



First Quarter 2022 Edition

eNEWSLETTER

NEED TRAINING?

Call our office to schedule training for your agency at 573.341.6155.

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The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) was initiated in 1986 by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to provide resources, training and technical assistance to rural transit providers. The Missouri RTAP Center is located at Missouri University of Science and Technology (Missouri S&T) in Rolla. Since April 2012, Missouri S&T has been contracted by MoDOT to manage the RTAP program.



National RTAP is a program of the Federal Transit Administration

dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and FREE training.

LETTER FROM THE MANAGER



Heath Pickerill
Missouri RTAP Manager

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PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Missouri University of Science
and Technology

THE FINE PRINT

Missouri RTAP quarterly
eNewsletter is published by the
Missouri RTAP office located on
the campus of Missouri University
of Science and Technology.
The opinions, findings, and
recommendations expressed in this
newsletter are not necessarily those
of Missouri S&T, MoDOT or the
Federal Transit Administration.

DEAR TRANSIT FRIENDS,

The first quarter of 2022 is nearly over, and our services and training have slowly returned to normal. Over the past few months, I have attended a few in-person conferences and meetings. Gathering with local agencies and transit providers to distribute program information has provided a sense of normalcy, getting to gather in groups again. The CTAA Expo will be held May 10-13 in Louisville, Kentucky. While I am not able to attend because of other commitments, I know some of our transit agencies are making plans. Conferences such as this one can be covered with RTAP Scholarship Reimbursement funds as well as other in-person or virtual conferences and education opportunities. In addition, some transit agencies have used these funds to purchase in-house training materials. We are happy to answer any questions about eligible expenses. Also, it is never too early to start making plans to attend the MPTA conference in Springfield on September 28-29. The RTAP team will be meeting with the rural transit agencies during a joint session with MoDOT as in past years. We very much look forward to visiting the agencies we serve, share program updates, and gather ideas for expanding our services.

While we have continued offering in-person training during most of the Pandemic, the number of our classes have significantly decreased. This change is partly a result of the restrictions we faced due to Covid-19 guidelines as well as more in-house trainings being held by some of the larger agencies. Fewer scheduled classes give John Rice more availability to travel the state teaching required training. John also has more time to teach new classes. We have actively been researching new topics to deliver. Please contact Doreen if you would like to schedule any drivers' training or have questions. We would love to hear from you about trainings you would like to see offered.

Now that travel restrictions have been lifted, I look forward to traveling again to transit meetings around the state. If you have any upcoming events you would like RTAP to participate, please let me know. I am happy to share the latest RTAP offerings or gather your ideas on how we can best serve transit agencies in the state. Please feel free to contact me at pickerillh@mst.edu or by phone at 573-341-7637 with any questions, comments, or suggestion. If you know someone who would like to start receiving the newsletter, they can call our office or go to the Missouri RTAP website at mortap.com and sign up.

Best wishes,

Heath Pickerill,
Missouri RTAP Manager



JUST TRANSITION NOW

DOES AMERICA NEED A 'MOBILITY BILL OF RIGHTS'?

AND MORE IMPORTANT: WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN IT?

A NEW EFFORT TO GET WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATORS TO

adopt a "transportation bill of rights" is prompting conversation about what might be possible if more American cities stopped treating universal access to sustainable mobility as a far-off goal, and started treating it as something all their residents are entitled to today.

As part of a larger campaign to achieve a just transition away from fossil fuels, a coalition of Washington-based nonprofits is urging lawmakers to commit to nine key principles every time they write transportation policy for the Evergreen State. The nonprofits behind it — Front and Centered, Disability Rights Washington, 350 Washington, and the Yakima Asian Pacific Islander Coalition — assembled the list after months of interviews with a diverse cross-section of Washington's BIPOC, disability, immigrant and environmental justice communities, many of whom don't, can't, or choose not to drive.

HERE'S WHAT THEY CAME UP WITH:

1. No one dies or is seriously injured traveling on state roads, streets, and sidewalks
2. Every household can access groceries within 20 minutes without a car
3. No one today is harmed by pollution or noise from transportation
4. Protection from the climate crisis today for future generations
5. All trips less than one mile are easily and enjoyably achieved by non-vehicle travel including for people with disabilities
6. No household should spend more than 45 percent of its income on housing, transportation, and energy
7. Every child who wants to can bike, walk, or roll safely to school
8. Transit service is frequent and spans the day and night so people can get to work and come back
9. The pursuit of happiness does not require a car

An impressive 276 organizations have co-signed the campaign in its current form, but the leaders behind it stress that the Bill is a living document that they hope to expand and make more concrete over time. But the hard truth behind each of the tenets will remain the same: that Washington's transportation policies are consistently failing to provide true mobility for all, and failing vulnerable groups the most.

