

Finance and Capital Committee Information Item III-A

May 13, 2021

Covid-19 FY2022 Service Update

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board Action/Information Summary

Action ● Information
 MEAD Number: Resolution:
 202272
 Yes ● No

TITLE:

Covid-19 FY2022 Service Update

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

This presentation discusses rail and bus service, customer research, and potential regional travel market opportunities.

PURPOSE:

This presentation provides an update on rail and bus service, customer research, and potential regional travel market opportunities.

DESCRIPTION:

Metro's pandemic recovery plan seeks to support the region's recovery, earn public trust that bus and rail travel is safe, and effectively communicate changing service and fare plans. The service restoration strategy is to (1) protect employees, (2) protect customers, and (3) stay ahead of demand. With the widespread availability of Covid-19 vaccines and increasing vaccination rates, Metro is entering the early stages of its recovery phase. This phase includes monitoring conditions and looking for opportunities to adapt service to meet evolving customer needs.

Key Highlights:

- WMATA continues to provide service ahead of demand, which requires anticipating conditions approximately three to six months in advance.
- The FY2022 budget maintains rail service at 80% of pre-Covid-19 levels, bus service at 85% of pre-Covid-19 levels.
- As approved in the budget, bus and rail service enhancements are being added in June and September, including extending bus service to 2 am.
- WMATA's service restoration goals are to maximize coverage and to prepare for returning ridership while protecting employee and customer health and responding to customer priorities.

Background and History:

In light of trends in telework and split work weeks, peak period ridership is not expected to recover immediately as the vaccines become widely available. WMATA is evaluating options to ensure service levels and fares support regional recovery and respond to demand and ridership volume and patterns, as well as customer research findings.

Discussion:

The FY2022 budget maintains the following service levels:

- Rail Service: Maintains the current Metrorail service level (80 percent of pre-pandemic)
- Bus Service: Implements Metrobus service improvements (providing approximately 85 percent of pre-pandemic bus service levels)

Customer Research Findings:

Metrobus:

- Nearly three in five pre-pandemic bus customers have returned to riding Metrobus, though many take fewer trips
- Bus customers are making more trips to see friends, family, and to travel to medical appointments

Metrorail:

- Telework is the main obstacle to the recovery of work-commuter trips
- Price is not a barrier for the return of most rail riders
- Three in four customers would (or do) feel safe riding Metrorail after they are vaccinated
- By year's end, expected cumulative recovery of pre-pandemic Metrorail commuters (unique riders) is 42%, though they are expected to make fewer trips due to teleworking options
- Federal government agencies have some of the most liberal telework policies

Customer priorities for service are: clean, not crowded, more frequent.

Current Situation and Outlook:

- Peak period ridership unlikely to immediately recover due to growth of telework and split work weeks.
- Overall regional trip volumes and patterns are uncertain and challenging to predict. Factors include the potential for more work and non-work trips taken at other times, an expected robust economic recovery, and continued growth in population and activities near transit.
- Regionally, off-peak travel is relatively strong with sustained trips made throughout the day and evening, especially between 7am and 9 pm. Ride-hailing companies peaked in the early evening when transit service traditionally ramps down.

FUNDING IMPACT:

This is an information item.

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	N/A			
	Implementation of bus service changes approved in FY2022 budget in June and September			
Anticipated actions after	Staff to support Board consideration of service and fare			

presentation	options
	Development and consultation with jurisdictional partners

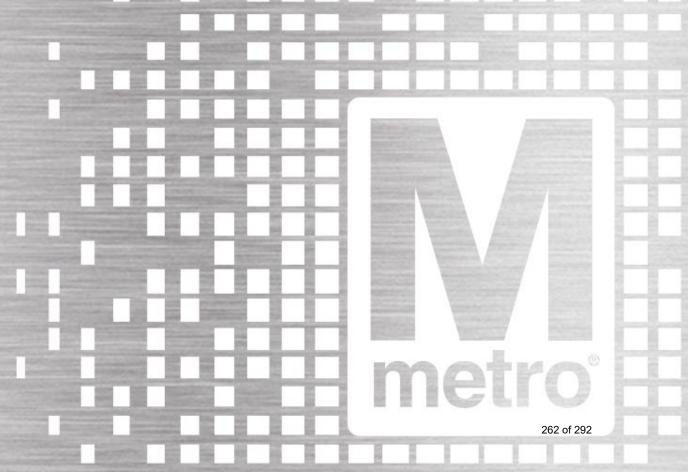
RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendations are made in this information item.

