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August 2024
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Message from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues:

We continue to make progress on our safety regulatory agenda. On August 14, 2024, FTA [published](#) final updates to the [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program \(PTSCTP\) regulation \(49 CFR part 672\)](#). The final rule streamlines communication and administrative processes, clarifies voluntary participation and recertification training requirements and responds to comments received on the PTSCTP Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM).

The final rule maintains the existing minimum training requirements for State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) personnel who conduct reviews, inspections, examinations and other safety oversight activities of public transportation systems and transit agency employees and contractors directly responsible for the safety oversight of a rail fixed guideway public transportation system. FTA will host a webinar to provide more information about PTSCTP updates and will announce the date soon.

The final training rule follows the April 2024 publication of the [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans \(PTASP\)](#) final rule and [National Transportation Safety Plan](#), furthering the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law requirements to make transit safer for passengers and workers nationwide. FTA hosted a webinar on August 13, 2024 and you can view the recording and presentation [here](#).

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, educating our children and families about transit safety is important, particularly around rail grade crossings. Operation Lifesaver Inc., (OLI) has age-targeted [resources](#) for children to encourage transit safety best practices. For agencies, OLI opened the application period for its competitive Rail Transit Safety Education Grants offering \$190,000 in funding for transit agencies and government entities that provide transit service to conduct rail transit safety education and public awareness initiatives. [Submit applications](#) by September 1, 2024.

In late June, the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) met to continue defining and providing transit safety information, advice and recommendations to the U.S. Transportation Secretary and FTA Administrator. FTA published three TRACS reports on advancing rider and worker safety, reducing bus collisions and cyber and data security. View their recommendations on the [TRACS Reports webpage](#).

Your support of our mutual safety mission is critical to our collective success. Thank you for all you do to help your agencies ensure that workers and riders alike can get to and from their destinations safely.

Sincerely,
Joe



Joe DeLorenzo
Associate Administrator for
Transit Safety and Oversight
and Chief Safety Officer, FTA

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FTA at Recent Transit Industry Events

In July, FTA's Stewart Mader, Senior Program Analyst for Safety Policy, provided an update on the agency's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) Final Rule, the National Public Transportation Safety Plan, assaults against transit workers and the FTA regulatory agenda to the State & Tribal Public Transportation Partnerships Conference in Fort Worth, Texas.

At the 2024 Capital Project Management (CPM) Workshop in Washington, D.C., Stewart Mader provided updates on project management oversight, statutes, regulations, policies, program requirements, guidance, best practices, lessons learned and other related issues.

Earlier this month, FTA's Ivey Glendon, Acting Division Chief for the Office of System Safety, and Stewart Mader presented at the 2024 Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Sun Conference in Alexandria, Virginia. They provided updates on bus safety, assaults against transit workers, bus collision analysis and updates, the proposed General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers, and updates to the PTASP Final Rule and National Public Transportation Safety Plan.

Visit the FTA [website](#) to see the presentations from these events and other FTA conference presentations. FTA looks forward to meeting with stakeholders to share progress and updates on safety and safety initiatives during the [American Public Transportation Association \(APTA\) TRANSform](#) and other upcoming conferences.



FTA's Stewart Mader, Senior Program Analyst for Safety Policy presents at the Capital Project Management Workshop in Washington, D.C. General Engineer for FTA's Region 7 Office, Cynthia (Cindy) Moses moderated the session.



FTA Publishes Updates to its Safety Certification Training Regulation

FTA is actively working with the transit industry to provide safety training that is responsive to the industry's needs. The [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program \(PTSCTP\) regulation \(49 CFR part 672\)](#), originally published in 2018, sets forth Federal training requirements for rail transit agency personnel who are directly responsible for [safety oversight](#) of rail transit systems and State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) personnel who conduct safety reviews, inspections, examinations and other safety oversight activities of public transportation systems.

On August 14, 2024, FTA [published](#) final updates to the PTSCTP regulation. The final rule maintains a uniform safety training curriculum and minimum requirements for SSOAs and safety professionals in rail transit agencies. This final rule is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's continuous efforts and focus on keeping public transportation the safest mode of surface travel.

FTA reviewed comments received from the industry and included the following updates to the regulation:

- Requiring SSOAs and rail transit agencies to establish a point of contact for communication with FTA. The points of contact must provide semiannual reporting to FTA regarding participants status and their agency-defined recertification training requirements.
- Clarifying voluntary participation in the PTSCTP, including that voluntary participants are not required to complete recertification requirements to maintain their voluntary certification.
- Adding a recertification element defined by FTA.
- Removing Appendix A to allow flexibility in PTSCTP curriculum revision.
- Updating definitions to clarify existing requirements and adding definitions to provide consistency with other FTA programs and rulemakings.

