



APTA STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

STANDARD

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Operating Practices Working Group

Train Operating Employees Reporting to Work

Abstract: This standard provides minimum reporting-to-work requirements for operating employees of rail transit vehicles.

Keywords: assignment, operator, report, rulebook, uniform, work

Summary: This standard provides for a readiness review of train operating employees (called train operators in this document) before they begin vehicle operation, and an overview of specific responsibilities upon arriving at the workplace. This review allows for an extra margin of safety concerning employee fitness and readiness to operate a rail vehicle.

Scope and purpose: This standard applies to rail transit systems that operate light rail, heavy rail or rail subway systems. It does not apply to commuter railroads that operate on the general railroad system regulated by the Federal Railroad Administration. This standard provides minimum requirements for reporting to work for operating employees of rail transit vehicles to ensure the employee is ready for duty. The standard includes a verification of timely arrival for duty, a uniform and appearance requirement, identification of personal equipment needed for work, written materials required, and defined check-in responsibilities. This standard does not include fitness for duty (FFD) or hours of service (HOS) requirements. These topics are addressed in separate APTA standards. APTA intends that the standard will make reporting for duty processes more comprehensive, effective, and contributory to safety and good customer service.

This rail transit system standard represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any recommended practices or guidelines contained herein is voluntary. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a transit system's operations. In those cases, the government regulations take precedence over this standard. APTA recognizes that for certain applications, the standards or practices as implemented by individual transit agencies may be either more or less restrictive than those given in this document, unless referenced in federal regulations.

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Introduction

This introduction is not part of APTA-RT-OP-S-014-04, Rev. 2, *Train Operating Employees Reporting to Work*.

This standard represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies, rail transit systems, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any standards or recommended practices contained herein is voluntary. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a rail transit system's operations. In those cases, the government regulations take precedence over this standard. APTA recognizes that for certain applications, the standards or recommended practices, as implemented by individual rail transit systems, may be either more or less restrictive than those given in this document.

Note that rail transit is not directly comparable to railroads (Amtrak, commuter, freight rail, etc.). Rail transit systems differ greatly in the types of service, vehicles and technology employed, with some systems operating fully automated trains on exclusive rights-of-way and others operating on streets mixed with traffic. Rail transit demands a unique approach to solving its problems, and the APTA Rail Transit Standards Program was enacted to accomplish this complex task.

APTA recommends the use of this standard by:

- Individuals or organizations that operate rail transit systems;
- Individuals or organizations that contract with others for the operation of rail transit systems; and
- Individuals or organizations that influence how rail transit systems are operated (including but not limited to consultants, designers and contractors).

Note on alternate practices

Individual rail transit systems may modify the practices in this standard to accommodate their specific equipment and mode of operation. APTA recognizes that some rail transit systems may have unique operating environments that make strict compliance with every provision of this standard impossible. As a result, certain rail transit systems may need to implement the standards and practices herein in ways that are more or less restrictive than this document prescribes. A rail transit system may develop alternates to APTA standards so long as the alternates are based on a safe operating history and are described and documented in the system's safety program plan (or another document that is referenced in the system safety program plan).

Documentation of alternate practices shall:

- identify the specific APTA rail transit safety standard requirements that cannot be met;
- state why each of these requirements cannot be met;
- describe the alternate methods used; and
- describe and substantiate how the alternate methods do not compromise safety and provide a level of safety equivalent to the practices in the APTA safety standard (operating histories or hazard analysis findings may be used to substantiate this claim).

Train Operating Employees Reporting to Work

1. Background

The train operator begins the workday by reporting for duty. A supervised check-in with a supervisor or dispatcher could represent the only routine face-to-face contact between system managers and employees during the work assignment. The reporting-for-work process represents an opportunity to ensure that employees are fit for duty, properly and professionally attired in the approved uniform, and available to report for duty on time. Required equipment to be carried by the train operator can be checked by system supervisors. This could be on a regular or a random basis. The required equipment might include safety gear such as a flashlight or lantern, appropriate footwear, safety vests, hardhat, safety glasses, signal flags, pilot flags, switch machine keys, bulletins, general orders and notices. Additionally, the system rulebook and applicable timetable may be required to be in the employee's possession. Current licensing or medical certificates may be checked at this time. Rail operators have certain responsibilities upon reporting to work, such as reviewing new bulletins; train orders or other instructive documents; these check-in responsibilities shall be clearly established by the RTS.