Pandemic Recovery

FY2022 Service Update

Finance and Capital Committee May 13, 2021



Purpose

Provide an update on rail and bus service, customer research results, and potential regional travel market opportunities



Coronavirus Recovery Plan Goals

- Support region's recovery
- Earn public trust that bus/rail travel is safe
- Effectively communicate changing service/fare plans

Service Restoration Strategy

- 1 Protect employees
- Protect customers by providing service that enables safe social distancing
- Stay ahead of demand until vaccine or herd immunity makes social distancing unnecessary

Monitor crowding continuously





Recovery Plan Phases

Crisis Response

Stabilization

Managed Re-Entry

Recovery

Resilience

Stay at home orders in effect

Protect employees and advise most customers to avoid travel Stay at home orders relaxed

Protect
employees, ask
customers to
protect
themselves,
deliver trips for
essential
employment

Continued activity limits

Protect employees

Serve customers for work trips and other needs and enable social distancing Vaccine widely available; return to schools and offices

Ramp up service to handle influx of activity

Adapt service to meet evolving customer needs



Post-pandemic behavior patterns

Lingering behavioral changes unknown

Lessons from Covid-19 incorporated to make new service more resilient



FY2022 Approved Rail and Bus Service

Metrorail 80% of pre Covid-19 service

Maintain existing service levels

Span: Close 11 pm, 7 days

Frequency:

Weekdays: 12 min BL/OR/GR/YL/SV / 6 min RD

Weekends: 15 min BL/OR/GR/YL/SV / 12 min RD

Evenings: 20 min BL/OR/GR/YL/SV / 15 min RD

No station closures, no turnbacks

Metrobus 85% of pre Covid-19 service

Implement approved service changes in June and September 2021

Extend to 2 am on 34 lines 7 days

6 lines/restore weekday peak coverage

4 lines with full or partial restoration of all-day service

10 lines with restoration of Saturday service

9 lines with restoration of Sunday service



Service Restoration Goals

- June 2021 Maximize coverage
 - Extend hours of service span on framework routes
 - Most Saturday & Sunday coverage restored with pre-pandemic route patterns
 - Weekday coverage improved with restored routes, extensions of current routes, and hybrid route combinations
- September 2021 Prepare for Returning Ridership
 - Implement changes approved in FY2022 budget
 - Consider frequency improvements to meet anticipated demand and better serve customers



Service Changes Require Advance Work

- Developing and implementing a new service plan takes 3 months
- Activities include:
 - Collaborate with jurisdictions to coordinate service plans with local plans and services
 - Develop bus and rail schedules and align for connections between modes
 - Operational employees, including train and bus operators, select new assignments based on seniority
 - Relocate and train operators and mechanics to align with fleet and service distribution
 - Produce and install updated maps, schedules and signage in station, at bus stops and terminals and onboard trains and buses
 - Provide notice to customers in time for travel planning, changes in SmartBenefits choices and distribution of pass products



Customer research survey of pre-pandemic riders

- General population DC, MD, VA early April
- Traveled to work by Metro at least 1x weekly pre-pandemic
- Demographically representative by gender, income, education, race
- Phone and online options available
- Four focus groups April 28th and 29th

Meeting with business leaders April 27th

Chambers, Developers, Hospitality



Metrobus customer findings

Findings	Insights				
Nearly 3 in 5 pre-pandemic bus customers have returned to riding	 As of April 2021, nearly 3 in 5 pre-pandemic bus customers rode Metrobus between March and mid-April This is this highest retention / recovery measure we've seen since the start of the pandemic Like our rail customers, bus riders are making fewer trips Now a higher proportion of infrequent riders 				
Bus customers are making more trips to see friends, family, and to medical appointments	 55% of the pre-pandemic bus trips were for work compared to 42% recently 				



