

Who we are:

Transportation is so basic that many of us overlook its overwhelming importance in our daily lives. Practically everything used in our homes, offices, or schools across Tennessee – from furniture to food items to clothing – requires a large and complex transportation network. The Tennessee Department of Transportation provides citizens of Tennessee and travelers with one of the best transportation systems in the country. TDOT is a multimodal agency with responsibilities in building and maintaining roads, aviation, public transit, waterways, railroads, cycling and walking. Our involvement ranges from airport improvements to funding transit buses to planning for river ports. The Department of Transportation has approximately 3,500 employees with four statewide region facilities in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Jackson.



Rail Safety Team Lead

Passenger Transportation, Rail and Freight Division – Freight and Rail
Safety & Engineering Section
Nashville, TN
\$103,848 annually

Job Overview

The Rail Safety Team Lead will lead, mentor, and train the Rail Safety Team through empowerment, communication, and delegated authority. This position will develop work plans that align with TDOT's strategic vision and will effectively delegate authority and responsibility while ensuring the availability of resources for the Rail Safety Team to be successful.

The Rail Safety Team Lead will lead the development and implementation of departmental policies, discipline-specific technical guidance, procedures, and manuals related to rail safety for incorporation into TDOT's programs and projects. This position will ensure the implementation of the quality assurance program to achieve program efficiency and effectiveness. The Rail Safety Team Lead will supervise technical staff and implement performance plans, schedules, and budgets, ensuring each team member's expected outcomes, performance, and accountability. The Rail Safety Team Lead will research national best practices to drive innovation and efficiency within the Rail Safety Team.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Manage resources and staff utilization and assist the Rail Safety Team in performing their roles effectively and efficiently, optimizing the Team's ability to administer rail safety processes successfully.

Lead conducting federal- and state-required rail safety inspections. Work in partnership with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to perform inspections of railroad tracks, railroad signals and train control, and railroad operating practices. Perform state inspections, including reviewing rail yards, walkways, good conditions at road crossings, identifying gas storage tanks adjacent to tracks, etc.

Enforce Tennessee state laws that require railroad companies to maintain at-grade rail-highway crossings in good condition. Grade rail crossings and those rated as poor must be corrected and reinspected every 30 days until they are repaired. Prepare inspection reports. Issue notices of violations when necessary.

Serve as an emergency coordinator with the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), as required. Remain on-call 24/7 in case anything happens (e.g., fatalities or significant incidents).

Lead the Rail Safety Team in providing exceptional customer service to internal and external customers, exercising effective listening skills, providing prompt responses, maintaining complete and accurate documentation, and communicating effectively.

Establish and ensure that there is a direct relationship between quality and work outcomes by developing and implementing quality control and quality assurance processes for the Rail Safety Team's rail safety activities.

Assist with the management of the policy direction for the Rail Safety Team as part of a matrix structure, creating policies, procedures, guidelines, and performance metrics that support adherence to federal and state requirements, include best practices, and improve planning processes. Assist with the financial performance of the Rail Safety Team in alignment with TDOT financial processes to ensure transparency and accountability.

Manage change and conflict, clarify the vision, take ownership of the change, communicate effectively, remain transparent, lead by example, and hold yourself and others accountable throughout the process.

Ensure the Rail Safety Team remains current on national best practices relating to rail safety processes and procedures; incorporate research, evaluations, and implementation of emerging processes and technologies into the rail safety responsibilities that will improve efficiency, resiliency, effectiveness, reliability, sustainability, and the safety of Tennessee's transportation network; integrate federal and state requirements into TDOT's guidance documents, processes, and procedures. Participate in peer exchanges with State and local governments and applicable industry partners for critical insights and collaboration.

Provide oversight in the development of the Rail Safety Team deliverables, and ensure they are consistent, predictable, and repeatable to provide consistently high levels of achievement, mitigation of risk, and an established track record of success.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- 5 years of demonstrated competency in rail or freight safety or related field.

Necessary Special Qualifications

- This candidate has two (2) years to obtain FRA certification in at least one of six technical disciplines focusing on compliance and enforcement (Grade Crossings, Hazardous Materials, Motive Power and Equipment, Operating Practices, Signal and Train Control, Track) as a condition of employment.

Ideal Candidate

The Rail Safety Team Lead is highly skilled in creating, overseeing, and implementing innovative rail safety programs. They showcase excellent communication, leadership, and team management abilities, successfully engaging with stakeholders across all levels. In their leadership role, they guide the team on best practices and ensure adherence to state and federal regulations, while promoting innovation. Their position is essential in identifying opportunities to overcome challenges and plan for future success.