“When we look at transportation policy, especially at the state level, if you don’t participate in the commercial transaction of owning a car, you don’t figure prominently, if at all,” said Paulo Nunes-Ueno, transportation and land use policy lead for Front and Centered. “Because of systemic racism and the ways we assign certain people many more rights and privileges than others, you have sacrifice zones — places where an otherwise unacceptable level of pollution is declared acceptable, places where a lack of [accessible mobility choices] is considered OK. ... So we asked our members, ‘What are your rights? Regardless of who you are, whether you’re 9 or 99, physically able to drive a car or not — regardless of whether you live in an urban or rural area, whether you can afford to drive or not, what are the things that in your life you should be able to count on, in terms of transportation?’”

Nunes-Ueno and his colleagues aren’t the first to ask those sorts of question. Several public agencies across America have adopted a similar set of principles to guide their work, including the Pittsburgh Department of Mobility and Infrastructure and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, each of which has written its own version of the “bill of rights.” And voters in New York State recently amended the constitution to mandate that “each person shall have a right to clean air and water, and a healthful environment.”

Those promising efforts, though aren’t actually binding legal standards — and they don’t give road users grounds to hold leaders accountable when their rights are denied.

The closest model for an actual legal right to mobility might come from Mexico, which amended its national constitution in late 2020 to make it clear that “every person has the right to mobility under conditions of safety, accessibility, efficiency, sustainability, quality, inclusion and equality.” The country’s Chamber of Deputies is still debating the details of an accompanying “General Mobility Law” which will define the government’s actual responsibilities for guaranteeing that new entitlement, but proponents are hopeful it will lay the foundation for a revolution in Mexican transportation policy — including which types of projects are first in line for public funding.

“Ideally, the infrastructure for cars should only be financed by general taxes in [only] exceptional [cases], and be limited...to other schemes, such as the payment of tenure, charges to congestion, derivatives of parking meters and fees that motorists pay directly,” wrote Mexico City politician Vidal Llerenas Morales in a recent op-ed. “In this sense, the new law lays the foundations for new financing schemes.”

In the absence of similar policy in the United States, some forward-thinking American transportation agencies’ are using their discretionary power to de-prioritize car-focused projects — though those powers are often limited.

Even the current US DOT has won plaudits from advocates for putting people-centered projects first in the handful of competitive grant programs it controls, as well as issuing new guidelines urging states to spend their formula grants on sustainable transportation in service of the agency’s new Vision Zero goal. But those grant programs are dwarfed by the unrestricted funds that states can use on whatever projects they wish, even if they infringe upon the mobility of vulnerable groups — and those guidelines can all too easily be ignored, even when they come from the highest transportation office in the land.

As America waits for the kind of national reforms that would transform safe, sustainable, and dignified mobility into a wide-reaching human right, state and local efforts like Washington’s might be the country’s strongest hope to move the needle — but only if they’re backed up by real policy.

“This is just the first step,” added Nunes-Ueno. “What’s more important than the bill of rights being symbolically adopted [is] for us to create the tools and analysis that show where our rights are being trampled. When communities are driving the solutions and making sure that their rights are met, policy comes out of that — and change comes out of that.”

usa.streetsblog.org/2022/02/07/does-america-need-a-mobility-bill-of-rights/



FTA ANNOUNCES \$4.7B IN FEDERAL TRANSIT FUNDING

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced Thursday that more than \$4.7 billion in transit funding was available to transit agencies, states, and Tribal governments.

The funding, which is allocated according to formula, would support public transportation and public transportation jobs across the country, the FTA said.

"People rely on buses, trains, and ferries to get where they need to be every day," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law makes the largest investment in public transit in history, which means that more Americans will have access to great transportation, our communities will have less traffic congestion, and the air will be cleaner for our children."

Part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed last year, the funding is part of the Further Extending Government Funding Act, which provides partial-year spending authority through Feb. 18, 2022, as well as funding included as advance appropriations from the BIL for the State of Good Repair and the

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities formula programs.