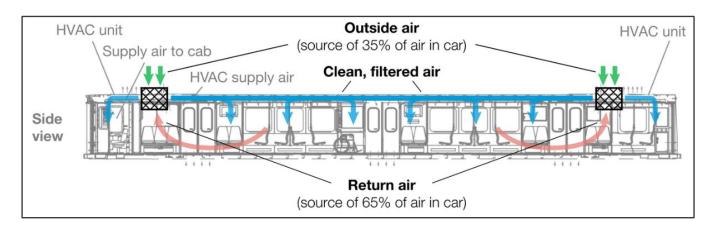
Metrorail expected changes this year

Findings	Insights
Telework is the main obstacle to recovery of work-commuter trips Price is not a primary barrier for rail rider return	 7 in 10 (72%) pre-pandemic Metrorail commuters are traveling less often to work than they did before the pandemic 6 in 10 (57%) are not traveling to work at all 3 in 4 rail customers receive travel subsidies, earn >\$100k,
	or both
Aversion to riding Metrorail is a strong secondary factor	Of the customers who rode Metrorail to work before the pandemic • 2 in 5 (39%) are traveling to work at least one day a week • But only half of those traveling to work (18% of the prepandemic customer base) are riding Metrorail to get there (most drive)



Air Ventilation and Filtration

- Metrorail cars complete a full air change approx. every three minutes
 - Upgrading to MERV-9 filters and piloting MERV-13 filters and UVC systems, supported by an FTA grant received earlier this year



- Stations and facilities upgraded to MERV-13 filters; piloting the use of MERV-15 filters
- On buses, new air enters frequently as the doors open and close at each stop
 - Upgraded to MERV-7 filters; working to move to MERV-10 as soon as possible, while also piloting additional air purification enhancements
- Following ventilation guidance closely and working to increase filtration levels and airflow further and continue to require face masks throughout the system



Metrorail expected changes this year

Findings / Insights	Supporting Details			
3 in 4 customers would (or do) feel safe riding Metrorail after they are vaccinated	3 in 4 lapsed (73%) Metrorail customers would feel safe riding Metrorail after they are vaccinated			
By year's end, expected cumulative recovery of pre-pandemic Metrorail commuters (unique riders) is 42% but they will make fewer trips due to telework	We expect an average of four fewer trips per week from 70% of Metrorail commuters			
Notably, federal government agencies have some of the most liberal telework policies.	 Sample verbatim comments: "Employees will be allowed to telework permanently from any state in the country, including Alaska and Hawaii." (Dept. of Commerce) "There will be more liberal consideration to telework requests for health (mental, physical and family members)." (DoD) "Able to telework four days a week or five if approved by supervisor." (Dept. of Agriculture) 			



Telework Post-Pandemic – Employee Preferences

Commuters who were given the opportunity to telework regularly for the first time during the pandemic want to continue teleworking after the pandemic is over.

- Before the pandemic, more than 1 in 2 (54%) Metrorail commuters did not telework
- During the pandemic, 4 in 5 (82%) of these non-teleworkers started teleworking. This new teleworking segment is 44% of the total prepandemic commuter base
- Of the new teleworkers, 9 in 10 (93%) want to continue teleworking at least one day a week after the pandemic is over



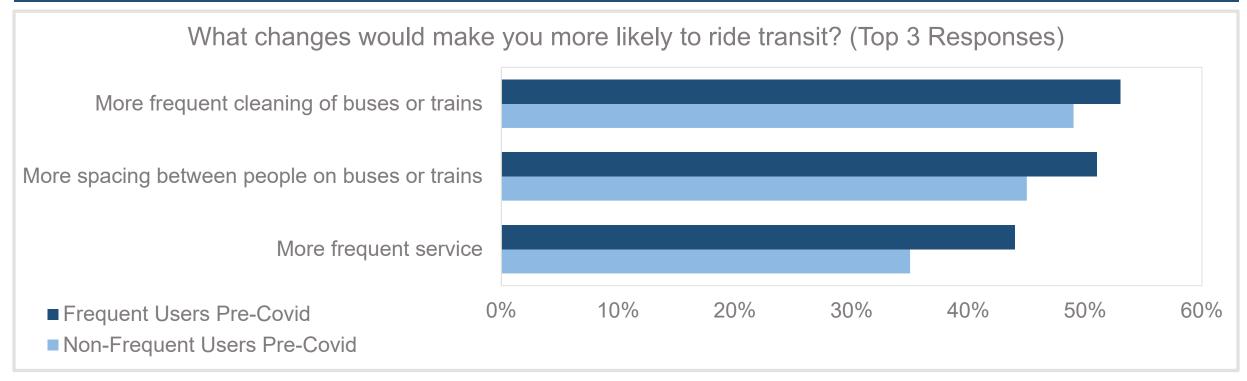
Back to Work key takeaways

- Research findings "spot on" with what business leaders are hearing
- Private sector employers see return to at least 2x week to collaborate,
 strengthen corporate culture
- Believe peaks will change and want all day, frequent service
- Hospitality expects surge in fall and needs frequent bus and rail service for workers and visitors 7 days a week
- After Labor Day is key timing for the beginning of phased re-entry
- Recommend increased communications about Covid safety, improved service, and third-party endorsements of Metro



What do customers want?

