

RTAP Peer Roundtable Notes

Retaining Staff

7/10/2025 | 1:00–2:30PM | Online

Attendees

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Amy Nieland | 7. Tom Spears |
| 2. Pat LaCourse | 8. Bill Spitzer |
| 3. Marcia Haglund | 9. Mariah Kathan |
| 4. Melinda Estey | 10. Jaycie Kratky |
| 5. Jeremy Monahan | |
| 6. Tracy Borgschatz | |

Roles

- Timekeeper: Pat LaCourse
- Parking Lot: Jeremy Monahan
- Conversation Encourager:

Best tip for retaining staff:

- Always being available to talk to
- Thanking them after each shift
- Creating a supportive workplace and connecting the work to values
- Making your company a great place to work, employee recognition
- For mistakes don't scold but try to teach
- Handwritten notes

Biggest Challenges:

- Trying to please everyone – hard to give everyone what they want across the board
 - How can we make it even better when we already provide the environment, benefits, schedules?
 - Part-Time don't qualify for all the benefits that help make the job more appealing, they do get some but it depends on their hours
 - It would be nice to be able to do a benefit allocation based on a percentage

- Drivers: this is their second career, one step away from retirement or medical emergency, how do we get a younger crowd interested?
- Elderly Staff
- An “I don’t need this job” mentality
- Accommodating time off requests
- Weather and Retirement
- Split Shift Scheduling

Solutions:

- Being a county-based agency helps with benefits and attracts younger drivers
- Staff get holiday based on a percentage based on hours worked and the county tracks it and then every year they send it out for what amount of hours they get for holiday pay
- Part time staff gets 1.5 holiday pay for federal holidays that the transit system is open and those that work receive that pay benefit
- Split shifts to allow a break in the day, one employee can take the morning, one can take the afternoon, flexibility in the scheduling
- Offers in house training to get your CDL license
- Ordering a bus that doesn’t require a CDL
- Offering financial incentives to obtain the CDL
- Paying for license and renewals
- Held an all staff training where they shut down the agency for the day and found a vendor to supply door prizes, he donated north central merch, 200\$ in Menards gift cards that they used to purchase specific items like cups, coolers, cooling towels, ice cube trays, etc.
 - Game by taking their half a playing card to match a door prize but had to say something that they learned about someone from their table
- Activity from Any Nieland at 1:41 PM – Nominations of other staff
- Calendar Ideas – Once a time is requested it is first come first serve. It is marked on a calendar that they all see, so you’ll know that the time is already off.
- You can see in a smaller staff on calendars who is available or out for the day
- Recognition Lunches for Volunteer Drivers
- Making sure that doing small things like identifiable clothing and ID badges that make them feel part of their agency
- Personal birthday cards with a small gift card
- Providing them training opportunities

Ask a Peer:

- Has anyone suspended a passenger from riding? Why? Did they appeal the suspension? How long were they suspended?
 - Yes, a 3-day suspension, they were “harassing” another passenger and making them feel uncomfortable and a complaint was brought to the agency. They brought in the individual to have the conversation about what happened. He was a special needs individual and came in with his dad. The conversation went well, and he was able to resolve the issue and is now riding again.
 - Yes, there were several instances to include a mobility device and broke the lift, so they were physically unable to transport them which came with challenges.
 - Extremely violent with disabilities but trying to make sure that the driver and other passengers are safe.
 - Unable to care for a passenger that needed medical attention
 - Appeals were never escalated to MnDOT
- Rider who is having bathroom accidents regularly, most not being reported, how do we address this issue with her?
 - Make sure your staff is reporting the incidents
 - Be very cautious in your way of handling this, use your human services do a wellness check and help them get the care they need but to help you with documentation. Know that the reporting individual is noted in the report.

Next Peer Roundtable: August 21, 2025, Topic – Driver Training