

## Evaluation of New Trainees

Information compiled February 27, 2006

**The Question:** What is your system, grading criterion, or process for the final approval of a trainee? I'm looking specifically for what standards you use to pass / fail the trainee.

**Ben Franklin Transit** says... Ben Franklin Transit uses a multifaceted grading system when evaluating prospective coach operator/drivers during our Basic Training Program. Not only are trainees required to take periodic quizzes (on information they've received during both classroom and behind the wheel instruction) during phase one of training, but they're also evaluated each day behind the wheel. Trainees must prove themselves in three areas: 1) test taking (can only fail one quiz), 2) continued improvement in their driving ability, 3) and thirdly, we subjectively look at their overall attitude (which weighs heavily on whether they succeed through the program). A final written exam is also given to the trainees and must pass with a 70% or better. The score on the final exam (for coach operators) also dictates the seniority of the classmates.

**Community Transit** says... We are in the process of developing a "practical final" for coach operator trainees which is not yet complete I would be happy to send a copy on when it's done. It will likely be a few more weeks.

**CUBS** says... We have such a low turnover that we might hire a new driver once every couple of years. Most of the trainee's come from the school district and already know how to drive and handle a bus. We really do not have specific standards.

**Island Transit** says... We don't have a grade system, but we are with the trainee from day one through all the training process. During the training if incidents happen we log them down, and we end training if there are too many incidents or accidents. We have a schedule of training that we follow strictly and each trainee has at least 300 hours of training before being let loose on the road.

**Jefferson Transit** says... I'm the final evaluator of new trainees. As the Service and Training Supervisor I also do the majority of the training, and so I know the drivers very well.

As far as criteria, of course they have to pass their CDL driving test. If they are new to bus driving they have already spent weeks with me prior to passing this test. After the test I have a couple of operators who I charge with teaching route familiarization, handling fares, transfer procedures and general items you can only learn by doing. Once a new driver can handle passengers, stay on route/on time, communicate effectively with passengers

and other operators, etc. I take them back to do specialized training (handling difficult passengers, emergency evacuation, accident procedures, etc.).

All of our operators are capable of doing both fixed route and Dial-a-Ride paratransit functions. Once a new driver can do fixed route, we put him out on the road when necessary and continue training on paratransit specifics. A lot of this involves ADAPT's procedures and orienteering around the town and throughout the county.

The whole training process takes about 4 weeks for an experienced driver and 6 for a complete novice.

As far as standards, they are difficult to measure. Of course if a trainee has an accident he will probably not be hired at all. And if I don't feel like I would be able to ride comfortably and safely with the driver, I won't 'bless' him. I ask the same opinion of all the trainers who've had experience with him. If we all agree, initial training is completed.

I check out new operators periodically to make sure they're still on track (and of course all the other operators give me info too). I give refresher training as needed, and my door is always open if the new operator has questions (which they often do).

**Kitsap Transit** says... Our final driver evaluation is really two phases. First is the "end of formal training pretrip and drive". This consists of the driver conducting a complete bus CDL pretrip and observed drive. Certain elements of the pretrip are pass/fail and the remaining combine for a score. The drive portion has 18 required elements including defensive driving (following distance, speed, etc), braking, wheelchair procedures, etc.

All of these are scored on a 3-2-1 scale and the combined score has to meet minimum. The second phase involves route qualification where the driver learns our various routes and has to drive each under observation. This is also a pass/fail test for each route. This portion can take several days and weeks depending on the work schedule of the individual driver.

**Mason Transit** says... This is the criteria we use for our driver trainees. We do have other informational classes that they take but the following are required to pass successfully to complete the training program.

All driver trainees must have or be able to attain Class B CDL with Passenger endorsement and air brakes.

They must successfully complete the following classes:

- CPR/ First Aid
- Passenger Assistance
- Defensive Driving
- TSI Bus Operators Training Course

The Trainees must be able to learn to operate all the transit vehicles used by Mason County Transit and demonstrate their ability to handle the vehicles smoothly and safely. They must be able to learn all routes and develop a working knowledge of Mason county roads and addresses demonstrated through memory and use of maps. The trainees must demonstrate appropriate attitude and good customer service skills.

The trainees then are assigned to OJT Drivers and must demonstrate their skills while driving with several OJT Drivers for a minimum period of 2 weeks. The OJT Drivers score the trainees using the following scale:

- 3 = Proficient
- 2 = Skills are sufficient and should improve with experience
- 1 = Not to Standard. Additional training required.

The trainees must have a minimum of 2 in all categories to move to a driving position. The categories observed by the drivers are:

- Pre-trip inspections
- Radio Communications
- Knowledge of Emergency Equipment
- Safe Driving
- General Safety
- Passenger Assistance
- Assisting passengers using a wheelchair
- Body Mechanics
- Passenger Relations
- Customer Service
- Knowledge of Paperwork
- Routing and Map Reading

**Skagit Transit** says... I use several criteria depending on the prior experience of the trainee. If the trainee already has a CDL of the correct class, I use the Operator Evaluation form attached to the other email. For trainees with no experience, I use the same evaluation form plus the trainee must pass the CDL test. Most of the evaluation is subjective.

**Spokane Transit** says... We use this form each day. The Trainer fills it out and places it in a central binder accessible to all Trainers. Before the next training day, the Trainer reviews each of their student's files and then knows specifically what each students needs to work on. Our program is laid out in such a manner that it identifies struggling students and then we focus our efforts on that student until we make the decision to wash from the program. The daily documentation really helps us to make this determination. Usually, the students we release from training already know where they stand in the program and why this action has been taken. Working great for us so far!