "t") |
| TEMPERATURE (exact degrees) | | | | |
| °F | Fahrenheit | 5 (F-32)/9 or (F-32)/1.8 | Celsius | °C |

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| 14. ABSTRACT The Federal Transit Administration's National Transit Workforce Development Strategic Plan outlines goals and objectives to address workforce challenges in the public transportation industry from 2023 to 2028. The Biden-Harris Administration's labor investment through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law supports workforce development initiatives, with funding opportunities available for training and retention efforts. The Transit Workforce Center (TWC) expands technical assistance and promotes diversity and inclusion in recruitment, training, and career advancement. The Strategic Plan recognizes the need to prioritize worker health and safety post-COVID-19 and emphasizes the importance of partnerships and data sharing. This Strategic Plan has six overarching goals including worker safety, investment, recruitment, retention, skills development, and metrics. Extensive stakeholder engagement and collaboration with the US Department of Labor contributed to the Strategic Plan's development, and ongoing refinement and evaluation processes are in place. Regular dialogues with strategic partners ensure effectiveness and alignment with relevant programs. The strategic plan serves as a guide for a diverse and vital workforce in the public transportation industry. | | | | | |
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Section 1

Executive Summary

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) mission is to improve America's communities through public transportation. We envision a better quality of life for all built on public transportation excellence. This first FTA National Transit Workforce Development Strategic Plan creates a roadmap of specific goals, objectives, and key performance indicators to ensure a strong public transit workforce that can meet this mission. The planned timeframe is 2023 to 2028 when the industry will continue to undergo many changes and challenges. Today, transit agencies are facing major issues in recruiting and retaining frontline positions like vehicle operators and maintenance staff. Emerging technologies such as transitioning transit fleets to low- or no-emission vehicles require retraining and/or recruiting new maintenance personnel and building new maintenance infrastructure. There continue to be impacts with retirements, post COVID-19 related issues, safety concerns, technological advancements, and a competitive labor market.

To address these challenges, the Biden-Harris Administration has made a significant labor investment through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), leading to various workforce development initiatives. Funding opportunities for workforce development activities and projects include 0.5 percent of FTA formula funds and five percent of grants for low and zero-emission vehicles. This investment aims to support training and retention, especially as the industry transitions to zero-emission electric vehicles.

The Transit Workforce Center (TWC), established by the FTA, expands technical assistance efforts focused on industry workforce needs. The TWC is managed by the International Transportation Center (ITLC). This moment presents opportunities to prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging in recruitment, training, and career advancement. The transition to zero-emission vehicle fleets requires new skill sets, which can be facilitated through expanded training programs. A renewed focus on training and advancement promotes registered apprenticeship programs and mentorship to support the industry's future generation.

The aftermath of COVID-19 further emphasizes the need to recruit and retain the workforce while prioritizing worker health and safety. Strengthened partnerships and collaborations with labor, education, community organizations, and workforce development entities are essential to address the industry's workforce needs. Inter-agency partnerships promote data sharing and standardization to understand current and future workforce needs better current.

Meeting industry challenges and leveraging opportunities requires strategic planning. This Strategic Plan outlines FTA's key workforce goals and objectives to ensure the industry has the necessary tools and resources for a diverse workforce. Public transportation plays a crucial role in providing mobility and economic security, and this Strategic Plan serves as a guide for moving forward together.

This Strategic Plan was developed through extensive communication and engagement with various stakeholders in the public transportation industry. Over 18 months, FTA and TWC facilitated dialogues at conferences, meetings, webinars, and other events to assess needs and understand the industry's challenges and opportunities. In addition to these interactions, data collected through TWC's ongoing technical assistance work and collaborations with industry partners were used to enhance the knowledge base.

In developing this Strategic Plan, FTA, and TWC gathered input from key industry stakeholders through breakout group discussions, listening sessions, and opportunities to submit comments. These valuable discussions refined the initial goals and provided insights into specific objectives and activities necessary to achieve them.

This Strategic Plan identifies six Goals:

1. Worker Safety & Health
2. Workforce Investment
3. Recruitment & Outreach
4. Retention
5. Skills Development & Career Advancement
6. Workforce Metrics

Each Goal symbolizes a comprehensive, achievable, long-term, and durable outcome that the industry strives to accomplish. FTA collaborated extensively with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to establish these goals and define performance measures. FTA will maintain an ongoing process of refining these goals and measures as necessary. Regular dialogues with strategic partners, including the DOL, will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of these goals and measures and ensure alignment with relevant DOL programs.

To ensure effectiveness, each Goal includes strategic elements:

Strategic Objectives

These objectives follow the SMART method (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound). They outline realistic outcomes tied to key performance indicators.

Activities

These are the specific actions that will support the industry in making progress toward the strategic objectives. They set the stage for achieving the established goals.

Mission

To help transit agencies attract, develop, and retain a skilled, diverse, and engaged workforce equipped to meet the evolving needs of the public transportation industry.

Values

The values below serve as the fundamental principles that define the identity of this Strategic Plan and shape its approach to carrying out the specified work. They are the foundation of numerous strategic endeavors in fulfilling the Strategic Plan's mission. These values govern the interactions with all partners and dictate how one another is to be treated.

- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Equity
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Accessibility
- Partnership
- Transparency
- Excellence
- Accountability
- Respect
- Trust

Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1 Worker Safety & Health

Make the public transportation industry workplace safe and healthy for workers and customers by establishing, strengthening, and expanding health and safety initiatives, training, and support.

