



APTA STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

RAIL STANDARD

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Rulebook Introduction and Authority

Abstract: This standard provides guidance for the development of a rail transit system rulebook introduction and provides suggested approaches for rulebook issuance and authority.

Keywords: authority, general rules, issuance, rail transit rulebook

Summary: This standard defines the authority to issue and revise the rulebook. The requirements of this standard are divided into five sections. These sections are purpose, application of the rules, rulebook development, rulebook issuance and rulebook revision.

Scope and purpose: This is a standard for the preparation of the rail transit system (RTS) rulebook introduction and issuance authority. The purpose of the rulebook is to serve as a central source of all rules written within the RTS. The purpose of this standard is not to define the contents of the rulebook, but to address rulebook application, development, issuance and revision in an organized manner.

This *Rail Standard* represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely, transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any standards, practices or guidelines contained herein is voluntary. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a transit system's operations. In those cases, the government regulations take precedence over this standard. APTA recognizes that for certain applications, the standards or practices, as implemented by individual transit agencies, may be either more or less restrictive than those given in this document.

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Introduction

This introduction is not part of RT -OP-S -001-02, “Rulebook Introduction and Authority”

This Standard for Rulebook Introduction and Authority represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely, transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any standards or recommended practices contained herein is voluntary. In some cases, Federal and/or State regulations govern portions of a Rail Transit System’s operations. In those cases, the government regulations take precedence over this standard. APTA recognizes that for certain applications, the standards or recommended practices, as implemented by individual rail transit agencies, may be either more or less restrictive than those given in this document.

All rail transit operating agencies require written expressions of their policies, rules, regulations and procedures for the following reasons:

- The need to coordinate the numerous activities necessary to ensure safe, efficient and timely operation.
- The specialized jobs and job tasks associated with rail transit systems.
- The highly visible nature of public transit agencies.
- The need to protect the benefit that rail transit services provide to the public in urbanized areas.
- The need to provide a common set of operating practices for all employees engaged in the provision or support of transportation.

Note on alternate practices

Individual RTSs may modify the practices in this standard to accommodate their specific equipment and mode of operation. APTA recognizes that some RTSs may have unique operating environments that make strict compliance with every provision of this standard impossible. As a result, certain RTSs may need to implement the standards and practices herein in ways that are more or less restrictive than this document prescribes. A RTS may develop alternates to the APTA standards so long as the alternates are based on a safe operating history and are described and documented in the RTS’s system safety program plan (SSPP) or another document referenced in the SSPP.

Documentation of alternate practices shall:

- Identify the specific APTA rail transit safety standard requirements that cannot be met;
- State why each of these requirements cannot be met;
- Describe the alternate methods used; and
- Describe and substantiate how the alternate methods do not compromise safety and provide a level of safety equivalent to the practices in the APTA safety standard (operating histories or hazard analysis findings may be used to substantiate this claim).

Rulebook Introduction and Authority

1. Rulebooks

1.1 General rulebook

The general rulebook provides guidance on expected compliance by all authorized personnel in the RTS. The general rulebook is mandatory for all authorized personnel to ensure safety, consistency, and integration of activity performance across the organization. The RTS shall define which book is the general rulebook.

1.2 Specialized rulebooks

The specialized rulebooks provide guidance on expected compliance by each RTS department's authorized personnel. For example, specialized rulebooks may contain operating procedures manuals that provide detailed step-by-step guidance for specific operating processes and activities. Rules covering specialized categories may also be incorporated into the general rulebook that contains the general rules.

1.3 Written instructions

Written instructions, including but not limited to bulletins, orders and/or notices, are official documents that have the authority to supplement rulebooks between rulebook revisions or to effect a temporary or permanent rulebook change. Written instructions have the force of a rule and are approved and distributed according to RTS policy or procedure. Written instructions shall have a visual distinction, such as title, format or paper color. Receipt and acknowledgement of written instructions shall be according to RTS policy.