This standard provides for a readiness review of train operators before they begin vehicle operation, and an overview of specific responsibilities upon arriving at the workplace. This review allows for an extra margin of safety concerning train operator fitness and readiness to operate a rail vehicle.

Since reporting for work processes encompass a readiness review of employees, the rail transit system policies and procedures shall define circumstances that result in removal of a train operator from service.

2. General requirements

It is essential that train operators are prepared for and perform their assignment in accordance with the transit agency's procedures and policies. These procedures and policies should encompass procedures for fitness for duty and other requirements, such as clothing, identification badges, required equipment, tools and documents or manuals.

Each agency shall define the reporting-for-work requirements of operating employees who have work assignments for the day. While each agency develops its own requirements, the following items shall be included at a minimum:

- Fitness for duty
- Punctuality
- Uniform and appearance requirements
- Personal equipment requirements
- Safety equipment requirements
- Rulebook or other written material requirement
- Specific actions required upon reporting to work
- Employee relief responsibility
- Prohibited behavior and activities
- Personal conduct

Each transit agency shall develop specific written policies and procedures that define agency expectations of reporting train operators. These policies and procedures shall be designed to promote safety and customer service.

2.1 Punctuality

The rail transit system shall determine and clearly describe the train operator requirements for reporting for duty, which shall include the following elements:

- Reporting to work on time
- Reporting to the correct location
- Providing appropriate notice for failure to report on time

The agency shall define a mechanism for the monitoring of train operators' reporting for duty on schedule and taking corrective actions as appropriate.

The RTS shall define its requirements for employees to report when they will knowingly be late for reporting for duty or calling in sick and shall determine what corrective actions are associated with late reporting for duty or sick under these circumstances.

Section A.1 of the informative appendix contains guidance to help agencies establish punctuality requirements.

2.2 Uniform and appearance requirements

The rail transit system shall determine and clearly describe all requirements of train operator uniforms and appearance. The intent of this is to promote a publicly recognizable train operator appearance that is professional and neat.

Section A.2 of the informative appendix contains guidance to help transit systems establish uniform and appearance requirements.

2.3 Personal equipment requirements

The rail transit system shall determine and clearly describe all requirements regarding train operator equipment to be carried by employees when reporting to work and conducting their duties.

Section A.3 of the informative appendix contains guidance to help transit agencies establish personal equipment requirements.

2.4 Rulebook or other written material requirements

The transit agency shall determine and clearly describe all operating rulebook and other written materials that are required for operation and that are required to be in the train operator's possession upon reporting for work.

Section A.3 of the informative appendix contains guidance to help transit systems establish rulebook or other written material requirements.

2.5 Specific actions required upon reporting for work

The agency shall determine and clearly describe all actions required of train operators reporting for work.

Section A.4 of the informative appendix contains guidance to help agencies establish specific requirements for reporting-to-work duties.

2.6 Employee relief responsibility

The rail transit system shall determine and clearly describe all actions required of train operators engaged in relief activities.

Section A.5 of the informative appendix contains guidance to help transit systems establish employee relief responsibility requirements.

Related APTA standards

APTA RT-OP-S-018-12, *Fitness for Duty Program Requirements*.