Strategic Objectives

- A. Support the exploration and development of engineering and design initiatives that can create a safer industry work environment.
 - 1. Enhance vehicle and public safety through research and design. Modify buses with secure barriers, comfortable seats, and improved visibility. Redesign buses to address air circulation, smoother rides, operator fatigue, distractions, breaks, and advanced technologies. These changes improve bus operators' workplaces and attract diverse r
 - 2. Make bus facilities safer by researching and designing improvements. This includes better ventilation, reducing trip hazards, and giving technicians safety equipment.
 - 3. Look into safety concerns and find solutions for operators and maintenance workers. This is especially important as the industry switches to all-battery electric vehicles and maintains electrical equipment like fast chargers and diagnostic tools.
 - 4. Make sure industry workers receive thorough safety training. This includes giving them the right gear, like Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), fail-safes, and teaching them how to use them correctly.
 - 5. Work with vehicle makers, nonprofit groups, and schools to improve safety training for industry workers.
- B. Help and share information about studies, projects, training, and other activities that promote workers' physical and mental well-being.
 - 1. Ensure worker stress and mental health challenges and solutions are acknowledged and explored through best practices.

2. Explore and support initiatives to deal with the issue of transit vehicle operator assault.
3. Explore options for flexible scheduling.
4. Share and spread knowledge about the best ways to make workplaces safe and healthy, including having flexible schedules.
5. Help make programs that let operators and workers have a say and be part of decisions and actions that affect their work environment in the industry.
6. Teach the community about keeping industry workers and operators safe and healthy and include them in developing solutions.
7. Make sure the training and help given to workers are respectful of different cultures. This includes training for supervisors and support for workers who speak English as a second language.

Table 1 Goal 1 Performance Indicators

| Indicator | Measurement Tracking | Timing |
|--|---|--------------|
| Identify a number of workplace safety accidents | Number of workplace safety accidents (OSHA type) | Annually |
| Determine types of workplace safety incidents | Number of workplace safety incidents (assaults data in NTD) | Annually |
| Hold transit frontline worker safety (and mental health/ well-being) training | Number of transit personnel trained | Annually |
| Fund new programs focusing on the safety and health of transit frontline employees (pending available funding) | Funding of two newly established programs | Through 2028 |

Workforce Development Examples

1. Public transportation agency automatically removes a driver from service after any attack, treating any attack as an incident from which an operator needs time to recover. Counseling is available to the operator who suffered the assault.
2. Public transportation agency re-engineered a 40-foot bus to include a secure operator compartment. The work began before 2020 and took on new urgency after the pandemic.

Goal 2 Workforce Investment

Invest in developing and training the public transportation workforce to support and achieve all workforce goals. This includes investments that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging (DEIAB) in the workforce.

Strategic Objectives

- A. Support sustainable investment in public transportation workforce development and planning.
 1. Promote workforce development and workforce strategic planning across key FTA programs.
 2. Encourage coordination of workforce funding programs and initiatives across governmental agencies at Federal and State levels, including working with partners and stakeholders at the local level, such as community colleges and workforce development organizations.
 3. Develop and disseminate materials on best practices and funding sources for workforce development, and support communication and dialogue across the industry on those best practices.
 4. Provide technical assistance to agencies on ways to access and utilize workforce development resources and explore tools to help agencies track the use of funds for workforce development.
 5. Support current labor-management committees and the establishment of new ones. In non-unionized settings, support communication with the frontline workforce on how resources can be used effectively.
 6. Gather and disseminate data and reports on the return on investment when public transportation agencies direct resources into workforce development initiatives.

- B. Ensure funding goes towards programs that help make the workforce more diverse, fostering a sense of belonging, ensuring equity, inclusiveness, and accessibility.
 1. Provide information on available funding from various sources such as Federal and State governments, state and local organizations, and employers. This funding can be used for programs that help create a diverse, fair, inclusive, and accessible workforce.
 2. Explore workforce funding opportunities that strengthen supportive services for a diverse workforce, such as childcare, housing, and accommodation support.
 3. Find and share the best ways to ensure everyone has equal workforce occupation opportunities and opportunities for advancement/skills development. These practices should make the workplace fair and give everyone a chance to succeed.
 4. Give industry partners information and tools to work with communities, schools, and workforce programs to ensure everyone has equal opportunities, access, and inclusion.

Table 2 Goal 2 Key Performance Indicators

| Indicator | Measurement | Timing |
|--|--|--------------|
| Jobs created by a workforce project as reported to FTA by transit agencies (note: in the future, any FTA-funded workforce project will be required to report the number of jobs created) | Count, annually | Through 2028 |
| Promote and note funding opportunities and associated resources (best practices, other examples) available to the industry published on TWC webpages | Number of resources created and updated annually | Through 2028 |
| TWC technical assistance responses and presentations to agencies and their partners on funding-related questions | 100 total technical assistance responses and presentations | Through 2028 |
| Benchmark industry investment in training and workforce development compared to the U.S. average for related industries | Percent of industry payroll invested, annually | Through 2028 |

Workforce Development Examples

1. Public transportation industry partners collaborated with a public transportation agency to obtain approximately \$1.2 million, their part of a \$9.1 million grant for apprenticeships. The grant will be used to broaden the agency apprenticeship program and prepare mechanics for the coming transition to zero-emissions buses.

2. Public transportation agencies hired military Veterans into their apprenticeship program who are receiving funding through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC), provides a monthly stipend to Primary Family Caregivers of eligible Veterans

Goal 3 Recruitment & Outreach

Make public transportation jobs more appealing by helping people learn about the value these jobs bring to communities and increasing recruitment and outreach activities from high school and later.

