

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. TDOT Aeronautics is located near the John C. Tune Airport in Nashville, TN.



Policy Statewide Technical Specialist
Traffic Design Division – Production Support Section
Nashville, TN
\$99,864 annually

Job Overview

The Policy Statewide Technical Specialist is a statewide specialist position that will manage all aspects of TDOT's policy program within the Production Support Section. This specialist plays a critical leadership role in shaping and implementing traffic engineering policies and design guidance, while also supporting Project Teams across all phases of the Project Delivery Network (PDN) to ensure projects are delivered according to their scope, schedule, budget, and risk profiles from simple to exceedingly complex. This position advises on project delivery and ensures regulatory compliance across various traffic engineering disciplines, including ITS device utilization and communication, safety and work zones, signals, signing and pavement markings, lighting, and modeling. This position also guides the coordination and development of the statewide policy program, working closely with internal teams and consultants to enhance the quality, consistency, coordination, specification consistency, drawings, and automation of standards documentation and processes.

The Policy Statewide Technical Specialist provides authoritative technical support to regional staff and project teams, ensuring alignment of design decisions with state and federal policies as part of a matrix organization. This position guides the development, maintenance, and consistent application of traffic policy standards, incorporating national best practices, innovative design concepts, and stakeholder feedback to enhance safety, mobility, and system performance. This position also contributes to legislative analysis, risk mitigation, and quality assurance, while mentoring staff and facilitating knowledge transfer. In coordination with the Project Management Division, this position supports project oversight to ensure outcomes align with TDOT's Asset Management and strategic goals.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Regularly assess programs, policies, procedures, and guidelines to ensure compliance with Federal and State regulations and add consistency. Identify areas of non-compliance and work with others to develop and implement corrective action plans improving traffic processes, and consistency for projects within the Department. Monitor and manage TDOT's Traffic Design manuals and guidelines in coordination with the Statewide Production Engineer.

Ensure exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers by exercising effective listening skills, providing prompt responses, maintaining complete and accurate documentation, excellent writing skills, and communicating effectively.

Collaborate with TDOT project teams, regional designers, and external partners to ensure policy alignment and manage impacts on project scope, schedule, and budget across all delivery phases, including design-build and Alternative Technical Concepts. Guide or support multi-disciplinary quality reviews for complex projects, providing second-level feedback to ensure design deliverables meet statewide quality standards and the TDOT Project Delivery Network (PDN). Resolve cross-disciplinary design conflicts and facilitate coordination between headquarters and regional. Represent TDOT at public meetings, FHWA reviews, and legislative briefings; clearly communicate policy decisions and technical guidance to stakeholders. Review and respond to legislative proposals impacting traffic engineering and advise leadership on implications and recommended actions. Actively engage in technical committees and coordinate across divisions such as Construction, Maintenance, and Planning to support a unified, department-wide policy framework.

Routinely collaborate with the Production Support Section to identify and document knowledge on industry best practices that includes maximizing project successes, acknowledging national best practices, and avoiding past errors. Assist with modifying all applicable policies, procedures, design standards, manuals, specifications, and special provisions. Work collectively with stakeholders to ensure proper operations and coordination with adjacent facilities. Read, interpret, and apply statutes, regulations, policies, plans, specifications, standards, grant language requirements, contract requirements, and funding applications. Provide feedback to Regions, local government partners, consultants, contractors, and legislators on grants, projects, and programs, and provide resolution for highly complex issues.

Serve on selection committees for professional engineering services as part of the Brooks Act, including assistance with RFP development, attendance at project-specific marketing meetings, assistance with determining scoring criteria, assistance with project information sessions, when applicable, serving as a scorer as part of the consultant acquisition process, and attendance at de-briefs for consultants where usable feedback must be provided. Review and give final approval to consultant submittals to determine if a consultant is qualified to perform standards applications and/or operational type work. Review, advise, and make recommendations to ensure that project standards are completed on time. Provide technical recommendations to higher-level management for the acquisition of public-private partnerships (PPP) and implementation of policy.

Serve as the Policy Program Specialist for the department to review and give approval of the standards policy program, including but not limited to; regulatory compliance and alignment, plan review, drafting standards for projects, quality assurance, and ensuring consistency and uniformity in applying standards and procedures developed by consultants and in-house for contract letting and in support of Design's projects. Assist in resolving engineering issues that arise during project planning, design, and construction. Participate in evaluations to improve the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of designs. Establish and monitor metrics for the effectiveness of design and construction specifications and standards. Prepare reports and updates for executive leadership and state officials regarding the status and impact of new and proposed changes to existing policies.

Research and implement innovative technologies to enhance TDOT standards, processes, and quality. Ensure all policies and specifications comply with FHWA, AASHTO, and TDOT guidelines, while maintaining consistency and sustainability across programs. Stay current with national best practices and innovative emerging trends to guide the development and integration of transportation policies, standards, and guidance documents. Monitor projects for compliance, conduct audits, and support legislation and strategic initiatives that advance safety, mobility, and operational efficiency.

Assist and support the development of grants for Traffic Design strategies, including the application of emerging technologies to enhance transportation safety. Assist in securing grant funding for traffic programs and maintain and oversee a spreadsheet of all available grant opportunities relevant to traffic design and operation's needs. Assist with the application, implementation, and tracking of any grants identified to be obtainable.

Assist in the development of training according to the TDOT Technical Training Director requirements that address policies, objectives, benefits, risk management, technical asset management elements, and emerging technologies related to policies in transportation to improve team performance, create a stronger understanding of the transportation industry, inspire new ideas, and develop skills. Conduct training sessions on new policy software, data collection techniques, and regulatory changes. Ensure internal stakeholders are well-informed, stay current, and contribute to leading policy practices, training, and education. Ensure deliverables are consistent, predictable, and repeatable to provide consistently high levels of achievement, mitigation of risk, and an established track record of success.

Maintain and update the department's policy inventory system, coordinate with and work collectively with the Asset Management Division, and work collectively with the statewide project and program development Engineers and the Production Support Section Manager to ensure proper design, implementation, and maintenance of the policy program and database system.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- 8 years of demonstrated competency in engineering, public policy, managing transportation projects, planning, urban studies, or related field

OR

- Master's degree
- 7 years of demonstrated competency in engineering, public policy, managing transportation projects, planning, urban studies, or related field

Ideal Candidate

The Policy Statewide Technical Specialist is a highly skilled and dedicated professional who places great importance on the efficiency, quality, and accessibility of policies. They are confident in their strategic thinking abilities and are always seeking ways to optimize system effectiveness and process improvement. They make informed decisions that result in improvements while keeping projects on schedule and within budget. The Policy Statewide Technical Specialist is passionate about collaborating with various stakeholders, including government agencies, contractors, and community members, to address transportation policy issues. They possess exceptional project management and leadership skills, which are complemented by strong analytical and problem-solving abilities. By staying up-to-date with emerging technologies and best practices, they continually strive to improve system efficiency and effectiveness.