"From counties with just one van providing rides, to systems operating hundreds of trains, buses, and ferries in the largest cities in America, our communities depend on this funding, which is increasing significantly thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law," FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez said. "This first down payment will help agencies start new projects, fix old infrastructure, and bring more fast, safe, convenient service."

The FTA said that full-year formula funding would be available when Congress passes an FY 2022 appropriations bill.

Once the appropriations bill passes, transit funding will be available to support transit in 500 urban communities and rural areas. The funding will include a 35 percent increase over previous years' funding allowing transit agencies to buy new buses and railcars, which will improve reliability and service.

transportationtodaynews.com/news/25490-fta-announces-4-7bin-federal-transit-funding/

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

"Transportation is kind of like electricity and water. You don't think about it until you don't have it. Then you think about it a lot..."



In 1971, while Richard Nixon was President of the United States, A White House Conference on Aging was held to identify the needs of our aging population. The report that followed identified that "the lack of reliable transportation in rural areas was a nationwide problem."

As a result of this study, it was also in 1971, that the "Older Adults Transportation Service" – or OATS, Inc. - was founded. Following just two years later, Missouri welcomed "Southeast Missouri Transportation Service" – SMTS, Inc. - onto the Rural Public Transportation scene.

The formative years were a struggle, as SMTS was launched forward with only one donated van, serving one county, in 1973. The organization quickly expanded to three vans and started looking at ways to expand this service into other adjoining counties. The organization, a 501c3 Non-profit, gradually, but surely gained momentum and eventually expanded into twenty counties, achieving the recognition of being the "Second Largest Rural Transportation Provider in the Nation," second only to OATS, another Missouri based Transit Authority. As a matter of fact, Missouri is the only state in the union to offer Public Transit Service in every county in the state – a remarkable claim to fame!

SMTS, Inc. was organized under the direction and capable hands of Mr. William Osborne who remained the organization's Executive Director for the next 40 years. Mr. Osborne witnessed many challenges, while achieving great success in assisting literally thousands of rural Missourians to access the goods, services and medical facilities they so desperately needed to reach. As the organization grew and expanded, so did the service and staff.



In 2010, Denny Ward, then Controller, was promoted to Assistant Executive Director. Upon Osborne's retirement in December of 2013, Ward was promoted to Executive Director and remains in that position today. During his tenure, Ward has re-branded the fleet with a more prolific and recognizable logo. He has also doubled the size of the fleet from 100 vehicles to 200 and increased the employee base to match the same and restructured the company's internal operations to include key management level positions to streamline the company's growth and expansion. In 2018, SMTS welcomed Stoddard County into their coverage area, making a total of 21 counties. In 2019, pre-covid, SMTS provided nearly 400,000 individual rides to those in need of our services and drove nearly 5 million miles!



vehicle maintenance while managing the company's fleet and facilities, and works closely with Ginny on employee training, safety and oversight in all twenty-one counties. Mrs. Angela Firebaugh - NEMT Supervisor, who handles trip assignments of our Non-Emergency Medical Transportation requests to all counties. Mrs. Angie Davidson - Madison County Coordinator, Gay Ann Weadon - Receptionist, Whitney Crites - Payroll & Accounts Payable, Alice Adams - Data Processing and Brenda McDowell - NEMT Billing.

It is our Area Supervisors, Coordinators and Drivers in all 21 Counties who comprise the backbone of the company. These dedicated women and men are highly credentialed individuals who strive each-and-every day to meet the needs of those we serve. Frequently, a family-like bond forms between our driver and the client they transport, making transit a very personal experience that adds to the quality of life.

Next year, SMTS, Inc. will celebrate 50 Years of meeting the Rural Public Transit needs of Missouri residents. It's an honor to serve the residents of Missouri, says Ward, and a privilege to be associated with the great people who support our efforts. Without the financial backing of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and MoDOT's Transit Division who administers this flow-through funding, and the agencies we contract with, we could not exist.