Strategic Objectives

- A. Support the implementation of industry-based career awareness and pipeline programs beginning in high school.
 1. Collect, share, and spread information about the best ways to create programs that help people learn about the value of public transportation careers and how to prepare for them.
 2. Help high schools, community colleges, and technical schools create programs that teach students about different public transportation careers and prepare them for these positions. Create programs and internships for students to learn about these jobs from an early age. Share information with parents, teachers, and school counselors to help young people explore opportunities in public transportation. Identify and explore changing policies that limit entry into frontline professions for persons under the age of 21.
 3. Find and show programs that help different groups of people who want jobs, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, and abilities to include homeless people, and those who were incarcerated but now have a second chance.
 4. Create and improve programs that help people get ready for jobs and apprenticeships. Include workers and representatives from the community, especially those who live there and have experience, to make the programs better and more connected to the community.
 5. Work together with different types of employers who have similar job needs. Link transportation companies looking for drivers and other jobs, and companies that work on things like energy and city infrastructure hire mechanics and electricians.
- B. Lead and help with plans, actions, and ideas that make it easier for everyone to join and work in the industry.

1. Make sure leaders support and invest in programs that include and treat everyone fairly and equally when hiring new people.
 2. Find and remove barriers preventing people from joining the industry. Look at how people are hired and any rules or ways of doing things that affect some groups more than others who have fewer opportunities.
 3. Share and display easier ways to hire and welcome new employees by explaining things clearly to people interested in joining. Look into and learn about rules and ways of doing things that impact how people can get training for industry-specific licenses like Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL).
 4. Help make sure that jobs in the industry offer competitive salaries, good benefits, bonuses, and take care of important things like having time for family, finding a place to live, choosing when to work, and being in a safe and healthy workplace where people help and support each other.
 5. Encourage working together with labor unions, schools, government, groups, and the community who all want to make sure that everyone has a fair chance to join the workforce and be included, no matter who they are.
 6. Encourage analysis of data at the national, regional, and local levels to make sure that the right facts and figures about the job market are current. This will help to understand what the industry needs in the future and plan accordingly.
- C. Develop materials, resources, and activities that support the implementation of effective recruitment strategies, techniques, and campaigns.
1. Give examples of the best ways to reach and talk to different groups of people. Show how to share messages about jobs in public transportation that focus on helpful services and being environmentally friendly.
 2. Create templates and collections of examples that show how to make attractive materials and events for finding new employees. Make tools for the industry to find and use different databases and organizations that can help hire a wide range of people. This includes websites where you can search for jobs online.

3. Develop strategies and platforms to facilitate nationwide dissemination of career information. This entails providing comprehensive details about the diverse roles within public transportation and the responsibilities associated with them. Additionally, outline the pathways to accessing these positions, as well as highlight the opportunities for entering, progressing in, and receiving ongoing training and education within these careers. Furthermore, showcase personal narratives from workers, shedding light on their individual positions and the journeys they undertook to build their careers.
4. Share knowledge and effective techniques about how to recruit and plan for the future of an organization through various mediums such as online resources, webinars, presentations, and personalized support to help with putting these strategies into action.

Table 3 Goal 3 Key Performance Indicators

| Indicator | Measurement | Timing |
|--|---|--------------|
| Apprentices completing a program | Count, annually | Through 2028 |
| Enrolled apprentices | Count, annually | Through 2028 |
| Change in time to fill vacancies | Percent change, annually | Through 2028 |
| New and redesigned pre-apprenticeship, pre-employment, and career awareness programs | At least 20 | Through 2028 |
| Dissemination of new national level career awareness, pre-apprenticeship, and pre-employment resources | At least 30 | Through 2028 |
| Dissemination of new national level recruitment examples resources | At least 50 | Through 2028 |
| Level of representation from currently underrepresented communities | Number of industry EEO reports to FTA and future data collection through BLS collaboration on public transportation employee demographics | Through 2028 |
| Level of diversity in key medium to high-skill occupations such as bus technicians | Number of industry EEO reports to FTA and future data collection through BLS collaboration on public transportation employee demographics | Through 2028 |
| Average time to fill key positions | Trend tracking using industry reports, annually | Through 2028 |
| Average time from interview to hiring | Decrease in the number of days to hire, annually | Through 2028 |

Workforce Development Examples

1. The Transit Workforce Center (TWC) developed a National Transit Frontline Worker Recruitment Toolkit titled #ConnectingMyCommunity containing materials, resources, tools, tips, and strategies public transportation agencies can use to support recruitment campaigns.
2. A public transportation agency worked with local colleges and community groups to review and revamp its hiring requirements, eliminating certain elements that were creating barriers and disproportionately impacting potential candidates from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups. In addition, the partnership with a local college includes an outreach specialist and a program that prepares vehicle operators by providing support in completing the agency's application.

Goal 4 Retention

Promote initiatives that retain a diverse workforce.

Strategic Objectives

- A. Support the implementation of retention initiatives.
 1. Offer examples of best practices in public transit employee retention and provide access to reports and resources demonstrating successful retention initiatives.
 2. Develop and share information and helpful resources about wage and benefit packages that help increase employee retention rates. These packages should include competitive pay and a wide range of benefits, such as comprehensive healthcare, retirement plans, ample vacation and leave time, and paid training (including CDL training). Additional benefits should include assistance with childcare and housing, access to legal support, educational benefits like tuition assistance, partnerships with educational institutions for earning degrees and certifications, and faster opportunities for promotions to the highest level of pay in a particular job category.
 3. Evaluate programs that support the workforce and help keep employees in their jobs. These initiatives may include programs that focus on physical and mental health, accommodations for people with disabilities and seniors, maintaining a good work-life balance, and programs that enhance the overall quality of work-life.
 4. Investigate and adopt strategies that reduce the number of people who quit during the early stages of joining and training, such as implementing mentoring programs.
 5. Collaborate with unionized and non-unionized employees to create programs and maintain regular communication that addresses the current workforce's concerns and needs. These initiatives aim to support local labor-management partnerships and ensure the retention of employees.
 6. Work with the union or frontline workers in non-union environments to examine different scheduling ideas. This includes exploring options for flexible schedules like four-day work weeks, for example. Additionally, consider the importance of seniority, creative ways to assign extra shifts, personalized routes, and choices for part-time or full-time employment.

