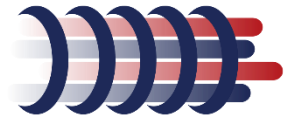




Federal Transit  
Administration

# Transit Workforce Center

National Technical Assistance Center  
for Transit Workforce Development



INTERNATIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION  
LEARNING CENTER

## New Avenues for Recruitment and Retention

Shayna Gleason, Transit Workforce Center  
Julia Castillo, Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Authority  
September 4, 2024



**TWC • TRANSIT WORKFORCE CENTER**



# Transit Workforce Center – Mission

Operated by the **International Transportation Learning Center (ITLC)**, the **Transit Workforce Center (TWC)** is **FTA’s** first ever national technical assistance center for transit workforce development.



## mission

The **TRANSIT WORKFORCE CENTER** is the Federal Transit Administration’s first ever national technical assistance center for transit workforce development. Its mission is to help urban, suburban, tribal, and rural public transportation entities recruit, hire, train, and retain the diverse workforce needed now and in the future.



# Strategies: Examples of Untapped Populations

**Returning  
citizens**

**People  
experiencing  
homelessness**

**Parents of  
young  
children**

**Others?**

**Veterans**

**Older adults /  
retirees**

**People with  
disabilities**



# People with Disabilities—MetroWest RTA, Framingham, MA

## Examples of Success

### MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)

- Central Massachusetts
- Employs people with a range of disabilities
- Currently, people with disabilities comprise 20% of MWRTA's workforce across a variety of roles (e.g., call center, grant writing)
- MWRTA partnered with disability-serving organizations
- Partners help identify candidates & navigate accommodation processes

*"It really was our benefit... We got some great employees and we still have them to this day"*

Deputy Administrator of MWRTA



*Several of MWRTA's employees with disabilities*



# Recruitment and Creating a Welcoming and Appropriate Environment

## Examples of Success

### MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)

- Central Massachusetts
- Employs people with a range of disabilities
- Currently, people with disabilities comprise 20% of MWRTA's workforce across a variety of roles (e.g., call center, grant writing)
- MWRTA partnered with disability-serving organizations
- Partners help identify candidates & navigate accommodation processes

*"COTA gets another good employee who, with some special attention, now has the confidence to succeed. This approach provides us with a well-rounded and diverse workforce and helps us live up to our motto, Moving Every Life Forward."*

COTA's Workforce Development Senior  
Program Manager





# Mississippi DRIVE



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Programs in Rural Transit

**NOW HIRING**

THIS COULD BE YOU!



[www.RideHIRTA.com/  
Careers](http://www.RideHIRTA.com/Careers)

1 (877) 686-0029





# How to Start

- 1) Get buy-in from Leadership
- 2) Review/Change Job Ads
- 3) Review/Change Application Process
- 4) Review/Change how Background checks are processed
- 5) Figure out who in the community you can partner with and who can refer people to you.

Workforce  
Development

Local  
Probation

Residential  
Reentry  
Centers  
(RRCs)

Local  
Economic  
Development

Department  
of Corrections

Local  
Agencies

Department of  
Public Transit



# Advertising

- Put most important info first.
- Salary, Benefits
- What you are looking for in the person you will hire?
- Do NOT include that you run a background check
- Use inclusive language



# Application

- Simplify your Application Process
- Ask for minimal information.
- Don't require someone to enter info that is already on a resume.
- If you need a complete application for HR purposes, find out how that can that be completed upon hire.



# Review and Change Background Reviews

It is more helpful to understand WHY an applicant has a criminal record, than simply knowing THAT an applicant has a record

- Limit information in background checks to recent, *occupation-related information*
- Eliminate bans that automatically disqualify applicants with criminal records.

## Background Check Criteria

The following criteria will NOT be considered, when evaluating the results of a background check:

- Arrests that did not lead to a conviction
- A conviction that is more than 5 years old, unless there are legal requirements tied to the role

Convictions under 5 years old will be reviewed The age of the applicant at the time of the offense

- The facts or circumstances surrounding the offense
- The relevance of the offense to the position being sought
- The time which has elapsed since the offense
- The number of convictions.

## A few other things to remember

# ***EVERY Hire is a RISK!***

- Make sure you are not violating **any** State or Federal laws that apply to your agency or services.
- Check contracts for language that may prohibit hiring who or how you hire. If you have such contracts, have conversations in removing that specific wording.
- Check to see if you qualify for any Federal or State Work Opportunity Tax Credits.
- Ensure **YOU control the narrative** so it stays positive



# Veterans—CapMetro, Austin, TX







# Childcare—Prairie Hills Transit, Spearfish, SD



*Photo credit: Prairie Hills Transit*



# Retirees—Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority, MA





## Your turn

Are there populations we haven't mentioned today that you've found to offer great candidates?

What has worked for you on recruitment and retention? What hasn't?



## Attend in-depth, interactive sessions built around FTA's workforce development goals and industry needs:

- Strengthening Workforce Health and Safety
- Funding Workforce Development
- Enhancing Outreach and Recruitment
- Retaining a Strong and Diverse Workforce
- Advancing Skills, Careers, and Partnerships
- Utilizing Workforce Data and Metrics

## Engage with a cross-section of transit stakeholders from:

- Agencies
- Labor
- Frontline Workforce
- Government
- Nonprofits
- Communities
- Education
- Workforce Development Organizations



Register Now! **November 11-13**  
**Hilton Inner Harbor, Baltimore, MD**

[www.TransitWorkforce.org/mc24](http://www.TransitWorkforce.org/mc24)





# Thank You!

**Shayna Gleason**

Research Associate

[sgleason@transportcenter.org](mailto:sgleason@transportcenter.org)