Clean, not crowded, more frequent



Q: One year after the COVID-19 pandemic is over, which of these changes would make you more likely to use public transportation? National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, "Voices of the Region: Survey Results," February 17, 2021



Current Situation and Outlook

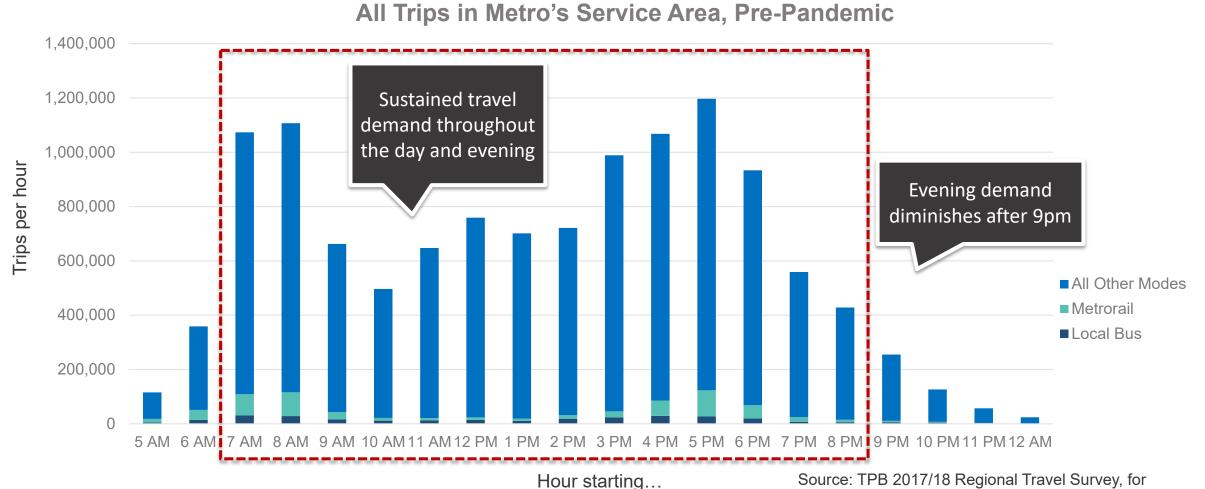
- Peak period ridership unlikely to recover right away
 - Growth of telework and split work weeks
- Overall regional trip volumes and patterns are uncertain and challenging to predict
 - Potential for more work and non-work trips taken at other times
 - Non-work trips account for 80% of total regional trips (all modes)
 - Expected robust economic recovery
 - Continued growth in population and activities near transit



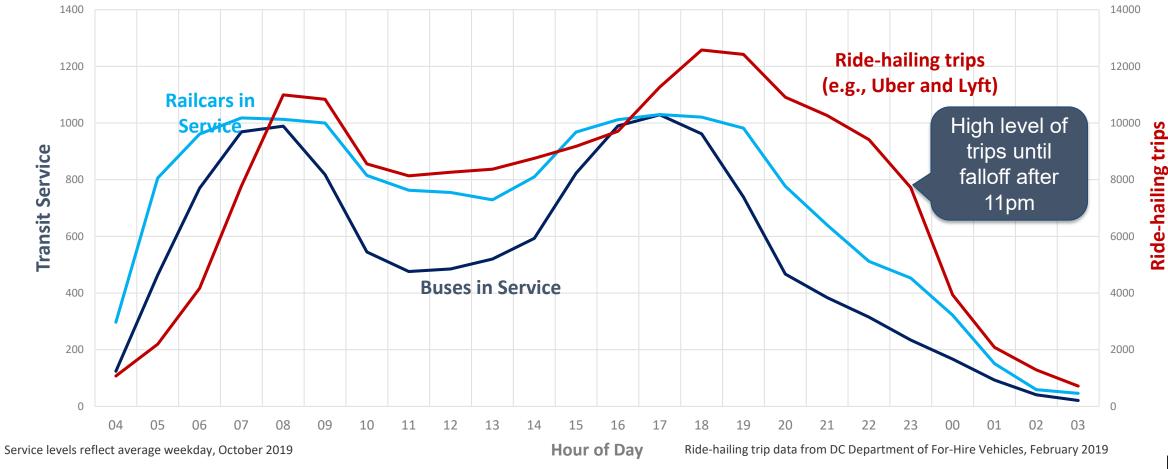
Top right: At Largo Town Center, the University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center opens June 2021