-
7. Encourage conducting regular interviews with employees who are leaving to understand the reasons behind their decisions. This information can be used to create a system that effectively communicates and utilizes these insights to improve efforts in retaining the current workforce.
- B. Provide guidance and support for initiatives that focus on retaining employees and aim to establish, strengthen, and expand programs that promote diversity, fairness, inclusivity, and equal opportunities.
1. Develop a positive work environment and culture that actively supports and enhances programs to retain employees and promote diversity, fairness, inclusivity, and equal opportunities.
 2. Engage in conversations with the union or frontline workers in non-union environments to discuss practices that can encourage diversity, fairness, inclusivity, and accessibility.

Table 4 Goal 4 Key Performance Indicators

| Indicator | Measurement | Timing |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Workforce shortage reduction (calculated as the % change nationally from the NTD in the number of transit employees every two years) | Percent change, every two years | Through 2028 |
| Collection and sharing of examples of retention best practices | At least 20 | Through 2028 |
| Compensation rates | Longitudinal trend, annually | Through 2028 |

Workforce Development Examples

1. A public transportation agency established an in-house childcare center, as well as a series of partnerships with childcare and eldercare organizations accessible to employees.
2. A public transportation agency shortened the time needed to reach the top-level of its pay scale by six months. Other agencies have reduced the number of steps needed to reach the top of the pay scale.

Goal 5 Skills Development & Career Advancement

Ensure that workers in the public transportation industry receive the essential training and expertise encompassing both present-day technologies and upcoming advancements. It is crucial to provide industry workers with accessible educational and training prospects that foster career advancement. This encompasses endeavors to cultivate a workforce that values DEIAB.

Strategic Objectives

- A. Create programs, tools, and assistance at the national level that help the workforce in different job areas to improve their skills and advance their careers through ongoing training and earning credentials.
 1. Offer help and share examples of how transit workers can climb the career ladder or benefit from a career lattice (moving laterally across functions) by gaining new skills and certifications. This includes providing case studies, clear guidelines, and requirements that show how others have succeeded in advancing their careers in the transit industry.
 2. Help, share information, and provide examples of apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs that connect to clear career paths and opportunities for advancement.
 3. Offer help and share examples of creating effective mentoring programs that are well-organized and provide proper training for mentors. Additionally, provide examples of how these programs can lead to career growth and advancement.
 4. Promote and share examples of working together through partnerships between labor and management or between frontline workers and management in non-union settings. These partnerships aim to create and implement training, education, and advancement programs.
 5. Help and share examples of how to establish partnerships with educational institutions for training purposes. These partnerships can provide opportunities to earn academic credits towards a degree. Additionally, explore collaborations with other training organizations that possess relevant expertise.

6. Promote continuous involvement in assessing workforce needs, evaluating programs, and developing a wide range of skills. These skills include technical abilities and important "soft" skills like customer service, mental health awareness, and understanding of homelessness.
 7. Look into and support useful ways to share information about the best methods and resources, including training materials, training methods, and curriculum. One option to consider is using cloud-based learning management systems at the national level.
 8. Provide information about training-related funding opportunities available to agencies and training partnerships, along with clear guidance on the various ways training funding can be used.
 9. Explore varied forms of standardized training for a range of positions and in a range of formats, including online training resulting in (stackable) credentials.
 10. Offer information and potential funding opportunities for CDL training. Investigate the challenges and efficient methods of delivering CDL training, which may include internal training, local/regional training partnerships, and available resources.
- B. Provide guidance, support, and a range of resources to create, support, and strengthen skills development initiatives for new technologies.
1. Aid in conducting research, collecting data, and sharing information to understand how new technologies may affect workers. This will help make informed decisions regarding the creation of new jobs, changes in traditional job roles and tasks, and the skills needed for future jobs.
 2. Promote collaborations with educational institutions and schools, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM), and other providers of new technologies and services. These partnerships can assist in supporting and training workers on the use of emerging technologies.
 3. Provide direct resources to the industry on training and training-the-trainer programs.
 4. Offer support and share examples of effective practices to ensure that training is provided and there are enough staff members to support ongoing training on new technologies. This applies to both current employees and new hires.

- C. Support training and advancement initiatives to strengthen and increase workforce DEIAB.
1. Aid in collecting and reporting accurate data to track the representation of diverse individuals in different skill and leadership positions within the public transportation industry. This tracking should be done at national, regional, and local levels, considering the diverse nature of different locations, including both urban and rural areas.
 2. Promote and assist initiatives that offer opportunities for diverse groups of workers to receive training and mentoring. These opportunities help individuals enter and diversify traditionally non-diverse public transportation positions and careers.
 3. Investigate and create solutions to overcome any existing barriers that prevent underrepresented groups of workers from accessing advanced training opportunities.
 4. Promote and provide resources on the best methods for creating workplaces that are DEIAB. These resources focus on offering training and advancement opportunities for everyone.