Additionally, FTA sought industry input on whether mandatory PTSCTP participation should extend to bus transit agencies and personnel and decided that it would not expand its applicability at this time.

While the updates are primarily administrative, they will enable FTA to effectively monitor compliance with the regulation and improve existing processes to ease the burden on transit agencies and SSOAs to coordinate the training program requirements.

The original regulation included minimum requirements to enhance the technical proficiency of those who conduct safety audits and examinations and those directly responsible for safety oversight. Since the PTSCTP regulation took effect, more than 1,400 designated safety personnel have completed training requirements, contributing to U.S. DOT's broader effort to make transportation safer for all.

Access FTA's [PTSCTP website](#) for information, including webinar resources, FAQs and more. For questions regarding the PTSCTP regulation and requirements, contact FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov. FTA will provide technical assistance to transit agencies and SSOAs to help meet the PTSCTP requirements.

FTA Drug and Alcohol Regulation Updates: July 2024

FTA's Drug and Alcohol Program issues a [quarterly newsletter](#) with updates to the industry on important topics. An excerpt is below, and you can read the entire July 2024 Drug & Alcohol Regulation Update Newsletter [here](#).

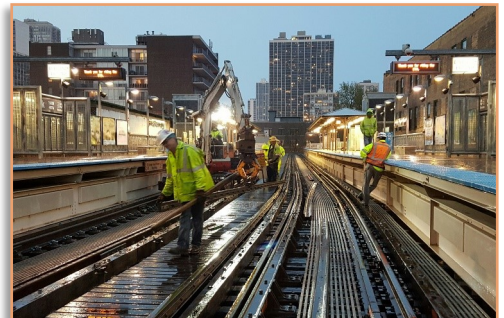
Post-Accident Timing

Employers must mitigate inefficiencies and delays in the post-accident decision-making and testing processes so post-accident testing can be completed as soon as practicable. If a required post-accident alcohol test is not administered within two hours following an FTA-defined accident, [49 CFR 655.44\(a\)\(2\)\(ii\)](#) requires employers to prepare and maintain a record stating the reasons the test was not promptly administered. If the post-accident alcohol test is not administered within eight hours, employers must cease attempts to complete the test and maintain a record of why the test was not completed. The two-hour and eight-hour windows are calculated from the time of the accident to the time of the alcohol test, as recorded on the Alcohol Testing Form (ATF). [Read the rest of the article here](#).

Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) Safety Training Available

[Registration](#) is open for the Transportation Safety Institute's (TSI) Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 safety training courses for transit personnel. These courses also support FTA grantees subject to the [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program \(PTSCTP\) regulation](#) with initial training and recertification training requirements. The FY24 safety training schedule offers some additional face-to-face deliveries.

- [FTA Safety Training Page](#) — outlines training requirements and available training courses. Contact FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov for more information about course offerings, Individual Training Plans, credit for non-FTA sponsored coursework and other safety-training related matters.
- [FTA-Sponsored Training Courses](#) — provides information on FTA-sponsored FY24 training delivered by TSI.
- [TSI Course Schedule](#) — includes TSI safety training courses for transit personnel to support FTA grantees subject to the [PTSCTP](#) regulation with initial training and recertification training requirements. In addition to PTSCTP bus and rail courses, training includes courses for bus, rail, general transit safety and transit crime prevention and emergency management. Contact TSI at TSI@dot.gov or 405-954-3682 for more information. TSI can verify the status of scheduled courses and assist with any other course-related questions.
- [Enhanced Transit Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative Related Training](#) — offers virtual Assault Awareness and Prevention (AAP) and Violence in the Transit Workplace (VTW) courses provided by the National Transit Institute (NTI). The AAP and VTW courses support the FTA Enhanced Transit Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative. Transit agencies can also use the AAP course to fulfill the new [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law requirement](#) for de-escalation training. Contact NTI at nti_info@nti.rutgers.edu or 848-932-1700 with any questions.



FTA Celebrates 60 Years of Improving America Through Public Transit

After 60 years of improving American communities through public transportation, the [FTA reflects](#) on the history of the Federal transit program.

After witnessing the nation's expansive investment in national highways and road networks during the 1950s, and the corresponding disinvestment and decline in public transit ridership, President John F. Kennedy proposed to Congress in 1962 a Federal program to invest in transit. Two years later, President Lyndon Johnson signed the legislation creating the federal transit program. For the first time, the federal government provided financial and technical assistance to support transit bus and rail systems across the U.S. In 1964, The Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) was created to manage the transit program.

