



# COVID-19 Pandemic Threatens Public Transit Jobs and Service

## Key Takeaways

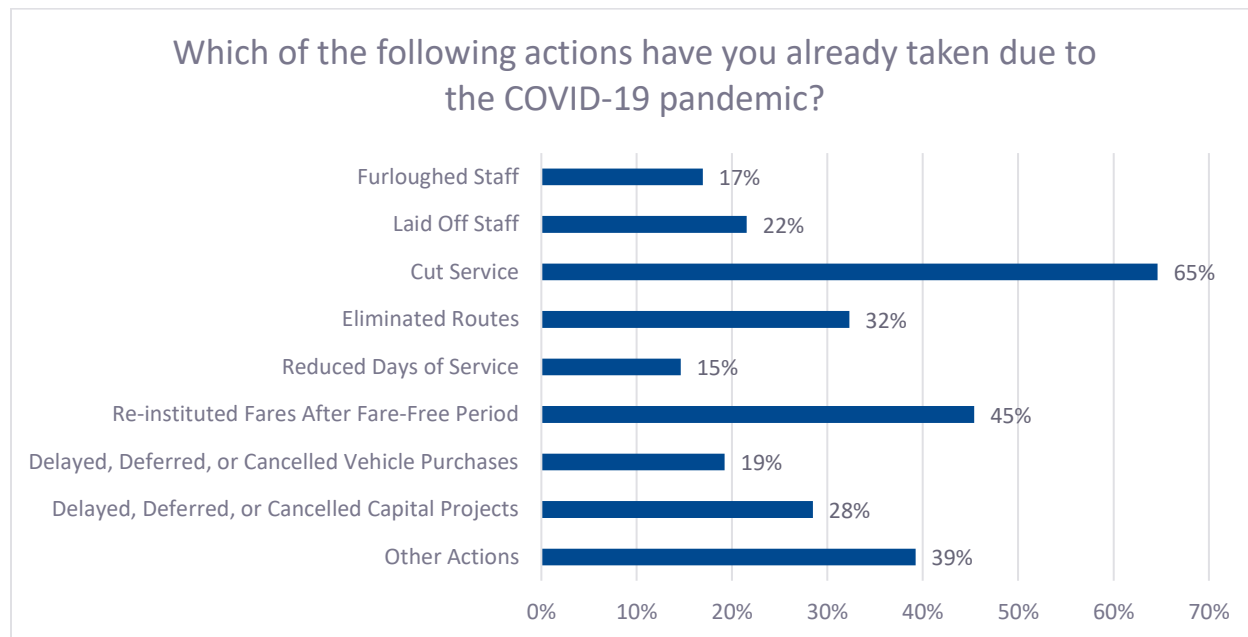
1. Public transit agencies face a critical funding shortfall that threatens jobs and service due to the COVID-19 pandemic
2. In 2020, 65 percent of public transit agencies were forced to cut service. Four in 10 agencies are considering additional cuts to service to close their budget gaps
3. Nearly one in every three agencies (28 percent) have delayed, deferred, or cancelled capital projects, impacting jobs at manufacturers and construction firms across the country
4. If Congress and the Administration do not provide significant additional COVID-19 emergency transit funding, many public transit agencies will be forced to cut service and lay off or furlough employees

## Funding Shortfall Leading to Lost Jobs, Service Reductions

Public transit agencies face a critical funding shortfall that threatens jobs and service due to the COVID-19 pandemic, even after receiving emergency relief from the federal government. In March 2020, Congress provided \$25 billion in emergency transit funding in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Late last year, Congress provided an additional \$14 billion in emergency transit funding in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA). Transit agencies have nearly fully obligated CARES Act funding, and many transit agencies, including the largest public transit agencies, indicate that their CRRSAA funding will be expended quickly.

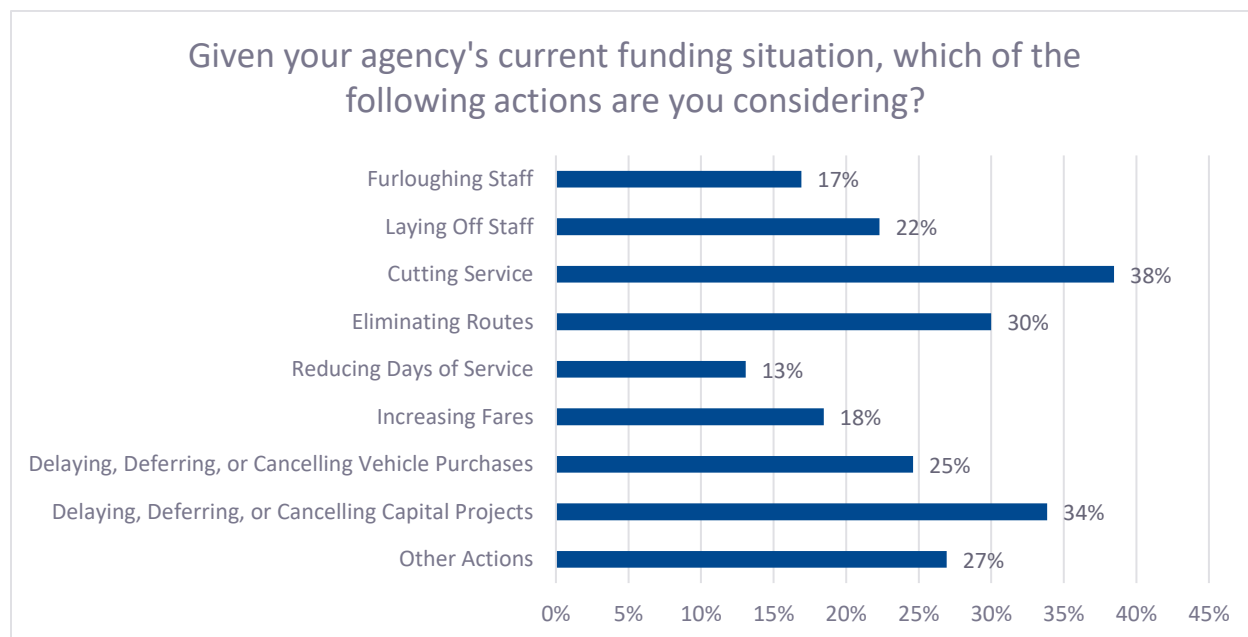
The emergency funding provided to date has enabled most transit agencies to avoid layoffs, with 22 percent of agencies stating that they have been forced to lay off staff. Although most agencies have avoided layoffs, they have been forced to implement other cost-cutting mechanisms to balance their budgets. These cuts can have significant long-term impacts, such as decreasing state-of-good-repair and other capital investment. Nearly one in three agencies (28 percent) have delayed, deferred, or cancelled capital projects. These cuts in capital spending have an impact on jobs at manufacturers and construction firms across the country.

