



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

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October 13, 2020

Subject: Impacts of COV-19 on the National Transit Database (NTD) Reporting

Dear Recipients:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recognizes the effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency on the transit industry and this letter provides information about recent National Transit Database (NTD) developments and the new NTD report year.

## BACKGROUND

FTA recognizes that data collection has been both critical and challenging during the COVID-19 public health emergency. In March 2020, FTA immediately acted providing administrative relief for reporting activities wherever possible. FTA extended the NTD reporting deadline of April 30, 2020, by two months and waived certain requirements for the data collection process. Thus, FTA plans to release the [NTD Annual Data Publications](#) in November 2020 (one month later than usual).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Policy Updates (e.g., COVID-19) -- FTA continues to receive and address questions regarding NTD reporting and COVID-19. Here are several websites or resources you may find useful:

- [COVID-19 FAQs](#): Provides answers to grantee FAQs regarding COVID-19.
- [Guide: NTD Reporting and COVID-19](#): Provides information about the impacts of COVID-19 on NTD reporting specifically. We will update guidance on this page as necessary.

One challenge many agencies are facing is on-vehicle data collection (i.e., ridership sampling). Report Year 2020 (RY 2020) is normally a mandatory sampling year for urban operators reporting to the NTD. However, FTA has waived the sampling requirement for all systems that use in-person sampling activities. This includes all activities involving onboard data collectors. For the 2020 NTD Annual Report, reporters may instead use the average passenger trip length from the most recent prior year sample, which in some cases will be from 2017. The [Guide: NTD Reporting and COVID-19](#) contains further information on this topic.

Looking ahead, reporters should follow the normal due dates for the Fiscal (Report) Year 2020 reporting period. The first annual reporting deadline, which applies to agencies **with fiscal**

**year's ending on or before June 30, 2020, is October 31, 2020.** The [2020 NTD Reporting Policy Manual](#) includes several updates for this year, including new fields to report CARES Act funds.

Training Opportunities -- Training resources are available now or in the coming year and are provided in partnership with the FTA-funded [National Transit Institute \(NTI\)](#).

- Recorded Webinars (available online on-demand) -- Are located on the [NTD Presentation and Webinars](#) page. A webinar on RY 2020 updates, including COVID-19 impacts and CARES Act funding, is now available.
- Full-Day Online Trainings (14 hours total split over four days) -- These week-long trainings are for full reporters and are provided through the NTI. There is a wait list for upcoming sessions. Full details are included in the registration page link below <https://www.ntionline.com/>. The training is free for local government personnel from transit systems in the United States and is \$300 for all others.

To be added to the wait list for the full-day training, navigate to <https://www.ntionline.com/>. Scroll down to the bottom of the welcome page where it says, "Join Our Mailing List," and click on "Sign Up!" You will receive updates when new virtual training is open for enrollment (although a wait list may still apply). Note, there are no wait lists for the recorded webinars mentioned above.

General Contacts and Additional Resources -- The NTD Help-Desk is a primary resource for questions related to the NTD. The Help Desk provides support by email ([ntdhelp@dot.gov](mailto:ntdhelp@dot.gov)) or phone (888-2525-0936) from 8:00 AM–7:00 PM eastern time. You may also contact your assigned NTD analyst directly at any time through the NTD Report Tool. The following are additional resources relevant to the NTD:

- [NTD Reporting System User Guide](#): Guidance on how to navigate within forms and user other functionality in the online reporting system.
- [NTD Reporting – Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Apportionments -- The apportionments for Federal FY 2021 are based on 2019 data reported to the NTD. Service during 2019 was not affected by COVID-19, so the formula calculation will use NTD data as normal for this year. If you received a waiver from reporting 2019 data, then FTA will use your 2018 data instead.

Looking ahead to next year, FTA will use your 2019 data (or your 2018 data, if 2019 reporting was waived) for the FY 2022 formula apportionment by default. You do not need to submit a request to FTA to use the 2019 data (or 2018 data) as it will be automatically applied to every NTD Report.

We look forward to a successful NTD report year and appreciate our partnership with you providing this vital information.

Sincerely,

*Yvette G. Taylor*  
Yvette G. Taylor, Ph.D.  
Regional Administrator