This federal investment in public transportation initiated a steady recovery for transit systems across the country. The federal support leveraged local resources to first stabilize transit systems that were on the brink of collapse in the '60s and early '70s, then rebuilt and expanded service, creating a resurgence in transit.

UMTA was renamed the Federal Transit Administration in 1991 to reflect its inclusion of suburban and rural areas and to ensure mobility for all Americans. Today, FTA supports more than 3,500 transit agencies and State Departments of Transportation nationwide to ensure everyone can fully participate in their communities, riding to work, to the doctor, to shop, and to see family and friends.

Fast forward to 2021, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, passed by Congress and signed by President Biden, marks the largest transit investment in American history – \$108 billion over five years – helping transit providers expand service to reach more people, make communities safer, improve the rider experience and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions responsible for climate change.

When UMTA was established, it received \$375 million in federal funds to support transit capital projects. Today, we manage a budget of \$21 billion.

Together, we can make FTA better than ever, supporting programs that modernize transit, combat the climate crisis through low- and no-emission buses, improve access for people with disabilities, replace aging railcars, expand tribal transit, advance research and innovation, promote civil rights, and provide safety oversight.



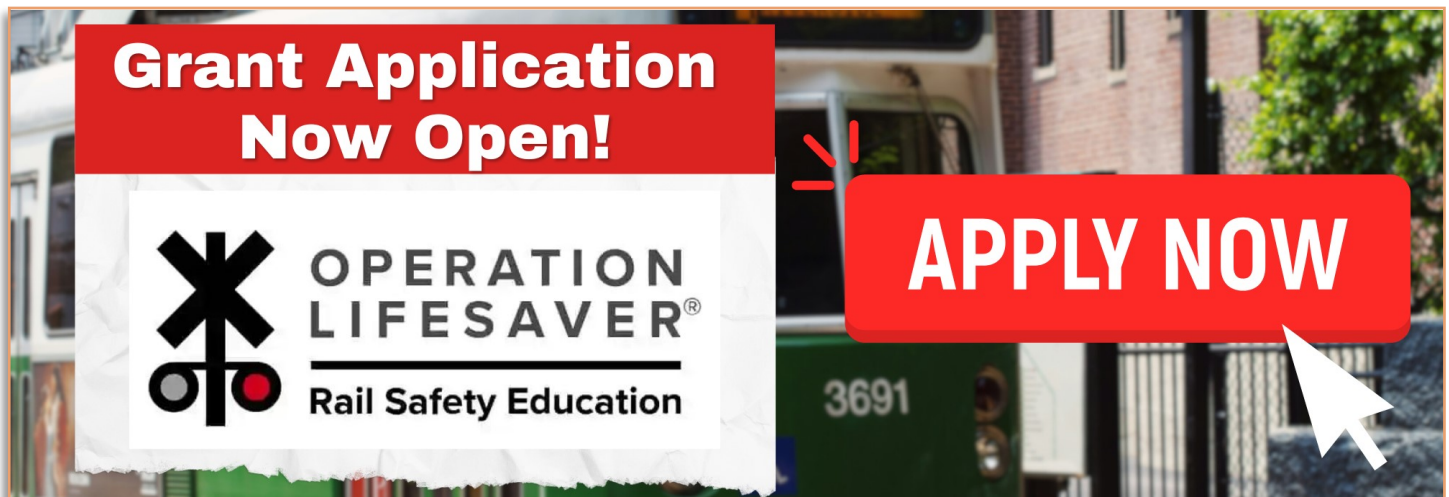
The printed program for FTA's 60 Years of Improving America Through Public Transit event held at the U.S. DOT Headquarters in Washington, D.C.



From left to right: Former FTA Administrator Gordon Linton, Former FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez, Current FTA Acting Administrator Veronica Vanterpool and Former FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams pose for a group photo at the FTA 60-Year Anniversary event in July 2024.

NOW AVAILABLE: Operation Lifesaver, Inc. Rail Transit Safety Education Grants

In June 2024, FTA began a new cooperative agreement with [Operation Lifesaver, Inc. \(OLI\)](#) to provide technical assistance to state operation lifesaver programs, transit agencies and the general public regarding safety best practices to prevent fatalities and injuries at and around transit rail grade crossings. On July 1, 2024, OLI [announced](#) that the application period is open for its competitive Rail Transit Safety Education Grants. The grants offer a total of \$190,000 in funding for transit agencies and government entities that provide transit service to conduct rail transit safety education and public awareness initiatives. Submit applications before the September 1, 2024, deadline. Grant awards will be announced by October 15, 2024. For additional details, contact Wende Corcoran at wcorcoran@oli.org.