Table 5 Goal 5 Key Performance Indicators

| Indicator | Measurement | Timing |
|--|---|--------------|
| New and redesigned registered apprenticeship programs | At least 5 | Through 2028 |
| Number of new and redesigned mentorship programs | At least 5 | Through 2028 |
| Development and dissemination of major national ZEB training resources | At least 20 | Through 2028 |
| Agency level tracking of apprentice program graduates, including diversity data | At least data from 5 agencies | Through 2028 |
| Trend in promotions among underrepresented populations | 2 percent increase, annually | Through 2028 |
| Ongoing and new FTA funding initiatives supporting training, new training offerings, and training partnerships | At least 2 new initiatives created | Through 2028 |
| Delivery of public transit training courses | Number of courses delivered annually | Through 2028 |
| Transit agency employees trained | Total number of transit employees receiving training annually | Through 2028 |

Workforce Development Examples

1. Several public transportation agencies across the country have established successful registered apprenticeship programs for operators and technicians. Many new and existing programs have been supported by the Transit Worker Center's American Transit Training and Apprenticeship Innovators Network (ATTAIN) network, which provides public transit agencies and their frontline workers opportunities to engage in peer exchanges about transit apprenticeships, including their creation, structure, operation, and benefits.
2. Public transportation agencies have entered successful training partnerships for apprenticeship programs, training, and potential pathways for credit and certification with community colleges.

Goal 6 Workforce Metrics

Enhance the availability of data on workforce development and establish measures to help the public transportation industry and its stakeholders make informed decisions. Ensure that data are collected to evaluate activities and outcomes related to DEIAB.

Strategic Objectives

- A. Gather and study data about the public transportation workforce, including information on DEIAB. These data will help the industry and its stakeholders comprehend workforce-related information and make informed decisions regarding funding and activities for workforce development at national, regional, and local levels.
 1. Examine present and upcoming challenges and opportunities in the industry's workforce due to factors like changing demographics, retirement of experienced workers, the arrival of new workers from different generations, public health emergencies, technological advancements, service demands, and competition from other industries for talented individuals.
 2. Encourage the gathering, examination, and use of detailed stories, studies, and qualitative data to enhance our understanding of career paths and progressions in the field of public transportation.
 3. Evaluate immediate and future shortages in the workforce and identify skill requirements on a national scale. Showcase effective methods for assessing workforce needs at regional, state, and local levels.
 4. Establish techniques and standards for acquiring adequate and relevant data related to DEIAB while considering the demographics of the communities that the industry serves.
 5. Collect and examine information and data to document how zero-emission technologies, automation, and other technological advances will impact the future of the industry.

- B. Refine workforce project performance goals and measures building upon recommendations shared with the General Accountability Office.
1. Share the below list of workforce development project performance measures widely with the transit industry and encourage the use of those measures to assess workforce projects. Continually refine these measures on a yearly basis based on transit agency feedback:
 - Percent of workforce shortage reduction over a year
 - Percent change in time to fill vacancies
 - Number of jobs created by the project
 - The number of enrolled apprentices
 - The number of apprentices completing the program
 - Number of mentors and mentees
 - The number of new employees retained after one year
 2. Consider establishing performance objectives for workforce development programs that focus on specific job roles as needed, such as addressing emerging technology-based occupations.
 3. Identify various performance metrics, both quantitative and qualitative, that are relevant to evaluate the effectiveness of programs. These metrics can include financial measurements like costs, benefits, and return on investment to assess the value and impact of the programs.
 4. Ensure these metrics evaluate activities and outcomes related to DEIAB.
- C. Support the design and utilization of tools to perform comprehensive program evaluations and assess how well the industry's workforce development programs meet objectives. Demonstrating program performance and outcomes to key stakeholders and supporting continuous improvement are tools that should help agencies and their partners to:
1. Conduct performance evaluations and convey results.
 2. Document qualitative and quantitative metrics, including:
 - Participant satisfaction
 - Participant's days/months/in job
 - Turnover
 - Millennial Population Impacts
 - Learning gains
 - Career ladder progressions, retention, and wage increases

- Performance improvements and cost savings in transit operations and maintenance attributable to workforce development initiatives
3. Assess the financial benefits and costs of workforce development initiatives.
 4. Track progress on key performance metrics for specific transit workforce development programs against industry averages to demonstrate overall program effectiveness.

Table 6 Goal 6 Key Performance Indicators

| Indicator | Measurement | Timing |
|---|---|--------------|
| Development of clear, consistent, and standardized performance measures, data reporting processes for transit workforce development efforts as well as tools and resources to assist with agency implementation | Publication for dissemination to the public transportation industry | Through 2028 |
| Development of a set of benchmarks against related industries | Publication for dissemination to the public transportation industry | Through 2028 |
| Maintain a set of recommended performance measures for workforce projects and post on the TWC resources website | Revise and update annually | Through 2028 |

Workforce Development Examples

1. Several transit agencies with new or established mentorship and apprenticeship programs collect rigorous and extensive data. Examples of data points collected are six-month and one-year retention rates for new hires/ program participants, absences and incidents involving new hires, and the demographic profiles of program cohorts and mentors.
2. The International Transportation Learning Center’s (ITLC) “Metric of Success” series documented multiple measurable performance improvements following the formation of the Keystone Transit Career Ladder Partnership in Pennsylvania and the Project Empire Transit Career Ladder Partnership in New York state.

Section 3

Conclusion

Transit systems play a vital role in their communities. These services are a lifeline to jobs, healthcare, education, parks/recreation/leisure, spending time with friends and families, and other community connections. Communities with transit systems typically have more opportunities for health and wellness – people can walk, bike, roll, and stroll often without having to use or access a car. Many people who live in urban areas forego owning a car. For those within access to transit resources, they can reduce car utilization. Climate impacts and air quality are improved through the reduction of vehicle emissions due to shared rides. However, these benefits are predicated on whether the industry can retain and recruit the workforce they need today and tomorrow.