Regionally, Off-Peak Travel is Relatively Strong



Ride-hailing companies peaked in the early evening when transit service traditionally ramps down



Next Steps

- Implementation of bus service changes approved in FY2022 budget in June and September
- Staff to support Board consideration of service and fare options
- Development and consultation with jurisdictional partners







June 2021 Service Improvements

- Restore additional weekday coverage and/or frequency
 - 6 all-day routes (2 in DC, 1 in MD & 3 in VA)
 - 6 peak-period routes in VA
 - Some coverage restored by combining multiple routes, extending other routes and/or shortening routes to Rail stations for transfers to continue trip
- Extend service on 34 lines (36 routes) to 2 am, 7 days-a-week
- Most Saturday & Sunday coverage restored with start of June schedule
 - Most weekend coverage was restored with the start of the March schedule
- Additional weekday and weekend coverage will be restored with new Fairfax Connector service starting July 10th



Approved Bus Service Enhancements Implemented by June

	District of Columbia	Maryland	Virginia	
Late Night Service	32,33,36,52,70,80,92,A6, A8,G8,H4,L2,P6,S2,U5,V2, W2,W4,X2	A12,C4,D12,F4,J2,K6,P12, T18,Y2,Z8	1A,7A,10A,16E,23B,28A, 38B	
Weekday All-Day Service	60,E6*	C28*	23B,23T,26A	
Weekday Peak Service	V7		8Z*,11Y*,17K*,21A*,18J, 28G*	
Saturday Service	62,D2,E2,G2,M6,X8	C14,C29,NH2,R12	NH2	
Sunday Service	62,D2,E2,G2,M6,X8	H12,NH2,T14,V12	NH2	

^{*} Neighborhood coverage restored by extending another route



Approved Metrobus September 2021 Service Adjustments

	District of Columbia	Maryland	Virginia
Alexandria Transit Vision Plan Route Modifications			7A,7F,25B,28A
Shortened Route	80		
Route Eliminations	30N,30S,63		7Y
Routes with additional service to replace eliminated routes	31,32,33,36,62		7A
Additional Changes Under Evaluation - Additional Peak Frequency - Additional Off-Peak Frequency and Coverage	TBD	TBD	TBD 284 of 292



Metrobus Customer Retention/Recovery During the Pandemic (Individuals, Not Trips)

- Unique rider retention / recovery has increased slightly since January-February.
 - As of April 2021, nearly 3 in 5 pre-pandemic bus customers rode Metrobus between March and mid-April.
 - This is this highest retention / recovery measure we've seen since the start of the pandemic.
- However, there is now a higher proportion of *infrequent* riders (i.e., those who rode Metrobus on only one day of the last seven before answering the survey).

Base: Customers who rode Metrobus at least once a week before March 2020

Survey Question In the last 7 day how often did yo ride Metrobus?	s, to	June 1 to Aug. 31 (n=502)	Sept 1 to Oct 31 (n=456)	Nov 1 to Dec 31 (n=313)	Jan 1 To Feb. 28 (n=476)	Mar 1 To April 21 (n=269)
Active Customers Rode Metrobus a least 1 day in pas week	1t 49%	42%	55%	48%	54%	58%
5+ Day	s 21%	16%	24%	19%	22%	17%
4 Days	6%	4%	7%	6%	7%	10%
3 Days	5%	7%	8%	7%	7%	6%
2 Days	9%	7%	10%	7%	8%	8%
1 Day	8%	9%	7%	9%	10%	17%
Lapsed Customer Did Not Ride Mer Within 7 Days Pr Taking Survey	trobus 51%	58%	46%	52%	46%	42%

Metrobus Trip Purpose – Changes Since Spring 2020

Comparing the March-April numbers to the January-February results, we do not interpret a real increase in the volume of Metrobus trips to work.

However, trips to see friends and family have increased.

Also, there is a nominal increase in trips to medical appointments.

