



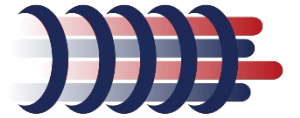
***TRANSIT
WORKFORCE
CENTER***



Federal Transit
Administration

Transit Workforce Center

National Technical Assistance Center
for Transit Workforce Development



INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORTATION
LEARNING CENTER

ATTAIN Bus Operator Apprenticeship

May 2, 2023



TWC • TRANSIT WORKFORCE CENTER

Welcome – Today's Agenda

- What is Apprenticeship?
- Benefits of Mentorship for Bus Operators
- Apprenticeship in Practice Panel
- Q&A
- Open Discussion

Please enter your name, title, organization location
in the chat box

Locations with Operator Mentorship Programs

VTA

Golden Gate Transit

Metro Transit

KCATA

IndyGo

GCRTA

AC Transit

CapMetro

St. Louis

WMATA

Champaign-Urbana



Problem Statement

Bus operators have the highest turnover rate of transit industry occupations. Agencies frequently have difficulty recruiting operators due to a tight labor market, rising minimum wages, and increased competition from the gig economy. Working long hours to cover vacant shifts, shorter breaks and layovers, and an increase in retirements among older operators, have led to low morale.

Operator Challenges:

- Work alone
- Have little control over working environment
- Physical ailments related to job
- Can feel squeezed between demands of riding public, timetables, and discipline from supervisors





What is Operator Mentorship?

- After successfully completing initial training class, new drivers are paired with mentors who pass on their skills
- Mentors are selected from among the experienced drivers at your agency
- Drivers volunteer their time to act as mentors
- Program may also incorporate ride-alongs or periodic meetings
 - Mentors are typically paid overtime



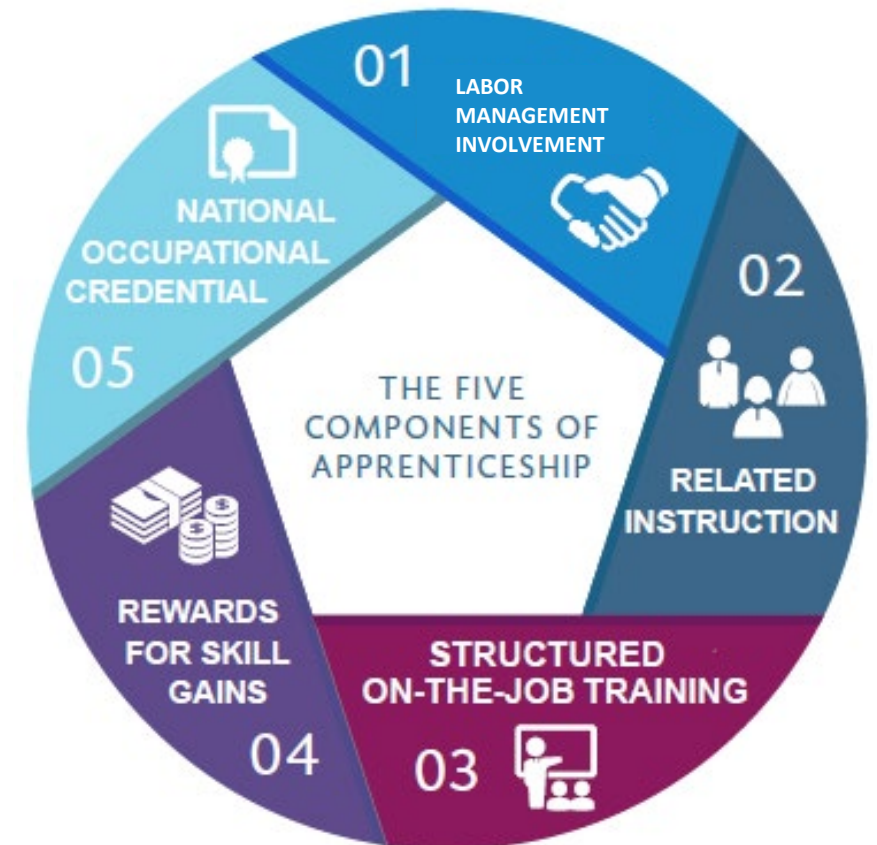
What is a Registered Bus Operator Apprenticeship?

- Basically, registering your mentorship program with the USDOL
- TWC provides assistance – but you build the program that works for your location!
 - Building the program - not easy but worth the effort
- The big challenges
 - Getting the commitment from labor and management
 - Providing resources (staff time) to develop and run the program



Overview of Registered Apprenticeship Model

- Great amount of flexibility
- Labor/management form committee to jointly develop program
- Minimum of 2000 hours of on-the-job learning per year
 - Satisfied by behind-the-wheel time operators already do!
- Minimum of 144 related technical instruction hours per year
 - Satisfied by the training you already do!





Benefits of Operator Apprenticeship/Mentorship

1

Reduced attrition

2

Increased confidence
& morale

3

Reduced absenteeism

4

Increased level of
professional recognition
for bus drivers

5

Increased recruitment
options, including
veteran's benefits

6

Strong emphasis on
customer service

7

Another tool for
reaching out to the
communities served



Registered Apprenticeship and Recruitment

- Apprenticeships can be registered with your state to allow veterans to access GI-Bill benefits while enrolled. Veterans receive a monthly stipend.
- The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) offers the [Universal Outreach Tool](#) to help sponsors find diverse candidates for their apprenticeship programs. The tool includes non-profit, state, local, and community organizations across the country, and sponsors can use the tool to identify organizations in their area that can help them recruit apprentices.
- Apprenticeships can be listed on apprenticeship.gov to help career seekers find your program



Apprenticeship in Practice



Q & A



Discussion topics you submitted!

- Best practices for developing an apprenticeship program
- Process for registering an apprenticeship with the state
- Funding for operator apprenticeships
- What hiring/screening processes and requirements are needed for an apprenticeship program?

Feel free to add questions or discussion topics in the chat or raise your hand!





Discussion topics you submitted!

- Operator retention rate among agencies
- Value of labor-management partnership
- Apprentice versus immediate hire - what is the difference?
- How to make the program sustainable?

**Feel free to add questions or discussion topics
in the chat or raise your hand!**





Resources Available

- [Transit Coach Operator Competency-Based Framework](#)
- [Mentor Training](#)
- [VTA study](#)
- Examples of operator apprenticeship standards (email us to request)
- [Apprenticeship.gov](#)
- [JFF Apprenticeship Courses](#)
- [Step-by-step apprenticeship start-up guide](#)
- FAQ page – **coming soon!**



Thank You!

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