On the cover are Karen Mitchem, Driver, and Inez Mason, Rider. Article: Denny Ward, Executive Director, SMTS

Fredericktown, MO, which is headquarters for the company, houses a staff of twelve employees, who are responsible for managing and processing the company's workflow, administration and operations. Mrs. Tracy Jones - Director of Finance, who has been with the company since 2017, along with her Financial Assistant, Debbie Elders, is responsible for managing the company's financial reporting, accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll and daily paperwork processing. Mrs. Ginny Smith - Director of Operations, H.R. and Safety Manager, supervises and provides oversight in all twenty-one counties. In addition, Ginny handles Human Resources and manages the company's Safety Programs. Mr. Daniel Smith - Fleet & Facilities Manager, who along with his Service Technician, Charlie Burns, handles light

[CLICK TO SEE MORE PHOTOS!](#)

5 MYTHS ABOUT USING TRANSIT TECH IN RURAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS



Think rural transportation is not compatible with modern technology? Think again. Here are five common misconceptions — and the transit agencies who've debunked them.

While rural agencies have begun exploring new ways to further increase the flexibility and responsiveness of their dial-a-ride services — including offering fully on-demand service — many of them have rightly been cautious about getting onboard with a tech-powered transit option, or on-demand microtransit. Will riders who prefer to pre-book be excluded? How about riders without smartphones? Can tech-enabled services operate in areas of low data or cellular connectivity? Will upgrading technology break the bank?

Below are the top five most common concerns we've seen when considering a TransitTech program in rural public transit services, along with real-world Via partners who have overcome these challenges to deliver high-quality, cost-effective service to rural residents.

MYTH 1: "TransitTech-powered on-demand transit is never financially viable in a sprawling and low-demand area. It can't be deployed in rural areas without increased costs."

REALITY: In some cases, switching from fixed-route or pre-booked dial-a-ride to on-demand can actually help decrease costs, while meeting the community's needs with flexibly adjusted parameters.

WeGo, in Hall County, Georgia, has proven that replacing fixed route services with true on-demand solutions can achieve the same dramatic effect on cost-per-passenger as the demand-response services cited by the NTD.

In August 2020, WeGo replaced three underperforming fixed bus routes while cutting operating costs in half. The on-demand service was so successful that the agency

expanded WeGo into the entire Hall County, scaling the service zone from 35 to 429 square miles, and used it to additionally replace the reservation-only curbside bus Dial-A-Ride. Average wait times for WeGo are shorter than the bus headways or pre-booking windows of the services it replaced.



MYTH 2: "TransitTech is one-size-fits-all: agencies will be pressured into implementing on-demand services even where pre-booking may be a better option."

REALITY: Technology facilitates flexible service design. Simulation exercises and live service data can help agencies refine their demand-responsive networks, indicating where pre-booked and on-demand services will work best.

In Baldwin County, Alabama, the Baldwin Region Area Transit Service (BRATS) faced a daunting challenge: providing transit services to an area of 2,000 square miles.

BRATS On-Demand, which launched in September of 2020, has offered a mix of true on-demand and pre-booked services based on riders' requested pickup locations,



ensuring that vehicles can be allocated appropriately to more remote regions as needed while maintaining higher overall quality of service. Riders have responded enthusiastically, and BRATS has seen a 48% increase in trips with the same operating budget.

MYTH 3: "Mapping and connectivity are too spotty in rural areas to allow tech-enabled services to work."

REALITY: Even in remote areas without any cellular service, tech-enabled transit can work in off-line mode with pre-downloaded rider locations, directions, and routing.

Some major benefits of TransitTech are dynamic routing, turn-by-turn directions for drivers, and real-time updates for riders — all of which rural agencies worry can be impacted by low data connectivity or inaccurate mapping in remote regions. But Via's platform functions in these conditions with very little impact on riders or drivers.

Though a mountainous, 250 square mile region with numerous cellular dead zones, riders in Roanoke County, Virginia, enjoy tech-enabled paratransit service. When out of cell range, drivers operate in "offline mode" that continues to deliver cached directions, permits logging of pickups and drop-offs, and connects whenever possible to transmit information between the driver and the central operations console. Riders continue to receive notifications and other communications as usual, despite the driver's loss of connectivity.

When faced with insufficient mapping in rural regions, Via teams help our partners bridge the gap. In our partnership with Blackfeet Transit, for example, many houses on the reservation lack recorded addresses; our software helps operators save map locations as riders' homes, facilitating accurate routing.

MYTH 4: "Tech-based on-demand services offer no options for riders without smartphones."

REALITY: On-demand systems offer a variety of booking options, including by calling dispatch centers, smartphone apps, web portals, or even standalone ride-booking kiosks, to ensure all types of riders are able to access the service.