1.4 Reminder notices

Reminder notices, or a similar document, may be used to provide greater detail, to remind personnel of specific rules or to address specific work units rather than all authorized personnel. Reminder notices do not have the authority to supplement rulebooks between rulebook revisions or to effect a temporary or permanent rulebook change. Reminder notices shall have a visual distinction, such as title, format or paper color. Receipt and acknowledgement of reminder notices shall be according to RTS policy.

2. Requirements

2.1 Purpose

General and specialized rulebooks shall address and govern all matters pertaining to the application, development, issuance and revision to the rules and procedures contained within and shall contain a statement or section to that effect.

2.2 Application of the rules

The general rulebook shall apply to all authorized personnel. Adherence to all general rules is mandatory for all authorized personnel to ensure safety, consistency, and integration of activity performance across the organization. It also applies to each employee using the system for transportation, whether on or off duty.

Specialized rulebooks shall apply only to authorized personnel within the department that issued the specialized rulebook or to authorized personnel within the specific job classification for which the rules and procedures are intended.

2.3 Rulebook development

A general rulebook committee (not required for specialized rulebooks) shall be established to review and recommend for approval all the rules and procedures in the general rulebook. The committee shall operate in accordance with any bylaws prescribed by the RTS. The general rulebook committee with chairperson may be composed of senior managers from operating, maintenance, safety, labor, risk, security and law offices.

Smaller organizations may have smaller general rulebook committees or none at all. In such cases, general rulebook revisions may require consideration of input from operating, maintenance, safety, labor and law offices.

A rulebook custodian shall be identified and responsible for maintaining the actual document and for incorporating all revisions to both the general and specialized rulebooks. The rulebook custodian shall also be responsible for maintaining a summary of changes for each general and specialized rulebook revision.

2.4 Rulebook issuance

2.4.1 Authority

The general rulebook shall be issued under the authority of the CEO or appropriate authority, which may include an oversight group such as a board of directors.

The general rulebook shall be issued under the signature of the CEO and may include the signatures of the COO, chief of rail transportation, and/or chief safety officer or their representatives or appropriate authority. All of the above shall concur with the general rulebook content based on reviews and approvals or comment by each affected department.

Specialized rulebooks shall be issued under the authority of the department head or appropriate authority.

Specialized rulebooks shall be issued under the signature of the department head or appropriate authority with concurrence or input from the safety office or various other relevant departments representative of operations, safety, law, labor relations, engineering or maintenance. If the RTS feels the need for higher approval, then the signature of the COO may be required.

2.4.2 Rulebook promulgation

General and specialized rulebooks shall be issued in accordance with written policy and/or requirements stated in the RTS SSPP or another document referenced in the SSPP. A document control process shall be established, and records shall be kept verifying that the general rulebook has been received and acknowledged by all affected authorized personnel. Records shall also be kept that the specialized rulebooks have been received and acknowledged by all affected departmental authorized personnel.

2.4.3 Responsibilities

All affected authorized personnel and offices shall maintain an up-to-date copy of the general rulebook and ensure that all affected authorized personnel are familiar with the content. Each department's affected authorized personnel and offices shall maintain an up-to-date copy of the specialized rulebook and ensure that their affected authorized personnel are familiar with the content.

2.5 Rulebook revision

2.5.1 Initiating rulebook change

Rulebook changes can be initiated in one of the following ways as stipulated by RTS policy:

- By employee suggestions via RTS policy or procedure.
- By the rulebook committee during periodic rulebook review as defined in the SSPP.
- By subject matter experts on behalf of their departments or the safety office, based on incident/accident investigations, immediate need or industry or RTS oversight standards.

2.5.2 General rulebook

A written instruction shall be issued when a new or revised general rule or procedure is implemented.

Revisions, both temporary and permanent, shall be issued by an official document that has the force of rule according to policy or procedure. The revised rules shall carry the same force as the rules in the general rulebook.

