

Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee

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PCAC Urges Providing MTA Front Line Employees with Excellent Customer Service Skills

In its report released today, *Best Foot Forward: Training Front Line Personnel to Provide Quality Customer Service*, the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee (PCAC) to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) compares and evaluates front line personnel customer service policies and practices at the MTA operating agencies. Front line personnel discussed include ticket clerks/ station agents, travel information representatives, conductors and bus operators. The report examines MTA agency hiring criteria, customer service training, employee communication, performance evaluation tools, incentive programs and disciplinary procedures and refresher training. It also considers innovative customer service training at other U. S. transportation agencies.

The report is a follow up to a 1984 report that examined passenger-employee relations training programs, supervisory training, and the incentive and disciplinary practices at the MTA and eight other transit properties. Twenty years later, the PCAC found that impressive strides have been made in training front line employees.

The need for excellent, consistent, effective communication and customer service are essential to running a successful transportation agency. Front line employees function as transportation agency "ambassadors." They need special training to achieve the requisite ability for outstanding customer service performance. This report makes a number of MTA-wide and specific agency recommendations to improve the level, acquisition and retention of employee customer service skills.

The findings and recommendations are attached.

Copies of the full report are available upon request from the PCAC office at 347 Madison Avenue, 8th Floor or can be downloaded from the website @ www.pcac.org.

The PCAC serves as the coordinating body for the three councils created by the New York State legislature in 1981: the Long Island Rail Road Commuter's Council, the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council and the New York City Transit Riders Council. The 38 volunteer members are users of the MTA system and represent the interests of the riders. They are appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of local elected officials.