NTD Reporting Checklist

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NTD Reporting Checklist

A printable reference for the National Transit Database (NTD) Annual Report. It lists every required data element, its operational source, its owner at the agency, and its deadline. Everything is grouped by module, with a tick box for each row.

Reporter category (Full, Reduced, or Rural) and any dollar or size thresholds referenced below change from year to year. Confirm both against the current year’s FTA National Transit Database Policy Manual and Reporting Manual before filing.

This checklist is organized the way the report itself is built: one module per source system. The person who owns each row is already the person who has the underlying data, not the person who has to go find it.

Module 1 • Service Data

Service data measures how much service the agency operated and how many riders used it. Most of it comes straight from dispatch, farebox, and vehicle systems rather than a spreadsheet built by hand at report time.

- [x] | Data element | Operational source | Owner | Deadline
- [ ] | Unlinked Passenger Trips (UPT) | Farebox transaction log, or an automated passenger counter | _____ | Annual Report, due 4 months after fiscal year end
- [ ] | Passenger Miles Traveled (PMT), Full Reporters (Reduced Reporters do not report PMT) | Automated passenger counter with stop-level detection, or a certified sampling program | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM) | Dispatch / CAD-AVL logs, reconciled against scheduled trip distance | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH) | Dispatch / CAD-AVL logs, reconciled against the schedule | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service (VOMS) | Dispatch scheduling records for the single peak service day | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Directional route miles | Schedule data / route shapes (including the agency’s GTFS feed) | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Unlinked passenger trips and passenger miles for complementary paratransit, where the agency operates it | Paratransit scheduling system, or driver manifest logs | _____ | Annual Report

\ The Annual Report deadline is each agency’s own fiscal year end plus 4 months. Confirm the exact date and any interim submission requirement against the current year’s NTD Reporting Manual.

Module 2 • Financial Data

Financial data ties every dollar spent and earned in the reporting year to a standard national chart of accounts. The general ledger needs to already be coded in a way the report can use, not translated afterward by whoever is filling in the form.

- [x] | Data element | Operational source | Owner | Deadline
- [ ] | Operating expenses by function (vehicle operations, vehicle maintenance, facility maintenance, general administration) | General ledger, coded to NTD’s Uniform System of Accounts | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Operating expenses by object class (Full Reporters: labor, fringe benefits, purchased services, materials and supplies) | General ledger detail | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Total operating expenses, all functions combined | General ledger, coded to NTD’s Uniform System of Accounts | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Capital expenditures by type (vehicles, facilities, other) and mode | Capital budget and grant drawdown records | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Fare revenue earned | Farebox or automated fare collection settlement report | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Funding sources (federal, state, local, directly generated) | Finance / grants records | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Employee counts by function (operations, maintenance, general administration), where the agency’s reporter category requires it | Payroll or HR records | _____ | Annual Report

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Module 3 • Asset Data

Asset data documents what the agency owns: the fleet and, where applicable, facilities, along with each item’s age and condition. It comes from whatever system tracks maintenance and capital purchases, whether that is dedicated asset management software or a well maintained spreadsheet.

- [x] | Data element | Operational source | Owner | Deadline
- [ ] | Revenue vehicle inventory: vehicle type, mode, ownership, fuel type, and year of manufacture | Fleet or asset management records, vehicle titles | _____ |

Annual Report

- [ ] | Facility inventory, where applicable | Asset management records | _____ | Annual Report

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Module 4 • Federal Funding Allocation

This module (form FFA-10) splits the agency's service and operating expense totals across each urbanized and rural area it serves. FTA uses these figures to apportion formula funds.

- [x] | Data element | Operational source | Owner | Deadline
- [ ] | Vehicle revenue miles and hours, trips, passenger miles, and operating expenses by urbanized or rural area served | Service and financial data above, split by area | _____ | Annual Report

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Module 5 • Safety and Security Data

Safety and security data has its own reporting rhythm, separate from the Annual Report. Some of it is monthly, and a major event has its own short reporting clock that does not wait for year end.

- [x] | Data element | Operational source | Owner | Deadline
- [ ] | Monthly incident reporting (Full Reporters) | Dispatch incident logs, safety department records | _____ | Monthly, per the current NTD monthly reporting schedule
- [ ] | Major reportable event detail (collision, fatality, injury, or other FTA-defined event) | Dispatch incident logs, safety department records | _____ | Within 30 days of the event
- [ ] | Annual safety and security declaration (Reduced and Rural Reporters) | Safety department records | _____ | Annual Report

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Module 6 • Certification and Filing

The Annual Report is not complete until someone with the authority to certify it does so, and, where the agency's size requires it, an outside auditor has reviewed the underlying data.

- [x] | Data element | Operational source | Owner | Deadline
- [ ] | Chief Executive Officer certification of data accuracy | Signed by agency CEO / General Manager | _____ | Annual Report

- [ ] | Independent Auditor Statement, where the agency meets the current year’s size threshold | External auditor | _____ | Annual Report
- [ ] | Fuel and energy consumption for revenue vehicles | Fuel card records or maintenance system logs | _____ | Annual Report

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How to Use This Checklist

- Fill in the owner column for every row before the fiscal year closes. A blank owner column in October is how a filing goes late, because no one notices a missing source until the week it is due.
- Confirm this year’s reporter category (Full, Reduced, or Rural) and this year’s size and dollar thresholds against the current NTD Policy Manual before relying on any figure not listed above. A category carried over from last year without reconfirming is a common source of an incomplete filing.
- Pull each number from the source system named, not from a spreadsheet re-entry of it, wherever the agency’s systems allow a direct export. A direct export is also the easiest thing to defend if the data is ever questioned.
- Route the completed sheet to whoever signs the CEO certification with enough lead time to review it, not the week it is due. A certifying officer reviewing eleven months of data for the first time on the deadline day finds errors too late to fix them.

Common Filing Errors

- Mixing fare validations with ridership. A contactless tap or a farebox transaction is not the same count as an Unlinked Passenger Trip. Reconcile the two before either number goes on the report.
- Reporting scheduled miles and hours instead of operated ones. Vehicle Revenue Miles and Vehicle Revenue Hours describe what actually ran, not what the schedule said should have run. Dispatch or CAD-AVL logs, not the published timetable, are the source.
- Carrying forward last year’s reporter category. Full, Reduced, and Rural status is reassessed against current thresholds every year. An agency that grew or shrank since the last filing may no longer be in the category it assumes.
- Leaving the auditor question unanswered until it is too late. Whether an Independent Auditor Statement is required depends on a size threshold that changes. Confirming it early leaves time to schedule the auditor if one is newly required.
- Treating the safety reporting clock like the Annual Report clock. Monthly incident reporting and the 30-day window for a major reportable event follow their own schedule. Neither one waits for the fiscal year end plus four months deadline that governs the rest of the report.

- Routing the certification too late to catch a mistake. A CEO or General Manager who first sees the completed report on the due date has no time to send anything back for correction.

TransitFare is a transit technology company founded in 2012 that builds fare collection, real time tracking, passenger counting, and rider alerts for transit agencies running 10 to 50 buses.

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