Base: Customers who rode Metrobus within 7 days prior to answering survey

Trip Purpose	Apr 20 to May 31 (n=153)	June 1 to Aug. 31 (n=209)	Sept 1 to Oct 31 (n=257)	Nov 1 to Dec 31 (n=149)	Jan 1 To Feb 28 (n=259)	Mar 1 To Apr 21 (n=107)
To shop for food and other household necessities	89%	38%	48%	53%	44%	45%
To go to medical appointments	49%	25%	25%	25%	28%	34%
To go to the pharmacy	56%	18%	22%	22%	28%	20%
To go to work	55%	33%	42%	38%	39%	42%
To visit friends and/or family	N/A	24%	27%	26%	21%	32%

Employers Represented in Survey

BRPT

720 Strategies American Society for Hematology **Buckley LLP** Counter Culture Coffee **Bureau of Counterterrorism** Court Services and Offender Supervision AAA Foundation **American University AARP** Americans for the Arts BurningCastle, LLC Cox Graae & Spack Architects America's Health Insurance Plans Byron Anderson Esquire CPE Accenture AmeriCorps C. Bridge CRAFT Ace temporary CAP **ACFD** ANA CRS **ACS** Capital one CSIS Analyst Institute CareTech Solutions **CSPI** Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) Ancilla Technologies Administration for Children and Families AOC, inc Carpi & Clay **Customs and Border Protection AOEC** Advancement Project Catholic charities Dawn AIA APL CBO DC Child & Family Services Agency AIDS United AQC **CBS** DC Courts Alaska Wilderness League **CGI** DC Department of Human Services Aramark Alexandria City Public Schools DC Department on Disability Services Arlene Selber Consultant Chamber of Commerce Allied Universal **Arms Control Association** Charles Koch Foundation and Institute DC Government **Armstrong Enterprise Communications** Alorica Chemonics International DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority Arnold & Porter Childrens National Hospital DC Public Library Amazon American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons DC Public Schools ASH Cision Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics CityDance DC Streetcar American Bar Association American Benefits Council Bank of America Classic Concierge **DCBOE** American College of Cardiology Cobec Consulting **Basis Public Charter DCPAS** American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics BFS/BMC Colorectal Cancer Alliance **Defense Information Systems Agency** American College of Radiology **BLS** Comcast NBCUniversal deKieffer & Horgan American Council of Engineering Companies Deloitte **Bob Woodruff Foundation** Communities In Schools American Councils for International Education **Community Connections Booz Allen Hamilton** Delta Airlines American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers Bread for the City Compliance LLC Dennis Ave Health Center American Gas Association Bread for the World Comrise Design-Build Institute of America CORPFDC American immigration council Breakthrough Energy DHS American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) **Bridges Public Charter School** Corporation for Public Broadcasting **Dimension Development**



District Healthcare Services

Council for Higher Education Accreditation

American Red Cross

Employers Represented in Survey Sample

DLC

Dominion Va Power

Drybar

Dumbarton House
Dynamic Systems Inc

EAB

Earth Networks

Environmental and Energy Study Institute

Environmental Protection Agency

Erickson Living
Everbridge

Eversheds Sutherland (US) LLP

Eximbank of US

ΕY

Eyes on Norbeck

Fairfax County Public Schools

Fannie Mae

FBI FCC FCHEA FDA

Federal Aviation Administration

Federal City Council

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Student Aid, US Department of Education

Federal Trade Commission

Fedex FGH First Book

First Washington Realty

FLIR FNIH

Food and Drug Administration
Food and Nutrition Service

Freddie Mac Gartner, Inc. GDP GenVisa

George Mason University
George Washington Hospital
Georgetown Paperstock
Georgetown University

Giant Ginnie Mae GMR Marketing

Golden Life Counseling & Coaching Government Accountability Office Government Publishing office

Grant Thornton, LLP Greenberg Traurig

GSA GST, Inc.

Guaranteed tenants

Guidehouse

Guidepost Solutions Hauptman Ham

HIAS HOPE

Household and Commercial Products Assoc.

Housing Unlimited Inc

Howard Hospital Howard University

HUD

Humane Society of the US

IBM IBO ICF ILTA

Industry Dive
Innovations for Poverty Action

INOVA Intellibridge

International Brotherhood of Teamsters

International Monetary Fund International Myeloma Foundation

InterSolutions iSolutions IWP

J&J Worldwide Services JCWilliams Consulting

Jesuit Conference of Canada and the US

Jewish social service agency

Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies

Joint Base Ft. Myer Journal of Neurosurgery Kaiser Permanente

Keller Williams Capital Properties

Kenjya-Trusant King Consults KLH Renovations **KSFM**

L&L Immigration Law

Lacy, Ltd.