Definitions

rail transit system: The organization that operates rail transit service and related activities. Also known as the transit system, transit agency, operating agency, operating authority, transit authority and other similar terms.

train operator: An authorized onboard employee who controls the movement of a train.

rail operating employees: Transit system employees either employed directly or by contract who are directly responsible for the routine movement of trains. This includes, but is not limited to, train operators, conductors, supervisors and control center personnel.

rail transit agency: Any entity that provides services on a rail fixed guideway public transportation system. (*49 CFR Part 673.5 Definitions*)

Abbreviations and acronyms

CDL	commercial driver's license
FFD	fitness for duty
HOS	hours of service
NATSA	North American Transit Services Association
PPE	personal protective equipment
RTA	Rail Transit Agency

Summary of document changes

1. Document formatted to the new APTA standard format.
2. Sections have been moved and renumbered.
3. Abbreviations for CDL, NATSA and PPE were added to the appropriate section.
4. A portion of the "Background" section was edited.
5. A bullet on "fitness for duty" was added in the "General requirements" section
6. The appendix had minor editing and reorganization.
7. Added "train orders, notices or other instructive documents" as responsibilities of reporting to work to Section 1.
8. Added "safety equipment requirements" to Section 2.
9. Added a requirement to Section 2.1 for the RTA to define its late/tardy reporting criteria and associated corrective action(s).
10. Merged Appendix A4 with Appendix A3.
11. Clarified wording for Sections on punctuality in A1.

Document history

Document Version	Working Group Vote	Public Comment/ Technical Oversight	Rail Transit CEO Approval	Rail Transit Standards Policy & Planning Approval	Publish Date
First published	June 18, 2003	—	—	June 6, 2004	June 2004
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Second revision	June 29, 2018	September 1, 2018	October 8, 2018	November 21, 2018	January 4, 2019

Appendix A (informative): Examples of operating employee reporting-to-work rules

This appendix contains examples of reporting-to-work best practices, including sample language, for employee requirements. The information is provided for informative purposes only.

A.1 Suggested wording for sections on punctuality

- **Operators must report to work on time.** Due to the time-sensitive characteristic of public transportation services, punctuality is a critical value for each agency. Maintaining a public timetable requires reliance on the employee to be at work at the proper time to pull out on schedule or to perform other assignments (such as yard or shop moves or other actions). As there is no latitude in the timetable, and only a small percentage of operators can be replaced without prior notice, explicit policy statements and processes must define responsibilities and consequences. Operators shall report to work on time. Failure to report on time shall result in the appropriate administrative action defined for late-reporting employees.
- **Operators must report to the correct location.** Operators shall report to the correct division, dispatch office, supervisor or relief location as scheduled or instructed in order to be considered present for duty.
- **Appropriate notice for failure to report on time.** Operators who are unable to report to work on time or calling in sick shall be required to give appropriate notice to the supervisor or dispatcher so that the work may be reassigned without loss of scheduled service. Failure to provide advance notification for a late report shall result in the appropriate administrative action defined for the situation.
- **Corrective action for failure to report on time.** The RTS is committed to fulfilling its service requirements to the public. Employee failure to report on time can negatively affect the provision and quality of transportation service. It is the RTS's policy that employees who do not report for duty on time shall be subject to progressive action for repeated occurrences.

A.2 Suggested requirements for uniforms and appearance

The uniform and appearance requirements shall include the following elements:

- **Cleanliness and neatness:** Employees reporting for duty shall be clean and neat. The uniform shall be in good repair and not wrinkled, damaged or stained. While in uniform, employees shall maintain a neat appearance, whether on or off duty. Good personal grooming shall be required, to complete the professional appearance of the operator.
- **Prescribed uniform:** Employees shall report to work in the entire, prescribed uniform. Personal clothing shall not be substituted for parts of the uniform unless authorized.
- **Regulation badges or ID patches:** Employees shall have regulation badges, ID patches or nameplates upon the uniform as required.
- **Foreign insignia:** Foreign insignia is any badge, button, patch, pin, etc. that is not issued as a part of the established uniform. Unless expressly authorized by management in writing, it shall not be worn.
- **Wearing of hats:** The wearing of hats is permitted within the confines of established policy. Hats shall be worn with the visor to the front and cannot be altered in any manner. Only the specific, authorized headgear shall be worn with the uniform, regardless of insignia or patches.
- **Wearing of shirts:** Shirttails shall be tucked into pants. Long-sleeve shirts require a tie, and sleeves shall not be rolled back. Only the top button of short-sleeve shirts shall be left unbuttoned. Only authorized patches shall be affixed to shirts.
- **Footwear:** Only the prescribed footwear shall be worn with the uniform. Open-toed shoes, sandals, sneakers, jogging and tennis shoes, shoes without defined heels, and shoes in poor repair shall not be permitted. If safety shoes are prescribed by the policy, then they shall be worn.
- **Headphones:** Headphones and earphones shall not be worn when reporting to work or when operating any vehicle.