Therefore, the General Accountability Office recommended that FTA develop a national transit workforce strategic plan. This new FTA National Transit Workforce Development Strategic Plan, 2023 to 2028, is the culmination of many years of outreach, discussion, and stakeholder engagement. The result is a concise and, we hope, compelling set of six goals with a series of strategic objectives, activities, key performance indicators, and workforce development examples. These goals and plans provide a comprehensive approach to all aspects of public transportation workforce development and a roadmap for achieving safety and health protections, investing in recruitment, retention, training, and advancement, and implementing metrics to support and measure success.

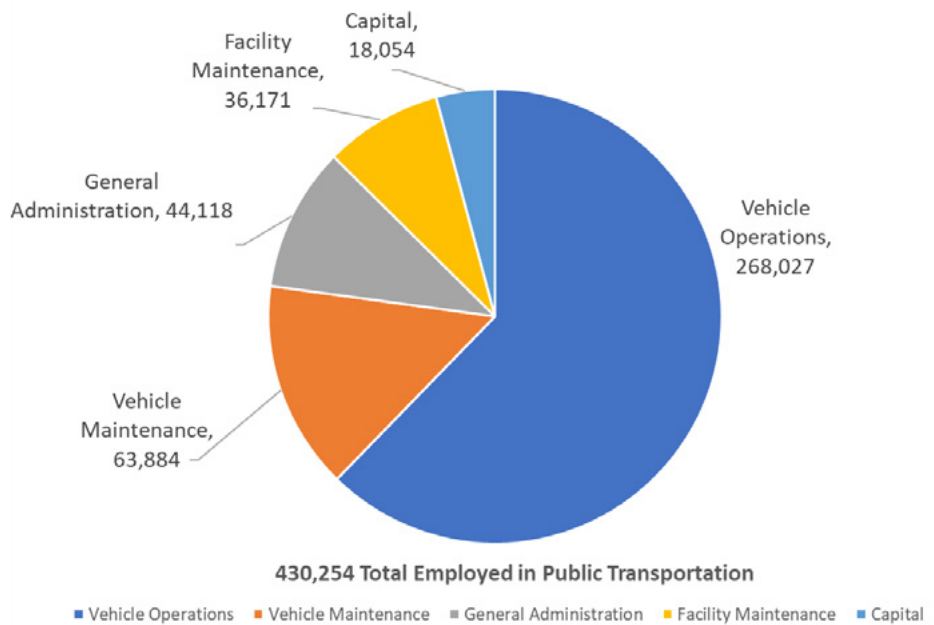
The implementation of these goals must be a collective and collaborative effort at all levels - Federal, State, and local - to ensure the public transportation industry can meet the workforce needs of today and tomorrow. We must address the labor and skills shortage, support the current workforce, advance workforce DEIAB, and maintain as well as enhance the infrastructure necessary for the future of the industry's workforce training and development needs. By achieving these goals, the public transportation industry can strengthen, expand, and enrich its current and future workforce, enabling it to carry out its mission to improve America's communities and advance opportunities for all.

FTA is dedicated to furthering funding, collaborating, and providing national leadership to support public transit workforce development through actualizing this strategic plan. Transit workers prove the value of transportation services every day in their communities. A career in any transit occupation is one that gives back to the community. We must ensure that there is a strong infrastructure of safety, training, mentorship, flexibility, support, and fairness that ensures we can recruit and retain a robust transit workforce. We hope you will join FTA and our national workforce technical assistance resource – the Transit Workforce Center, to help achieve these goals.

Appendix A

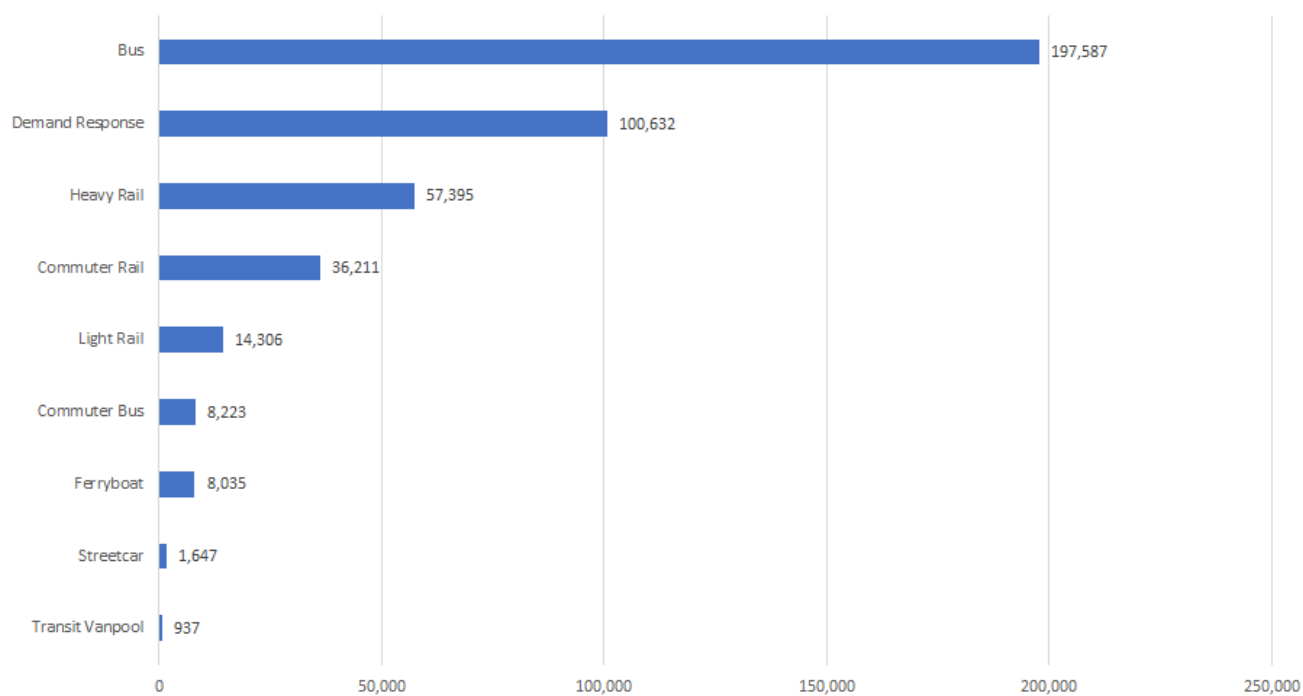
Key Statistics on the Public Transportation Workforce

The following tables, charts, and lists provide key data points related to the public transportation industry workforce. Appendix A includes information on employee counts across occupational categories and modes, average employee wages, and other related data.