Though TransitTech is a cutting-edge way to power rural services, it does not require that riders use cutting-edge technology to access those services.

In Wilson, North Carolina, Via helped build an entirely on-demand transit system, called RIDE, that offers phone booking for customers without smartphones, cash-based payment options for those without bank accounts, and wheelchair-accessible vehicles for riders with disabilities. As transit coverage and ridership have increased, approximately 34% of riders surveyed reported not owning a smartphone. In Baldwin County, Alabama, the proportion of phone-bookings sits at 70%.

MYTH 5: "Rural microtransit leaves out people with mobility issues."

REALITY: Microtransit serves all. With wheelchair-accessible vehicles, microtransit — sometimes commingled with paratransit — can bring an even better riding experience for those with accessibility needs.

One in 4 US adults live with some type of disability, yet a lack of convenient transit options impacts their access to essential destinations. To better serve this community, cities are increasingly supplementing their existing networks with microtransit, improving accessibility.

Like fixed routes and paratransit services, microtransit vehicles can also be WAVs (wheelchair-accessible vehicles), enabling riders to board with ease. However, unlike those traditional ways of moving, microtransit allows riders to book trips in real-time and be picked up from their doorsteps. Turns out, riders love the new freedom given by this new type of transit. As one of our riders in the Niagara region of Canada says, "For me, this (incoming microtransit service) is going to be a lot better than the system we have now. And it's not just me, there are actually quite a few people in Port Colborne who use a wheelchair, and this is going to be an improvement for all of us."

TransitTech for the future of rural transit.

Rural and suburban communities have taken advantage of modern mobility solutions and overcome their historic transit challenges. These real-life examples just demonstrate the power of software-enabled transit's efficiency, quality of service, and impact on bringing riders back. Despite any perceived roadblocks, TransitTech solutions are flexible and can fit seamlessly into communities of all sizes — the future of rural mobility is digitized.

https://ridewithvia.com/resources/articles/5-myths-about-using-transitech-in-rural-transportation-networks/?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_feb_2022&utm_content=rural_transit_myths

ATTENTION FUTURE CDL DRIVERS

BEGINNING 02/07/2022, FMCSA IS REQUIRING ENTRY LEVEL DRIVER TRAINING FOR NEW DRIVERS

FEDERAL [ENTRY-LEVEL DRIVER TRAINING \(ELDT\)](#) REGULATIONS WENT INTO EFFECT ON FEBRUARY 7, 2022, SETTING THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING THAT ENTRY-LEVEL DRIVERS OF COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES (CMV) MUST COMPLETE BEFORE BEING PERMITTED TO TAKE CERTAIN COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE (CDL) SKILLS OR KNOWLEDGE TESTS.

The requirements apply to drivers applying for a:

- Class A or Class B CDL for the first time
- Upgrade of an existing Class B CDL to a Class A CDL
- Hazardous materials (H), passenger (P), or school bus (S) endorsement for the first time
- There are [exemptions](#) to the requirements.
- States may enact additional requirements beyond the federal requirements.
- Individuals who were issued a Commercial Learners Permit (CLP), or were issued a CDL prior to February 7, 2022, are NOT required to complete ELDT training.

Entry-Level Driver Training must be conducted through training providers that are listed in the FMCSA [Training Provider Registry \(TPR\)](#). To complete ELDT requirements, drivers must complete Theory (topics include operation, safety, and non-driving activities such as drug and alcohol awareness), Behind the Wheel (BTW) range (conducted in a parking lot or other large area that allows drivers to maneuver), and BTW-public road training through one or more TPR-registered trainers (Theory and BTW training may be taken with separate trainers). There are no minimum number of hours or order for the training, but drivers must score at least 80% on the Theory assessment. For additional information, see FMCSA's [Training Provider Registry](#) and National RTAP's [technical brief on Entry-Level Driver Training Requirements](#).



Upcoming EVENTS



COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (CTAA) 2022

May 10-14, 2022
Kentucky International Convention Center
Louisville, Kentucky

CTAA's EXPO is the premier annual training and networking event for community and public transportation professionals. Speakers and sessions will keep attendees up to date with innovative technology, workforce development, communication strategies, funding, and regulations. The EXPO also features a trade show with all the latest community transportation goods and services. Our goal is to make EXPO accessible and affordable for everyone.

