



## Assault Protections for Transit Workers

- Assaults against transit workers continue to be a significant concern for workers, transit agencies, and the travelling public. **In the US, at least one transit worker is assaulted during their shift every day and in some localities the average can be more than 5 assaults each day.** These assaults happen in both rural and urban communities and contribute to productivity shortfalls, workplace absence, and increased levels of stress for assaulted workers.
- According to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), these assaults are caused by a variety of factors, including fare and rules disputes from passengers. However, **many assaults are uncategorized and appear to be random acts of violence from transit customers.** All frontline transit workers are at risk of assault – not just bus drivers.
- Addressing these assaults is complicated by inconsistent and under-reported data collection, as well as under-investment in mitigation infrastructure and training. **Under the FTA's current practices, an assault victim could have their nose broken, be hospitalized for 24 hours, suffer first degree burns without triggering any reporting requirements.** Additionally, the FTA does not separate customer assaults from worker assault in the National Transit Database, making it nearly impossible to conduct statistical analysis on a large scale using federal data.
- Many local transit agencies have found effective ways to prevent assaults. **Barriers, increased police presence, and route changes have all demonstrated significant decreases in the frequency and severity of worker assaults.** Localities must dedicate the resources necessary for whichever strategy will most immediately protect workers from assault on the job.
- In order to enable local decision makers to take the steps necessary to prevent transit worker assault, **Congress must update the FTA's data collection requirements** to accurately gauge the issue at each transit agency and identify the best practices of successful agencies. **Agencies that are failing to decrease the number and severity of assaults must be required to spend dedicated resources addressing this issue in partnership with their workers.**