

TRANSIT WORKFORCE CENTER

TWC TRANSIT WORKFORCE CENTER

ATTAIN
Rail Car Maintenance Apprenticeship

November 3, 2026

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

A program of the **Federal Transit Administration** administered by the International Transportation Learning Center

Welcome – Today's Agenda

- Starting a maintenance apprenticeship program
- Panelist Introductions
- Apprenticeship in Practice Panel
- Q&A

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

Transit Workforce Center – Mission







The **Transit Workforce Center** (TWC) is the Federal Transit Administration's national technical assistance center for transit workforce development.

Operated by the **International Transportation Learning Center** (ITLC), TWC supports the workforce development needs of urban, suburban, tribal, and rural public transportation entities across the country.

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What is Apprenticeship?

A structured training program to acquire skills and master a craft

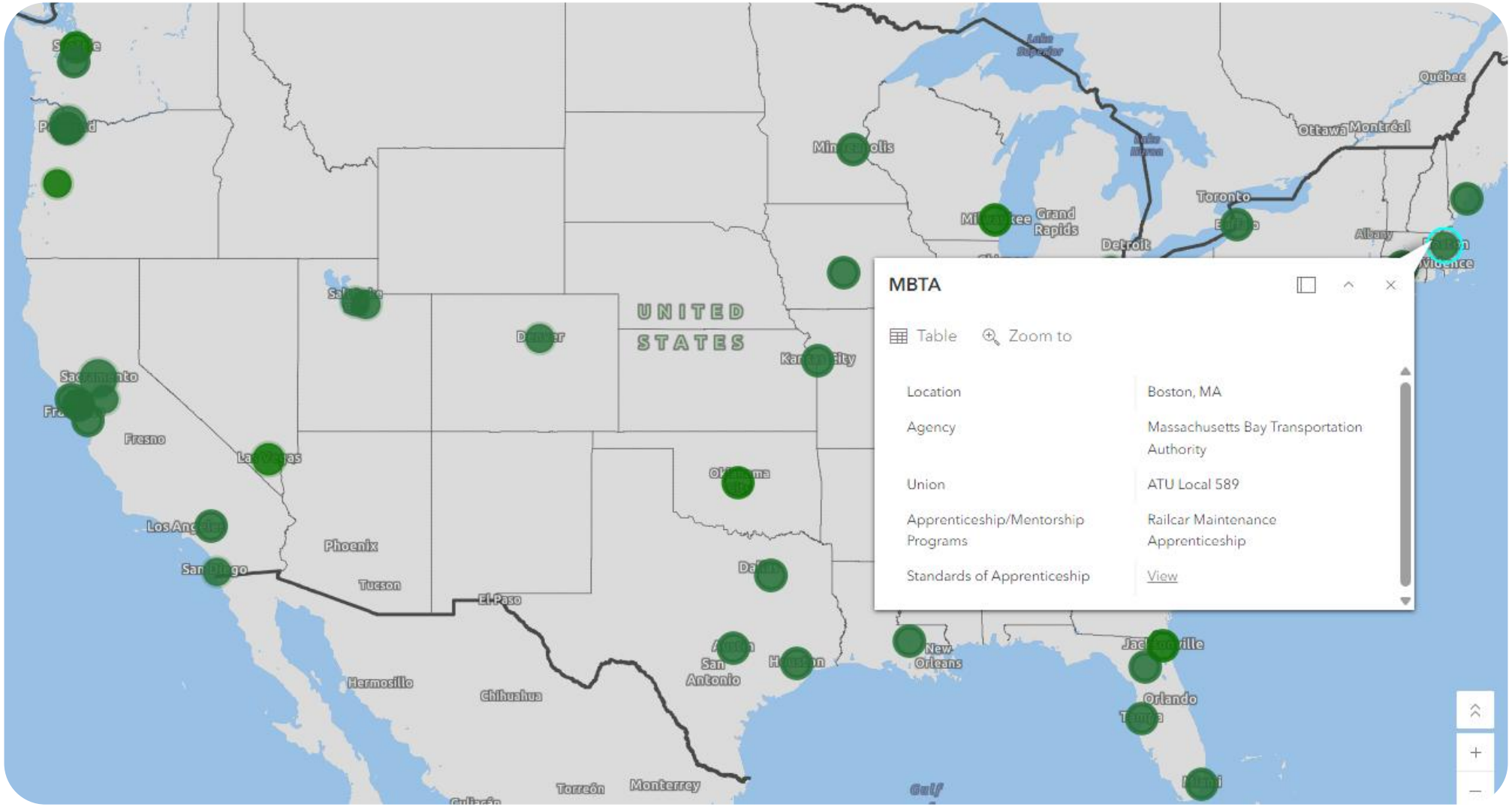
- Registered apprenticeship is a proven strategy to help get people trained while they earn money.
- Apprentices start as novices, progress to become expert, journey-level technicians
- Highly-skilled mentors pass on their skills
- Labor-management partnership essential – collaborative effort
- Vast majority of training (about 70%) is on-the-job learning – Learn by doing
- Related technical instruction (i.e., classroom) plays supporting role