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)



MISSOURI PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION (MPTA) CONFERENCE 2022

September 28-29, 2022
University Plaza Hotel & Convention Center
Springfield, MO

The MPTA 2022 Conference and Expo is a great opportunity for your company to network with all of our members and to promote your services and products. There will also be a special opportunity for all sponsors to present up to a 10 minute TED Talk during the general session on Thursday morning. We appreciate your support and interest and look forward to an ongoing relationship with you as public transportation continues to emerge as a national priority.

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)

TRANSPORTATION FOR ALL COMMUNITIES!

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, RELIABLE, AND AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION allows individuals with disabilities, seniors, and those with low income to access health care, education, employment, and community services. But, too often, creating mobility and transportation partnerships is an afterthought in planning. The practice of Mobility management develops partnerships across public housing groups, human services, and transportation professionals to ensure communities offer a continuum of accessible mobility options. Transportation access is integral for residents to utilize vital supportive services as well as key destinations such work, grocery stores, childcare,

and medical services. Residents in all communities need access to transportation to complete daily tasks and maintain an active lifestyle. The National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM), a technical assistance center funded by the US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, can help public housing groups, human services and health care professionals identify partnership opportunities to address transportation challenges. Visit NCMM to access technical assistance supports.



[VISIT HERE!](#)

RANSOMWARE ATTACK

RANSOMWARE 101

RANSOMWARE IS AN EVER-EVOLVING FORM OF MALWARE DESIGNED TO ENCRYPT FILES ON A DEVICE, RENDERING ANY FILES AND THE SYSTEMS THAT RELY ON THEM UNUSABLE. MALICIOUS ACTORS THEN DEMAND RANSOM IN EXCHANGE FOR DECRYPTION.

Ransomware actors often target and threaten to sell or leak exfiltrated data or authentication information if the ransom is not paid. In recent years, ransomware incidents have become increasingly prevalent among the Nation's state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) government entities and critical infrastructure organizations.

Malicious actors continue to adjust and evolve their ransomware tactics over time, and the U.S. Government, state and local governments, as well as the private sector remain vigilant in maintaining awareness of ransomware attacks and associated tactics, techniques, and procedures across the country and around the world.

Looking to learn more about this growing cyber threat? The Ransomware Guide from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security (CISA) and the MS-ISAC (Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center) is a great place to start. Released in September 2020, this joint Ransomware Guide includes industry best practices and a response checklist that can serve as a

ransomware-specific addendum to organization cyber incident response plans.

The U.S. Secret Service provides a guide that describes what actions organizations should take to cultivate an understanding of the technological and regulatory limitations, responsibilities, and resources available to them, and how to apply the acquired knowledge to their operations.

NIST's CSF Ransomware Profile can be applied to organizations using or looking to use the NIST Cybersecurity Framework.

Ransomware-related information and resources located at cisa.gov/stopransomware/general-information. These resources are designed to help individuals and organizations prevent attacks that can severely impact business processes and leave organizations without the data they need to operate and deliver mission-critical services. We also encourage you to take a look at some of the other resources made available by interagency partners, namely NIST at the Department of Commerce, as well as the National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force.

cisa.gov/stopransomware/ransomware-101

NEW REPORT CALLS FOR INVESTING IN TRANSIT WORKERS TO BOLSTER TRANSIT SERVICE



A new report released Feb. 4, Transit Equity Day, by the Alliance for a Just Society, the Labor Network for Sustainability and TransitCenter builds a case that a healthy transit industry that serves communities is tied to robust investments into the transit workforce.

The report, *Invest in Transit Equity, Invest in Transit Workers*, says the time has never been better to invest in public transit, which includes operators, maintenance workers and other transit employees.

The report notes that as of October 2021, public transit employment sat at 84 percent of pre-pandemic levels, which is the result of “the aging of the transit workforce, inadequate investments in job quality and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The report is peppered with personal stories of how transit workers helped during times of need, such as a rider who needed aid during a snowstorm and provided subtle but steady concern and empathy, such as the rider who shared a pair of bus drivers would ensure she safely reached her car following regular late-night shifts.

The recommendations urge agencies to partner with transit unions, rider organizations and other stakeholders to guide workforce investment to build a “skilled, stable transit workforce for the long-term strength” of transit systems.

