

# Halifax Transit – Bus Operator Hiring Guide

## About the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)

Work where you live. Love where you work. Make a difference at Halifax Regional Municipality.

At the Halifax Regional Municipality, our careers in public service directly impact our region, our communities, and the people we serve. Our customer-first approach means that we're always striving to develop innovative and entrepreneurial ways to enhance citizens' lives. Employing over 4,000 people, we're committed to being an inclusive, collaborative and respectful place to work. Come join us and enjoy progressive opportunities for development in addition to competitive salary and benefit packages.

## About Halifax Transit

Halifax Transit operates the public transit system for Halifax Regional Municipality, servicing the urban core of the municipality, namely the Halifax, Bedford, and Dartmouth areas, along with adjacent outlying communities.

Currently, there are over 320 conventional buses and 40 Access-A-Buses, all of which are low-floor wheelchair accessible. Halifax Transit operates 63 fixed route buses, including two MetroLink express routes and three Regional Express routes, including service to the Stanfield International Airport. Additionally, Halifax Transit also operates five (5) Harbour ferries on two ferry routes.

## Becoming a Halifax Transit Operator – What you should know

Do you enjoy driving? Do you enjoy interacting with the public? Are you a helpful, service-oriented person? If so, Halifax Transit may be the right place for you! As a Halifax Transit Operator, you will be driving transit buses on established routes, with definite on-time schedules. You will be driving in high-density traffic and in all weather conditions. We encourage you to take the [“Is this the Job For Me?”](#) quiz to see if this may be the job for you!

You will be responsible to inform the public of Halifax Transit's Fare policy; respond to customer inquiries and concerns; provide assistance to mobility-impaired persons; liaise with our Communications Centre regarding missed time points, poor road conditions, vehicle maintenance, or passenger emergencies; and, insure the safety of all passengers.

Transit Operators must possess good judgement, safe driving habits and an ability to deal with the public on a daily basis.

Please note that this is a competitive process and only those candidates who most closely match the skills and competencies will be selected to participate in the training program.

Successful candidates will be placed in a resource bank that will be in effect for up to 2 years. When an opening becomes available, you will be invited to take part in the 7-week, nationally accredited training program.

Those considering applying to become a Halifax Transit Bus Operator are encouraged to review the following information carefully and agree to all of the requirements prior to submitting an application.

## Qualifications

Candidates must:

- Be legally entitled to work in Canada;
- Possess a grade 11 or an equivalent combination of education and/or related experience;
- Three (3) years' experience working in a service occupation dealing directly with customers;
- Hold a valid driver's license and have a safe driving record (no more than 2 demerit points and no more than one (1) at-fault accident);  
*Note: if the demerit points on your abstract exceed 2, please contact your local vehicle registration branch and inquire if and/or how you can have the points removed from your license*
- Five (5) years of recent driving experience;
- Completion of a defensive driving course is an asset;
- Driving experience in a public transit environment is an asset.

## Skills and Abilities

- Be capable of meeting the physical demands of the job such as sitting for prolonged periods of time, reaching, gripping, pushing/pulling steering wheel, twisting and turning of neck, sensory/perceptual demands along with good concentration;
- Be able to demonstrate dependability and reliability;
- Have strong problem-solving skills;
- Be able to react quickly and remain calm in difficult and stressful situations;
- Be able to understand, speak, read, write English in order to learn training materials, communicate effectively with the travelling public and write reports.

## Responsibilities

- Report to dispatch or start location at the beginning of each shift and review operators' notices;
- Review and confirm the shift schedule and route for the shift;
- Check and visually inspect vehicle for pre-trip;
- Drive vehicle and practice defensive driving techniques;
- Follow applicable traffic laws at all times;
- Assess and monitor vehicle operating conditions, and report issues;
- Pull vehicle into bus stops;
- Greet and acknowledge passengers in a professional and courteous manner;
- Monitor fare collection and advise of Fare Policy and receive, verify and issue transfers;

- Monitor passenger loads;
- Respond to customer inquiries;
- Inform passengers of vehicle rules and regulations, as required;
- Respond to questions from the public;
- Follow safe boarding and exiting procedures;
- Board and exit people with special needs. Many buses have wheelchair accessible features, which require Bus Operators to assist passengers on and off the bus by operating ramps and securing wheelchairs;
- Ensure all door areas and aisles are clear of items;
- Anticipate potential problems and refer customer complaints to HRM's Corporate Call Centre;
- Monitor the behaviour of passengers to ensure the safety of others and contact the Communications Centre for assistance, as needed;
- Anticipate passenger emergencies and respond to medical emergencies;
- Respond to all on-board emergencies, evacuating passengers, as needed;
- Respond to incidents and accidents, seek assistance as required, and complete required reports;
- Drive vehicle in congested areas;
- Monitor stop areas and report damage and/or issues to the Communications Centre;
- Follow schedule routes and schedule guidelines;
- Monitor speed and time points, and report deviation from schedule to the Communications Centre;
- Respond to schedule and routing adjustments;
- Ensure passenger safety and comfort;
- Conduct post-operations procedures;
- At conclusion of shift, collect and report lost items;
- Report issues affecting safety and/or normal routing;
- Check out with dispatch.