Lake Research Partners

Latin American Youth Center

Lead4life Leidos Lenkin

Lenox Advisors Leslie Arnelle Leslie Riehl

Lewis-Burke Associates LLC

Liberty

Library of Congress

Literacy Lab

Living Sans Frontieres

Local 11

Lockheed Martin Long and foster

Lyceum Insurance Services

MACPAC Mantech Marine Corps

Maryland Department of Transportation

MassMutual Mayer Brown LLP MCKISSACK

Medstar Washington Hospital Center Meeting Management Services

Microsoft



Employers Represented in Survey Sample

Millennial Challenge Corporation

MITRE

MLS MMA

Monarch Title

Montgomery County Government Montgomery County Public Schools

Murrell NACD NASTAD

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

National Academy of Sciences

National Association of Clean Air Agencies
National Association of Home Builders
National Automobile Dealers Association
National Committee of Quality Assurance
National Electrical Manufacturers Association

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

National Geographic

National Institutes of Health

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Science Foundation National Taxpayers Union

National Vision

National Wildlife Federation

NCMEC Nestle Nobu

Nonaka Academy

Nonsmokers Rights Organizations

NORC

North American Sales Service Group

Northrop Grumman

NOVA Physician Wellness Center

NTT Data OncoC4

O'Neill and Associates

OSA

Oxfam America

P&G PAE

Panagora Group

Panum

Parks & Recreation

PATH
Patient First
Peak Systems Inc

Peraton

Popeyes Restaurant Posh Hair Spa & Waxing

Postmates
PR Partners
Privia Health

Proace Moving and storage

PSC

Quadrangle R Street Institute

Reese Yeatman Associates

Rep Regal Celebrations Rep Bruce Westerman

Rios Partners Royal Farms Ruff Sitty

Saint John's Community Services

Salisbury University

Samson

Sandler Woodcrafts
Sara Lang Strategies
Save the Children

Seafarers International Union Search for Common Ground

SEC

Service Employees International Union

Sisters of Mercy

SLC

Small Business Administration

Smithsonian Institution SoundExchange

Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance

Squire

Steampunk Inc Stixrud Group LLC

Storyblocks Sunglass Hut Superior Caring

Target

TDC (Telecommunications Development Corp)

Teaching strategies
TECHNICA Corporation

TeleSolv

The Big Bad Woof LLC The Brookings Institution

The Catholic University of America
The George Washington University

The Nature Conservancy

The New Center
The Newberry Group
The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Urban Institute
The White House
The World Bank

ThinkWell
The Lugar Center

Tucker-Rose Associates

UHS, George Washington University Hospital

UN Foundation United Airlines

United Planning Organization

UnitedHealthcare

Universal Service Administrative Company University of California Washington Center

University of Maryland

University of the District of Columbia

Unlimited Biking Urban Institute



Employers Represented in Survey Sample

US Agency for International Development

US Air Force

US Army

US Capitol

US Chamber of Commerce

US Citizenship and Immigration Services

US Conference of Catholic Bishops

US Conference of Mayors

US Department of Veteran Affairs

US Department of Agriculture

US Department of Commerce

US Department of Defense

US Department of Education

US Department of Energy

US Department of Health and Human Services

US Department of Interior

US Department of Justice

US Department of Labor

US Department of Navy

US Department of State

US Department of the Interior

US Department of the Treasury

US Department of Transportation.

US Department of Treasury

US Department of Veterans Affairs

US Department.of Labor

US Environmental Protection Agency

US General Services Administration

US Grains Council

US House Committees on Natural Resources

US House of Representatives

US Marshals Service

US Mint

US Navy

US Patent and Trademark office

US Postal Service
US Secret Service

US Senate

Vera Institute of Justice

Verisign, Inc.

Verizon

VHA

Vietnam Veterans of America

Virginia Tech

Volunteers of America Chesapeake and Carolinas

Walden University

Watkins

Watt Tieder

Wellsfargo Corp

Westat

Westfield Systems

WilmerHale Withum

WITS Solutions WordLife Church World Bank

World Learning
World Resources Institute

Year Up