“There has never been a more important time to invest in public transit — including investing in the skilled, experienced transit operators, maintenance employees and other transit workers that keep our buses and trains running. Such an investment will

have widespread benefits, providing better service to riders, boosting local economies and expanding opportunity and racial equity. In short, what is good for transit workers is also good for the people who ride trains and buses and good for the communities transit workers serve,” the report reads.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The report includes four recommendations with several options that would support the overall recommendation. There is recognition that a single solution does not exist to answer every system’s staffing challenges, but urges outreach and engagement as a first step.

“Whatever the problems, the first step to addressing them is engaging workers directly in the process through their democratically elected union representatives, as well as involving rider organizations and other community stakeholders,” the report states.

THE FOUR RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE:

- Ensure family-sustaining wages and good working conditions for all transit workers;
- Protect the health and safety of transit workers;
- Expand access to transit jobs and invest in workforce development; and
- Provide training and workforce development to help protect workers who could be displaced by electrification and other modernization efforts.

The full report is available on the National Campaign for Transit Justice’s website and is linked [here](#).

masstransitmag.com/management/article/21255704/new-report-calls-for-investing-in-transit-workers-to-bolster-transit-service

AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following is a list of the training programs and course length of each that are currently available to rural transit providers through Missouri RTAP. Requests for training can be made by contacting Doreen Harkins, MO-RTAP Program Specialist, at harkinsd@mst.edu or 573-341-6155.

1. **ACTIVE SHOOTER PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**
– 2 HOURS.
2. **AGGRESSIVE DRIVING** – 1 HOUR.
3. **BACKING SAFETY** – 1 HOUR.
4. **BASIC FIRST AID** – 1 HOUR.
5. **BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS** – 1 HOUR.
6. **CPR & BASIC FIRST AID** – 4 HOURS.
7. **DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PASSENGERS**
– 2 HOURS.
8. **DEFENSIVE DRIVING** – 3 HOURS.
9. **DISTRACTED DRIVING** – 1 HOUR.
10. **DIVERSITY & AWARENESS TRAINING -
PROVIDING QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR
TRANSPORTATION PASSENGERS WHO HAVE
DISABILITIES** – 2 HOURS.
11. **DRIVEN TO EXTREMES** – 1 HOUR.
12. **DRUG ABUSE AWARENESS IN RURAL TRANSIT**
– 1 HOUR.
13. **EMERGENCY & EVACUATION PROCEDURES**
– 1 1/2 TO 2 HOURS.
14. **ENTRY LEVEL CDL DRIVER TRAINING**
– 2 HOURS.
15. **FATIGUE AWARENESS FOR DRIVERS** – 2 HOURS.
16. **HIPAA** – 1 HOUR.
17. **NIGHT DRIVING** – 1 HOUR.
18. **OPERATION LIFESAVER – HIGHWAY-RAIL
CROSSING SAFETY** – 1 HOUR.
19. **PASSENGER ASSISTANCE/MOBILITY AID
SECUREMENT**
– 2 HOURS.
20. **REASONABLE SUSPICION TRAINING FOR
SUPERVISORS**
– 2 HOURS.
21. **SAFE & SECURE PROPER INFANT AND CHILD
SEAT INSTALLATION** – 2 HOURS.
22. **SENSITIVITY AWARENESS** – 1 HOUR.
23. **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT** – 1 HOUR.
24. **SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS** – 1 HOUR.
25. **WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT** – 2 TO 3 HOURS
DEPENDING ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.
26. **WINTER DRIVING SAFETY** – 1 HOUR.

For more information on classes and to register please visit: mltrc.mst.edu/mortaphome/mortaptraining/

RESOURCES

National RTAP – Rural Transit Assistance Program

www.nationalrtap.org/

**Transportation Safety Institute –
Transit Safety & Security Training Division**

www.tsi.dot.gov/Transit.aspx

**Federal Transit Administration –
Rural Transit Assistance Program Page**

[www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/
grants_financing_3554.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3554.html)

Missouri Public Transit

www.mopublictransit.org/

National Transit Institute

www.ntionline.com/

**Kansas RTAP – Kansas University
Transportation Center**

[www.kutc.ku.edu/cgiwrap/kutc/rtap/
index.php/index.html](http://www.kutc.ku.edu/cgiwrap/kutc/rtap/index.php/index.html)

**Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit
Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)**

www.tcrponline.org/