## Qualifications

Competencies are observable abilities, skills, knowledge, motivations or traits defined in terms of the behaviours needed for successful job performance. Competencies of a Bus Operator include the following: Analytical Thinking; Communication; Customer Service; Decision Making; Organization & Planning; Organizational Awareness; Teamwork and Cooperation; Values and Ethics; Valuing Diversity. [Read the Halifax Regional Municipality Competency Dictionary.](#)

## Hours of Work

A Bus Operator's hours of work, vacation time, and days off are determined by seniority and can impact a new Bus Operator's personal and family life. The following is a description of what a new Bus Operator might expect:

- Transit Services are available seven (7) days a week, 365 days a year.
- New Bus Operators will be required to work weekends, work both day and night shifts, at times changing from one to the other with little notice, and statutory holidays.
- Daily work assignments will often be split shifts (one example: beginning work at 6 a.m. and working to 9 a.m. and then another shift on the same day starting at 2 p.m. and working to 6 p.m.)
- Holidays and days off may not be consecutive or consistent.

- As seniority increases, so does a Bus Operator's choice of shifts and vacation time.
- Bus Operators may be required to participate in emergency management operations as part of HRM's emergency response.

***Shift work will have an impact on your personal life.***

***All candidates must consider this aspect of the position very seriously.***

### Conditions of Employment

As a condition of employment, candidates are required to successfully screen through: Child Abuse Registry Check, Vulnerable Sector Check including Criminal Record, as well as supply a driver's abstract that meets the set-out criteria. Candidates must also obtain an air brake endorsement (03), pass the Class 2 examination (if they do not already have a Nova Scotia Class 1 or 2 license), obtain a Standard Emergency First Aid with AED certification (if not already certified), pass a Pre-Hire Medical as required by the employer and Access Nova Scotia, and successfully complete Halifax Transit's seven (7) week Basic Operator Training program (this includes obtaining your Class 2 license). You must also successfully complete a 7-month probationary period.

### Working Conditions

Dealing with difficult situations and following a set schedule are just some of the challenges that the Bus Operator will face on a daily basis.

Transit Operators drive transit vehicles day or night in all types of weather conditions such as ice, snow, heavy rain, fog, etc. They must maneuver large buses through narrow streets encountering construction, detours, and dense traffic at times.

During the recruitment process, applicants have the right to request accommodation. Applicants invited to participate in the assessment process (such as an interview or testing) and who require accommodation, should discuss their needs with the Recruiter when invited to the assessment process.

### Hiring Process

Please check [our website](#) regularly at for information regarding upcoming Bus Operator recruitments. At commencement of Bus Operator recruitment, Halifax Transit holds several information sessions throughout HRM. The dates and locations will be published on our website as well as in local papers.

At each stage of the hiring process, candidates will be notified of their status via email or phone. Successful completion of all stages will result in a letter advising that you have been successfully placed into a Resource Bank. The number of candidates that will move out of the Bank and into each training class will be determined by the number of vacancies required to be filled by Halifax Transit. **There are normally four basic operator training classes per year so candidates could be in the resource bank for an extended period of time depending on the number of applicants in it.**

## Stage 1 – Application

- During Halifax Transit’s Bus Operator Recruitment, candidates must [apply online](#). Please note that applications will not be accepted by email, at the Halifax Transit facility or any other HRM locations.
- If the candidate has previously submitted an application and resume for a previous posting, they must reapply online. Only those who apply directly to the Bus Operator posting will be considered. For example, if you have already applied to become a Part-Time Hostler but are also interested in becoming a Bus Operator, you must submit two separate applications.
- Candidates will be evaluated based on the qualifications outlined in the job posting.

We thank all applicants for their interest in this position. Only those applicants selected for interview/testing will be contacted. Those meeting the **established qualifications** as identified in the job posting will receive an email notification detailing the assigned testing date, time and location.

## Stage 2 – Testing

- On test day, the candidate will be required to:
    - Show a valid driver’s license
    - Submit a current Driver’s Abstract (showing no more than 2 demerit points and no more than one at fault accident – Abstract must be dated within 30 days of the testing day).
    - Provide a letter from the insurance provider for any no-fault accidents that may appear on the abstract. *Note: we do not require a letter if there is only one accident appearing on the abstract.*
    - Bring two (2) pencils.
  - A short information session will be held at the beginning of the testing to outline test requirements.
  - Candidates must complete and pass:
    - Video Driving Test (35 minutes): includes real-life situations Transit Operators manage on a daily basis while driving. Test responses are multiple-choice based.
    - Essential Skills Test (30 minutes): measures an applicant’s ability to read maps and schedules, to calculate proper fares and hours worked, and to fill out reports.
    - An Online Assessment (45 minutes): measures an applicant’s suitability for the position based on four measures:
      - Vehicle Monitoring & Driving
      - Customer Service & Professionalism
      - Personal Management
      - Problem Solving
- \*Please note: information on how to take the online assessment will be provided to candidates on the testing day. Candidates will have 72 hours to complete the testing from a personal computer.**

Candidates will be notified via email whether or not they have passed “Stage 2 – Testing”. Those who pass will be provided information on the next steps in the process.