Overview of Registered Apprenticeship Model

- 2000 hours of OJL per year
- Recommended 144 related technical instruction hours per year
    - In-house training
    - Community College
    - Online Courses
    - Career & Tech Centers



Visualizing the Growing Trend of Registered Apprenticeship in U.S. Transit Agencies



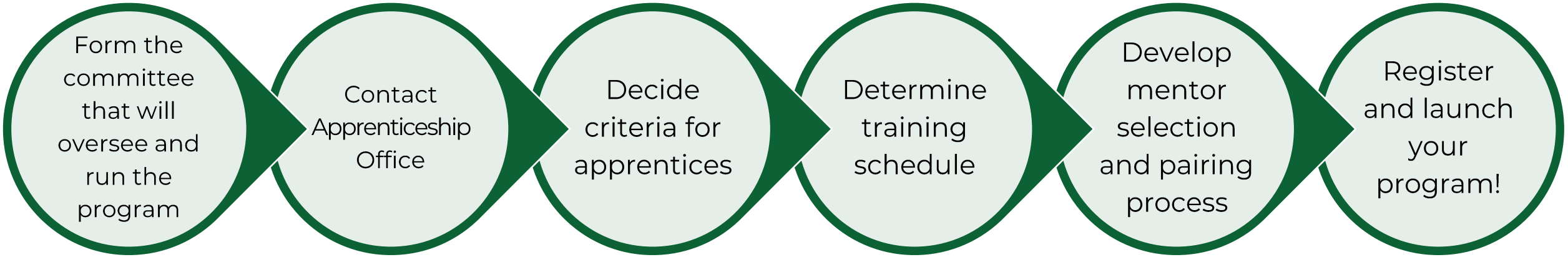
https://www.transitworkforce.org/registered-apprenticeships-map/

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Benefits of Maintenance Apprenticeship

1. Ability to grow your own techs following agency procedures/practices
2. Apprentices gain increased confidence & morale
3. Funding available when registered, veteran benefits
4. Increased level of professional recognition for technicians
5. Less reliance on trying to find techs from the outside
6. Reduced shop comebacks/ repeat failures through improved skills
7. Mentors gain satisfaction by passing on their skills & insights

Developing your apprenticeship program!



- Entrance exam
- Incumbent or new employees

- Length of program
- Hours and topics of training
- Training provider

Form the committee that will oversee and run the program

Equal members from labor/frontline workforce and management

This committee will agree on the components and training schedule and fill out the Standards of Apprenticeship.

- Your Apprenticeship Office representative will guide you through process of filling out
- Should specify length of program, program type, wage progression

Contact Apprenticeship Office

- Find contact information https://www.apprenticeship.gov/about-us/apprenticeship-system
- Reach out to get the necessary forms and boilerplate standards

Decide criteria for apprentices

Criteria can include:

- Incumbent or new employees
- Aptitude testing
- Prior work experience

Determine training schedule

Determine length and type of apprenticeship:

- Minimum of 1 year
- Time-based, competency-based, or hybrid

Resources to get you started:

- USDOL work-process schedules
- Examples from other agencies
- Local training providers

Develop mentor selection and pairing process

- Mentors facilitate on-the-job learning for the apprentices.
- Apprentices should be paired with mentors to complement classroom training.
- Mentors generally receive a wage premium for time spent with apprentices.

Program Registration

- Record keeping
- Periodic review
- Funding opportunities

Program Launch

- Mentors are selected, notified, and trained
- Program coordinator tracks apprentice progress and metrics that show program impacts

Apprenticeship in Practice Panel

Kelly Jennette
HR Project Management Office Director
MBTA

John Mersereau
Rail Maintenance
Boston Carmen's Union
ATU Local 589

Bob Martin
Instructor, Rail Maintenance
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Apprenticeship in Practice Panel

Scot Sidler
Director, Right-of-Way Maintenance
Caltrain

Joaquin Rivera
Director, Traction Electrification Systems
TASI

Jeffrey Pallin
Dean, Workforce Innovation
Mission College

Laura Thompson
Deputy Regional Director of Strategic Partnerships
California Division of Apprenticeship Standards

Q&A

Resources

- American Transit Trainers and Apprenticeship Innovators Network (ATTAIN)
- Interactive Apprenticeship Map
- Apprenticeship FAQs
- Mentor Development Program
- Apprenticeship Funding Sources

Thank You!

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