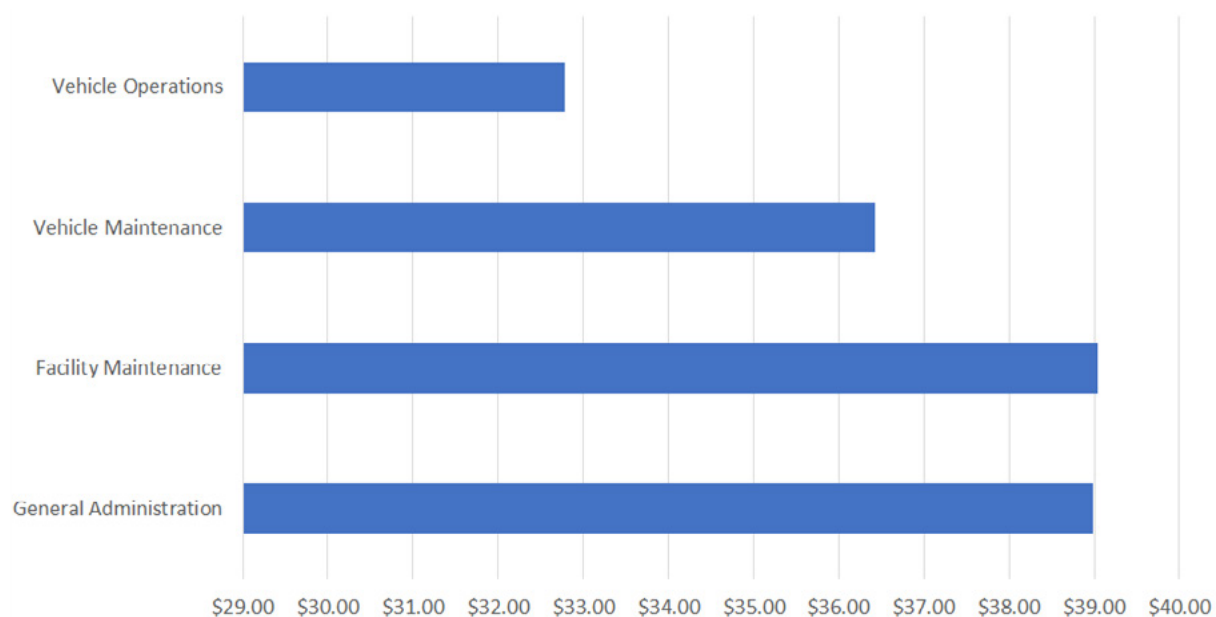
Source: TWC analysis of 2022 Public Transportation Fact Book, American Public Transportation Association. <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-2022-Public-Transportation-Fact-Book.pdf>

Figure 1 Employees by Occupational Category



Source: TWC analysis of 2022 Public Transportation Fact Book, American Public Transportation Association.
<https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-2022-Public-Transportation-Fact-Book.pdf>

Figure 2 Employees by Mode



Source: Federal Transit Administration (2021). National Transit Database [Data set]. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd>

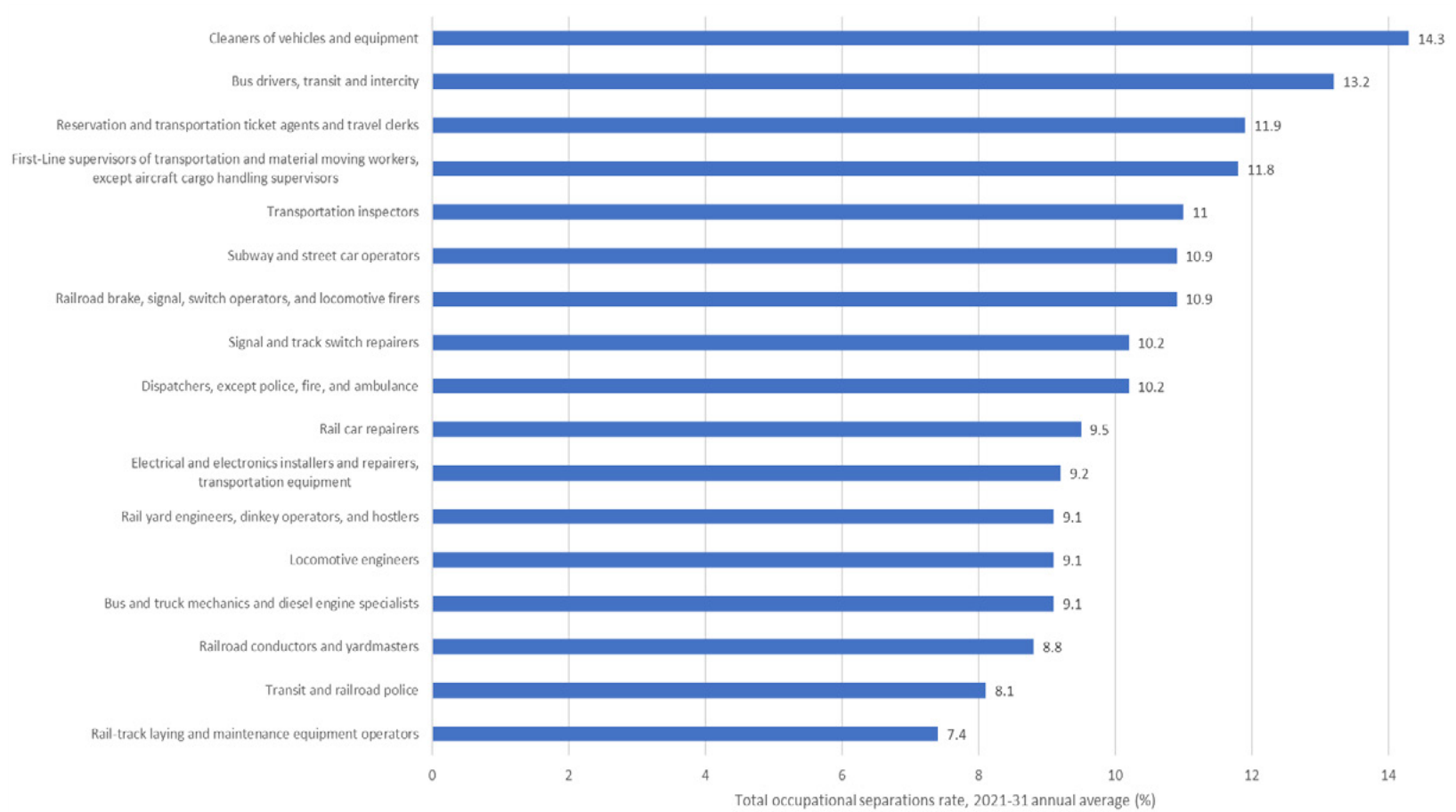
Figure 3 Average Hourly Wage by Occupational Category