- **Seasonal uniforms:** If seasonal uniforms are required by the policy, the appropriate “uniform of the day” shall be worn in all instances.
- **Jackets, vests, sweaters:** Jackets, vests and sweaters shall be uniform issue and appropriate for the season as defined by policy.
- **Ties and scarves:** Ties and scarves shall be uniform issue and worn in conjunction with appropriate uniform items.
- **Corrective eyewear:** If an employee requires corrective eyewear, it shall be worn whenever the employee’s duties require it. Employees shall wear only the approved corrective eyewear.

A.3 Suggested rulebook, written materials and personal equipment requirements

The personal equipment requirements shall be in the operator’s possession and may include the following elements:

- Rulebook
- New bulletins, train orders, notices, or other instructive documents
- Standard operating procedures/practices
- Proper licensing and medical certification
- Required keys
- Reliable watch, synchronized with railway time
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), which may include:
 - flashlight or lantern
 - safety vest
 - safety glasses
 - pilot flags
 - signal flags
- paddle or schedule
- train orders
- portable radio and/or other employer-provided communications devices
- timetable
- commercial driver’s license (CDL), where required, and
- Courtesy cards, accident forms, suspect ID forms, and other appropriate forms.

A.4 Suggested actions required upon reporting for work

Actions required of operators reporting to work shall include (as appropriate) the following:

- **Review of newly posted information:** Operators shall be responsible to read, understand and comply with bulletins, notices, train orders or other documents as required prior to operating a vehicle. Operators returning from a period off duty shall be responsible for compliance with any bulletins, notices or orders posted during their absence.
- **Reporting to supervisor or dispatcher (check-in):** If required, operators shall report to a supervisor or dispatcher to check in.
- **Signing in:** If applicable, operators shall sign in on time. Operators on duty shall maintain contact with the Control Center or a supervisor.
- **Receipt of operator mail:** Operators shall collect their mail upon reporting to work. This includes any written business communication sent to their specific attention. If required by policy, operators shall sign to acknowledge receipt.
- **Receipt of controlled equipment:** Operators shall receive all issued equipment provided at report time, such as a portable radio or safety gear, and sign for same.
- **Vehicle assignment and review of yard map:** Operators shall obtain the correct vehicle assignment and determine its location from the yard map.

- **Timely arrival for vehicle inspection:** Operators shall arrive at their assigned vehicles in time to perform any required inspections, as defined by the transit system.
- **Workplace courtesy:** Operators shall maintain courteous and professional relations with fellow operators, maintenance personnel and others in the workplace.
- **Substitution of work:** No operator shall substitute work assignments of any sort with another person without permission from supervision.
- **Timepiece accuracy and synchronization:** Operators shall maintain accurate timepieces, synchronized with official railway time.
- **Two-way radio test/check:** Operators shall conduct a two-way radio test/check.

A.5 Suggested employee relief responsibilities

Specific responsibilities for relieving and being relieved shall be followed and may include the following elements:

- **Fitness for duty:** Employees shall not accept relief from employees who are not fit for duty.
- **Pass-down:** Operators being relieved shall instruct the relieving employee concerning all conditions that are or may be abnormal. Train orders for the day and all necessary materials shall be transferred to the relieving employee.
- **Relief failure:** When the relieving operator fails to report at the scheduled time and place to make the relief, the operator to be relieved shall advise Central Control and remain in service as directed.