Permanent rule revisions intended to modify general rules and/or procedures governing the safe operation of trains prior to general rulebook reprint require the review and concurrence by the CEO, COO, the chief of rail transportation and/or the chief safety officer or their representatives or appropriate authority. All rule changes shall be addressed by a formal change control process, even those that need prompt implementation. Such revisions become a permanent part of the general rulebook and shall be included in the next reprint.

Temporary rule revisions intended to modify an operating rule and/or procedures may be issued to accommodate a temporary condition, such as construction in or around the right-of-way. Temporary revisions shall require approvals addressed by the agency's change control process but become null and void after a set period of time.

The general rulebook committee shall make its recommendations for changes, corrections, additions, deletions and/or other improvements to the committee chairperson. The committee chairperson shall review all recommendations and include those approved in the next regularly scheduled update of the general rulebook. The schedule of regular updates to the general rulebook shall be established by written policy.

2.5.3 Specialized rulebooks

A written instruction shall be issued when a new or revised specialized rule or procedure is implemented.

Revisions, both temporary and permanent, shall be issued by an official document that has the force of rule according to policy or procedure. The revised rules shall carry the same force as the rules in the specialized rulebook.

Permanent rule revisions intended to modify specialized rules and/or procedures governing the safe operation of trains prior to specialized rulebook reprint require the review and concurrence the department head or appropriate authority with concurrence or input from the safety office or various other relevant departments representative of operations, safety, law, labor relations, engineering or maintenance. All rule changes shall be addressed by the RTS's change control process, even those that need prompt implementation. The revision becomes a permanent part of the specialized rulebook and shall be included in the next reprint.

Temporary rule revisions intended to modify an operating rule and/or procedure may be issued to accommodate a temporary condition, such as construction in or around the right-of-way. Temporary revisions shall require approvals addressed by the agency's change control process but become null and void after a set period of time.

The schedule of regular reviews and updates to the specialized rulebook shall be established by written policy. Changes in specialized rulebooks shall not be in conflict with the General Rulebook.

2.5.4 Promulgation of rulebook revisions

New rules, regulations, policies or procedures shall be issued to all authorized personnel for general rules, and to all affected departmental authorized personnel for specialized rules. Receipt of such shall be kept in accordance with the document control process. New rules may or may not be accompanied by oral explanation/training, depending on the nature of the material. The revised rulebook or written instruction shall be posted or distributed according to RTS policy.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following terms and definitions apply. The job titles listed below are used in this standard for informational purposes only. It is up to the individual RTS to determine and utilize titles as it finds appropriate.

authorized personnel: Rail transit system personnel (employed or contracted) who need to be aware of and adhere to, or monitor adherence to, applicable rules and procedures contained in general and specialized rulebooks.

chief executive officer (CEO): Overall head of organization.

chief operating officer (COO): Overall head of a particular mode of transportation, either bus or rail. Will oversee and direct the maintenance and operations activities of the mode. The COO may preside over more than one mode.

chief of rail transportation: Head of the rail transportation office who manages the safe, efficient movement of passengers through stations and on trains. Staff may include train operators, station managers, operations control personnel, transportation supervisors and support personnel. It should be noted that certain employees, such as station personnel, might report to departments other than transportation.

chief safety officer: Head of the Office of Safety responsible for the safe operation of all modes of transportation, maintenance and construction for passengers, employees, contractors and the general public, property and the environment.

rail transit system (RTS): Term used to describe the organization that operates rail transit service and related activities. It is also known as the transit system, transit agency, operating agency, operating authority, transit authority or other similar term.

rules: Rules are written mandatory directives issued by the RTS for its officers and authorized personnel. Rules require or prohibit specific actions, conduct, methods or procedures in connection with the employment duties and responsibilities of those officers and authorized personnel.

4. Abbreviations and acronyms

APTA	American Public Transportation Association
CEO	chief executive officer
COO	chief operating officer
RTS	rail transit system
SSPP	system safety program plan