Notes: Please note that these data only include employees in directly operated services at Full Reporter agencies (systems receiving Urbanized Area Formula Grants and operating more than 30 vehicles or either fixed guideway or high intensity busways).

Projected Annual Average Labor Force Exits and Occupation Transfers in Transportation-related Occupations, 2021-31 (Ordered by Total Separations Rates)

| Occupation | Employment change, 2021-31 (%) (A) | Labor force exit rate, 2021-31 annual average (%) (B) | Occupational transfer rate, 2021-31 annual average (%) (C) | Total occupational separations rate, 2021-31 annual average (%) (D) |
|--|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Cleaners of vehicles and equipment | 5.8 | 5.4 | 8.9 | 14.3 |
| Bus drivers, transit and intercity | 8.2 | 7.9 | 5.3 | 13.2 |
| Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks | 7.4 | 4.6 | 7.3 | 11.9 |
| First-Line supervisors of transportation and material- al moving workers, except aircraft cargo handling supervisors | 5.5 | 3.6 | 8.2 | 11.8 |
| Transportation inspectors | 1.8 | 3.9 | 7.1 | 11 |
| Railroad brake, signal, switch operators, and locomotive firers | 1.2 | 4.2 | 6.7 | 10.9 |
| Subway and streetcar operators | 3.5 | 4.2 | 6.7 | 10.9 |
| Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance | 0.1 | 4.1 | 6.1 | 10.2 |
| Signal and track switch repairers | 3.7 | 3.6 | 6.6 | 10.2 |
| Rail car repairers | 3.7 | 3.2 | 6.3 | 9.5 |
| Electrical and electronics installers and repairers, transportation equipment | 3.5 | 3.1 | 6.1 | 9.2 |
| Bus and truck mechanics and diesel engine specialists | 4.3 | 3.3 | 5.8 | 9.1 |
| Locomotive engineers | 4.7 | 2.9 | 6.2 | 9.1 |
| Rail yard engineers, dinkey operators, and hostlers | 2.1 | 2.9 | 6.2 | 9.1 |
| Railroad conductors and yardmasters | 4.7 | 2.3 | 6.4 | 8.8 |
| Transit and railroad police | 3.2 | 3 | 5.1 | 8.1 |
| Rail-track laying and maintenance equipment operators | 4.4 | 2.2 | 5.2 | 7.4 |

Source: TWC analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics. Table 1.10 Occupational separations and openings, projected 2021-31. <https://www.bls.gov/emp/data/occupational-data.htm>



Source: TWC analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics. Table 1.10 Occupational separations and openings, projected 2021–31.
<https://www.bls.gov/emp/data/occupational-data.htm>

Figure 4 Projected Annual Average Separations in Transportation-related Occupations, 2021-31

Appendix B

List of Acronyms

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
APTA - American Public Transportation Association
ATTAIN - American Transit Training and Apprenticeship Innovators Network
BIL – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
BLS – Bureau of Labor Statistics
CBA - Collective Bargaining Agreement
CDL - Commercial Driver's License
COVID-19 - Coronavirus Disease 2019
DBE - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
DEIAB - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging
DOL – US Department of Labor
EDI - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
EEO - Equal Employment Opportunity
EV - Electric Vehicle
FLSA - Fair Labor Standards Act
FY - Fiscal Year
FTA - Federal Transit Administration
IAP - Individualized Assistance Plan
ITLC - The International Transportation Learning Center
KSA - Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
MBE - Minority Business Enterprise
MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization
NTD - National Transit Database
OEM - Original Equipment Manufacturers
OMB - Office of Management and Budget
OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PCAFC - Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers
PPE - Personal Protective Equipment
PT - Public Transit
PTASP - Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans
SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound
SOP - Standard Operating Procedure
TWC – Transit Workforce Center
VA - Department of Veterans Affairs
VET - Veterans
WFD - Workforce Development
ZEB – Zero-Emission Bus



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