DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

RTAP Peer Roundtable Notes
Driver Training
8/21/2025 | 1:00–2:30 PM | Online

Attendees

1. Deann Recker
2. Joanne Brackey
3. Todd Brackey
4. Bonnie Nielsen
5. Chris Hiepler
6. Cathleen Amick
7. Jeremy Monahan
8. Scott Stark
9. Jim Wolter
10. Pat LaCourse
11. Bill Spitzer
12. Allison Karau
13. Mariah Kathan
14. Jaycie Kratky
15. Adam Kraft

Roles

- Timekeeper: Joanne Brackey
- Parking Lot: Jeremy Monahan
- Conversation Encourager:

Biggest Challenges/Driver Training Needed:

- PASS
- Defensive Driving
- Passenger Interaction
- Technology (phones, tablets, etc.)
- Driving Skills & Safety
- Getting the drivers to retain what they have been trained on and to reduce bad habits
- Getting everyone scheduled and completing online trainings
- Finding time for everyone to do their online training
- Knowing what everyone is using for driver training and making sure she has good subject matter and content to reduce redundancy
- Time it takes to get training done
- Operators retaining knowledge from training

What are you doing for training at your agency?

- Online Training, School Bus garage training that she modified, new drivers get the training before they start driving, and other staff drivers update once a year.

  School Bus Content: Driving Skills, defensive driving content that she developed and reworked for transit needs. She would be happy to share her content once she has finished updating it.

- Online, In-person one-day PASS for new drivers, she does driver refreshers every three years in person and tries to keep class sizes low, she uses RTAP training information. National RTAP "2 the point training" – used by PLT safety manager, Jeremy and Joanne can connect to get the contact information from his safety manager

- In house trainer who does all new driver training, has a new driver checklist, 6 month review checklist, (Mariah will reach out to Dave about his checklists to share with agencies)

- Playing catch up and getting everyone rounded up for trainings before audit in October, purchasing links through CTAA, RTAP offers free PASS and other trainings to agencies. ELDT outline, BTW training,

- They do ride-alongs with experienced new hires to make sure they know the processes. They have a training bus for new hires without experience. They do online RTAP courses/videos, and have Joanne come and run classroom trainings. They also do first aid/CPR training.

- They have several training buses that they use for new drivers and do ride-alongs with them. They use online PASS and their trainer went to the in-person Defensive Driver Train-the-Trainer course. They also do yearly evaluations.

- They have a training program for new drivers to get their CDL that lasts six weeks, and licensed driver training lasts five weeks. They conduct ride-along observations at 60, 120, and 180 days, as well as annual observations. Refresher training is done in the spring for all drivers. They do remedial training if there are incidents. They use CTAAs PASS training and other defensive driving material.

- Two-week initial training, RTAP courses, ride with a trainer for a week, ride with their assigned route for a week. Evaluate after to see if they're ready. Quarterly safety meetings, the included driver training can depend on the season.

- New drivers ride with more experienced drivers to get acquainted with the vehicles and routes. They have a new driver checklist.

- There was conversation about difficulty with examiners' consistency and scheduling CDL examinations.

- Discussion about securing various mobility devices and any new training resources available. It can be helpful to take pictures of the device when you come across new ones, so you can learn how to secure it properly.

Ask a Peer:

How do you handle running into job candidates out in public who were not hired after interviewing?

- **Solutions:** Handle yourself with integrity in the process, so you feel good about how you said no to them. Explain when possible that there were better qualified candidates.

Next Peer Roundtable: September 18, 2025, Topic - Policies