USDOT Recognizes World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

On July 30, 2024, the U.S. DOT recognized World Day Against Trafficking in Persons and hosted a Building Effective Public Awareness & Outreach Efforts for the Transportation Industry [webinar](#) alongside the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Expert panelists shared best practices for building effective public awareness and outreach efforts for the transportation industry that are trauma-informed, person-centered, culturally responsive, and data-driven. Panelists also shared examples from various federally funded multimodal public awareness campaigns on human trafficking and discussed lessons learned.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are held against their will and trafficked into forced labor and commercial sex. Human traffickers exploit roadways, railways, waterways, and airways in urban, rural, and Tribal communities across the United States to recruit and transport their victims. DOT's "[Combating Human Trafficking in the Transportation Sector Awareness Training](#)" for transportation personnel underscores the intersection of human trafficking and transportation, provides general and transportation-specific indicators of human trafficking, and how to report a tip. See additional FTA [resources](#) to support your agencies in further preventing human trafficking on our nation's transit.

FTA Employee Spotlight: Toby Rao

Policy Analyst, Office of Safety Policy and Promotion, Office of System Safety, TSO, FTA



Toby Rao

Policy Analyst, Office of Safety Policy and Promotion, Office of System Safety, TSO, FTA

How would you explain your job to someone you have never met? I assist with the rulemaking process regarding safety regulations that affect transit agencies across the United States. The regulations and rules that come out of our office are crucial in keeping riders and workers of transit agencies safe in their daily interactions.

What were you doing prior to this role? Prior to this role, I was working for the State Safety Oversight Agency in Massachusetts as a Compliance Officer. I conducted accident and non-compliance investigations, and most recently assisted with the drafting of the Risk Based Inspection (RBI) program. Prior to that role I worked for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) as an Aviation and Air Cargo inspector in their regulatory and compliance division.

What is your favorite moment of your professional career so far? During the 2019 National Hockey League Finals the Stanley Cup came to Boston for Game 7 and while conducting a private charter inspection I got to stand in the room with the trophy while it was being processed for its charter flight. It felt like standing next to a piece of history and even though Boston lost, that made it a little easier to take.

What is your favorite form of public transportation? Why? I enjoy ferries for public transportation, which we have a nice one here in Boston. Next to that, I enjoy rail.

What is your favorite transit system in the US? For the transit systems I have visited, I honestly enjoy my home transit system in Boston, the MBTA.

What was your first time using public transit like? I don't remember the first time using public transit, but I do remember going to a Red Sox game on the Green Line in Boston back in 1998 with my father.

What people or experiences have shaped you? I have been involved in volunteer work with Meals on Wheels of America since 2012 and helping serve the local communities especially seniors in need. One of most inspiring individuals who I delivered meals to was Gail, a nurse assistant during the invasion of Pearl Harbor who had all sorts of memorabilia and stories to tell from that moment in history.

What movie or TV show could you watch on a loop? Why? I can watch Jaws any day of the year repeatedly. For a TV show I have frequent routine of watching Game of Thrones several times a year.

What are the saved weather locations on your phone? Grafton, Massachusetts (my home), Andover, Massachusetts (my previous home), Antarctica (always curious), Willamstad, Curacao (my honeymoon location) and Fernandina Beach, Florida (from a time I visited there).



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Federal Transit Administration
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Access the [FTA Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight Newsletters](#).

Upcoming FTA TSO Office Speaking Engagements

[APTA TRANSform](#)

September 29–October 2, 2024 | Anaheim, CA

[AASHTO Transit Management Winter Meeting](#)

October 7–10, 2024 | Salt Lake City, UT

[AASHTO Safety Summit and Peer Exchange](#)

October 15–17, 2024 | Houston, TX

[National Transit Workforce Conference](#)

November 11–12, 2024 | Baltimore, MD

[Ohio Needs Transit Conference & OPTA Expo](#)

November 18–20, 2024 | Columbus, OH

[APTA Safety and Risk Management Seminar](#)

December 8–11, 2024 | Atlanta, GA

Save the Dates: SSO Quarterly Call

November 20, 2024 | 3:00–4:30 pm ET | Virtual

The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. Grantees and subgrantees should refer to FTA's statutes and regulations for applicable requirements.