

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.



Freight Planning & State Safety Oversight Senior Technical Specialist
Passenger Transportation, Rail, and Freight Division – Freight, Rail Safety & Rail
Engineering Section
Nashville, TN
\$75,204 annually

Job Overview

The Freight Planning & State Safety Oversight Senior Technical Specialist is responsible for coordinating planning and public outreach work, collecting and analyzing Freight and Safety data and information, developing technical reports, grants, and contracts, and consulting with regulatory agencies. This position is actively engaged in the development, analysis, interpretation, and administration of both contracts and grants for freight and rail, along with auditing functions.

The Freight Planning & State Safety Oversight Senior Technical Specialist is expected to use sound judgment and decision-making skills to ensure that Department policies, technical guidance, procedures, software, and systems related to the Rail Safety and Engineering Section are current and accurate for incorporation into the project delivery process. This position assists in implementing the Quality Assurance Program as part of the Passenger Transportation, Rail, and Freight Division's activities to reduce errors, delays, and contractor claims. This position must perform advanced technical responsibilities and effectively articulate technical concepts through training, mentoring, and collaborating as part of a matrix organization.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Perform safety oversight of the Department's fixed guideway public transportation systems and entities that own them with Federal financial assistance authorized under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 – aiding in the review and development of agency safety plans, corrective action plans, audits, inspections, annual reports, and other oversight activities.

Assist in the day-to-day activities of the Short Line Preservation Grants Program, including completing desk reviews, contract grant management, consulting with FRA, and remaining actively engaged with grant recipients.

Assist with assessing public railroad crossings, including crash risk assessments, technical reviews for compliance with 23 CFR 646.214(b)(2), federal and state safety inspections, enforce state laws pertaining to railroads, and ensure that grade crossings remain in good condition for all public railroad crossings in Tennessee.

Collaborate with various transportation agencies, private partners, and public agencies to coordinate statewide freight planning efforts. Provide freight data and

assistance with small freight projects to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) upon request.

Provide exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers by exercising effective listening skills and providing prompt responses. Provide feedback to stakeholders, local government partners, consulting and regulatory agencies, consultants, contractors, and legislators to resolve highly complex projects and program issues.

Produce Annual Reports regarding the safety of each Rail Fixed Guideway Systems to the Federal Transit Authority, the Governor, and the Rail Transit Agency Boards of Directors.

Review and approve Safety Plans, Internal Safety Reviews, and State Safety Program Standards for the Passenger Transportation, Rail, and Freight Division.

Assist with developing and implementing a Quality Improvement Process to improve safety and manage risk for the Passenger Transportation, Rail, and Freight Division.

Assist in training and mentoring staff within the Freight Planning & State Oversight Team to ensure consistent, predictable, and repeatable levels of performance and achievement while mitigating risks and working within a matrix organization structure.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- 3 years of demonstrated competency in Rail or Freight Management, Rail or Freight Planning, Transportation or Program Safety Oversight, Grants or Program Management, State and Regional Transportation Planning, Public Administration, or related field.

OR

- Master's degree
- 2 years of demonstrated competency in Rail or Freight Management, Rail or Freight Planning, Transportation or Program Safety Oversight, Grants or Program Management, State and Regional Transportation Planning, Public Administration, or related field.

Ideal Candidate

The Freight Planning & State Safety Oversight Senior Technical Specialist position is a detail-oriented and analytical professional with extensive experience in freight planning, rail safety, and grant administration. They possess strong decision-making skills and excel at managing complex programs. Adept at coordinating with diverse stakeholders, including transportation agencies, private partners, and regulatory bodies, this Senior Technical Specialist ensures compliance with federal and state regulations while advancing freight and rail initiatives. They thrive in both independent and collaborative environments, demonstrating leadership through mentoring and training junior staff to maintain consistent and high-quality performance across the team.