### Stage 3 – Interview

The interview will be conducted by a panel of representatives from Halifax Transit Management. Candidates selected for an interview should review the municipality's [Job Seeker Tools](#) to become familiar with HRM's competency based interviews and familiarize themselves with techniques to help prepare for the interview.

Candidates will be notified via email whether or not they have passed "Stage 3 – Interview". Candidates who are successful in their interview will be requested to submit three (3) work related references. References should be from people who can attest to your work. At least two of these references should come from your someone who has recently worked with you in a supervisory capacity.

*Note: for those who are self-employed, references from customers, suppliers, etc. are required.*

### Stage 4 – Reference Check

The work-related references submitted during the interview will be contacted. Tip: always ask if someone is willing to be a reference before you submit their contact information.

Candidates will be notified via email if they were successful in "Stage 4 – Reference Checks". Those who are successful will receive an email containing a letter welcoming them to "Stage 5 – Placement in the Resource Bank".

### Stage 5 – Placement in the Resource Bank

The Resource Bank is made up of "pre-screened" candidates who have successfully completed the first (4) stages of the hiring process and are awaiting a position opening.

At this stage, candidates will be directed to a link on the internet where they can register and participate in a voluntary Pre-Employment Education Program (PEEP) for Bus Operator candidates, at no charge. Candidates will also be asked to request a child Abuse Register search be conducted by the Province of Nova Scotia and obtain the air brakes endorsement (03) from Access Nova Scotia which will be placed on their license (if they do not already have one). Tip: Applicants should obtain the documents requested at each stage.

The Coordinator, Resource Support & Development is required to post all Bus Operator vacancies internally to Amalgamated Transit Union – Local 508 employees of Halifax Transit as per the collective agreement. If there are insufficient internal candidates, candidates will be selected from the Resource Bank.

### Stage 6 – Conditional Offer of Employment

Once a position becomes available, candidates will be contacted via email with a Conditional Offer Letter of Employment. We endeavour to provide at least six (6) weeks of notice in advance of the training start date. Applicants will also be provided with a detailed list of 'Things to Do' in preparation for their start date.

The Coordinator, Resource Support & Development is required to post all Bus Operator vacancies internally to Amalgamated Transit Union – Local 508 employees of Halifax Transit

as per the collective agreement. If there are insufficient internal candidates, candidates will be selected from the Resource Bank.

The Coordinator, Resource Support & Development or his/her designate will be available throughout the hiring process to answer any questions and to ensure all documentation is submitted in a timely fashion.

Throughout the hiring process, costs will be incurred by the applicant at various stages:

Stage 2: Testing

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's Abstract | Approx. \$19.00 |
|--|-----------------|

Stage 5: Placement in the Resource Bank

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse Registry Check             | Price of Postage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Brake Study Manual                 | No Charge        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Brake Endorsement – Knowledge Test | Approx. \$15.00  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Endorsement placed on license          | Approx. \$12.00  |

Stage 6: Conditional Offer (Final Stage):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class 2 Study Professional Driver's Manual          | No Charge  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class 2 Exam – Knowledge Test                       | Approx. \$15.00                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerable Sector, Including Criminal Records Check | Approx. \$50.00 (\$75.00 if fingerprints required) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency First Aid CPR "A" & AED                   | Approx. \$60.00<br>(reimbursed once hired)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Hire Medical & Functional Assessment            | No Charge  |

***It is important you are aware of these costs and have money set aside to cover them when the time comes.***

Details of the hiring process are subject to change.

### Basic Operator Training

The nationally accredited 7-week Basic Operator Training program consists of both in-class and on-road sessions. Operator Trainees must meet the minimum testing requirements on all examinations and obtain their Class 2 license to continue. Transit Operator Trainees will be paid on an hourly basis, as per the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 508 collective agreement.

### Full employment with Halifax Transit

The offer of employment is conditional upon:

- Obtaining an air brake (03) endorsement through the Province of Nova Scotia.
- Passing the Pre-Hire Medical
- Passing the Class 2 written examination with the Province of Nova Scotia (if the applicant does not already have a Class 1 or 2 Nova Scotia license)
- Obtaining a Standard Emergency First Aid with AED certification from a service provider of the Employer's choice

- Successfully screening through a Vulnerable Sector Search including the Criminal Record and not being recorded on any Child Abuse Registry
- Submitting a Driver's Abstract containing no more than 2 demerit points and no more than 1 at-fault accident
- Successfully completing the seven (7) week Basic Operator Training program (which includes obtaining the Class 2 license)
- Successfully completing the 7-month probationary period

### Applying Online

Applicants **must** [apply online](#) by clicking "Work for the Halifax Regional Municipality" and clicking the "APPLY TODAY" button to view available jobs.



If you have technical difficulties applying online, [read our Frequently Asked Questions](#) or email [jobs@halifax.ca](mailto:jobs@halifax.ca)