Nearly two-thirds of agencies (65 percent) have cut service, although some of these service cuts were later reversed.



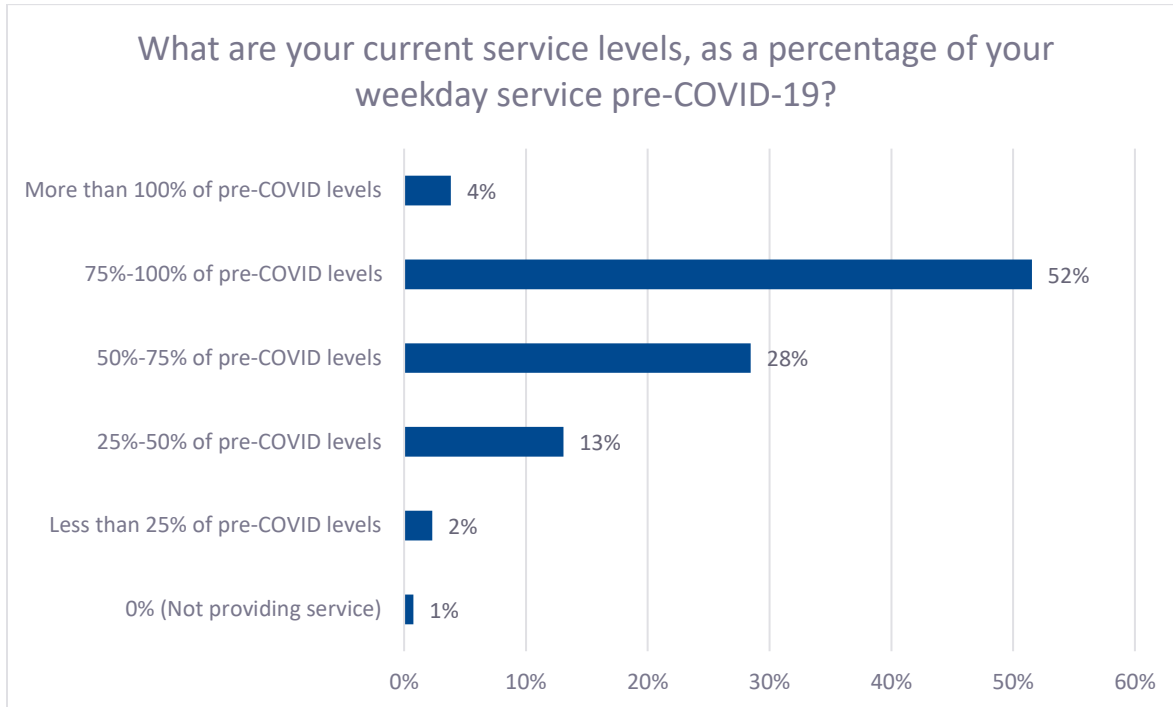
### Agencies Considering Service Cuts and Lay Offs to Close Budget Gap

Nearly four in 10 agencies (38 percent) state that they are considering implementing further service cuts given their current funding situation. Similarly, nearly one of every four agencies (22 percent) may be forced to lay off employees.



## Public Transit Agencies Still Providing Essential Services

The emergency funding provided to date has enabled public transit agencies to continue providing essential services. More than one-half of all agencies (56 percent) are currently operating more than 75 percent of their pre-COVID-19 service levels.



## Conclusion

Public transit agencies face a critical funding shortfall because of the COVID-19 pandemic. If Congress and the Administration do not provide additional COVID-19 emergency transit funding, transit agencies will face increasing financial challenges, impacting service and jobs.

## About the Survey

This survey was conducted of APTA transit agency members in January 2021. One hundred and thirty (130) APTA transit agency members responded, with those agencies carrying more than 75 percent of U.S. transit ridership.

## The American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

The American Public Transportation Association is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 public and private sector organizations that represents a \$74 billion industry that directly employs 435,000 people and supports millions of private sector jobs. APTA members are engaged in the areas of bus, paratransit, light rail, commuter rail, subways, waterborne services, and intercity and high-speed passenger rail. This includes transit systems; planning, design, construction, and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; transit associations and state departments of transportation. APTA is the only association in North America that represents all modes of public transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical transit services and products.

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### APTA Vision Statement

APTA leads public transportation in a new mobility era,  
advocating to connect and build thriving communities

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