



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION (FRA)

ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: FRA-26-61DP

POSITION TITLE: Railroad Safety Inspector (Operating Practices), GS-2121-12
Full Performance Level: GS-12 - \$ 76,463- \$ 99,404 per annum (Base Salary only; Locality will be added based on duty location at selection time)

Note: This position has special job requirements. See page 3.

POSITION LOCATION: Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Railroad Safety,
Geographical Area: District 4- Chicago, Illinois

Who May Apply: Current FRA Wide Status candidates that are GS-2121 12 in the Operating Practices discipline. This position is a voluntary reassignment.

OPENING DATE: 08/24/2026

CLOSING DATE: 09/07/2026

NUMBER AND TYPE: One Full-Time Permanent Position

It is required to email applications to ensure timely receipt.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Candidates will not be hired based on their race, sex, color, religion, or national origin.

Why Work For Us?

The Federal Railroad Administration's mission is to enable the safe, reliable, and efficient movement of people and goods for a strong America, now and in the future.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) promulgates and enforces rail safety regulations; consolidates government support of rail transportation activities; administers financial assistance programs; conducts research and development in support of improved railroad safety and efficiency, and national transportation policy, including improved intercity passenger service.

FRA is committed to fostering a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting or exceeding our strategic goals with efficiency, innovation, and a constant focus on better serving our customers.

You will serve as a Railroad Safety Inspector (Operating Practices) you will observe railroad employees in the performance of operational duties related to the movement of trains for compliance with the law, including utility employees. The objective of this position is to minimize the risk of human casualty and societal loss due to train accidents caused by defective conditions of railroad track and structures, or hazardous working conditions for railroad employees. The demands of the position require skills in evaluation, fact-finding, report writing; comprehension and application of technical and regulatory standards, as well as the ability to gain cooperation of individuals and organizations.

Summary Of The Essential Job Functions: As a Railroad Safety Inspector (Operating Practices), you will be required to:

- Observes railroad employees in the performance of operational duties related to the movement of trains for compliance with the law, including utility employees.
- In accordance with established FRA regulations and policies, the inspector provides a recommendation to the railroad of the improper or unsafe conditions, when violations or potential hazards are identified. Provides evidence to assist in prosecution of violations in the courts by the legal staffs of the Federal Railroad Administration The inspector may be called to appear in court as witness for the prosecution to substantiate the Government's case.
- Investigates railroad accidents, in accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 20505, using established FRA policies, guides, manual, etc, this may include visiting an accident site, collecting information to determine the probable cause (that may include equipment, track conditions, human factors, etc).
- Interviews employees and/or witnesses to develop facts. Writes a narrative report, describing the accident, the cause or causes, and recommends measures to prevent similar accidents in the future.

What Are The Minimum Qualifications For This Position?

You must have at least one year of specialized experience in or directly related to the essential job functions described above. For Federal employees this experience must have been at the next lower grade level. If you want us to consider experience you obtained outside the Federal Government, it must have been at that same level of complexity. The specialized experience must demonstrate:

- Broad knowledge of the economic and practical operating considerations, as well as the safety and health concerns involved in designing, constructing, and maintaining equipment in all areas of railroad operations and in developing operating rules and practices.

- Knowledge of the principles and practices involved in accident investigations including: relationship of equipment design factors to human response patterns; application of operating rules and practices; examination of pertinent operating documents for trains involved; employee qualification and service records, plus physical condition of deceased as determined by autopsy report.
- Inspector must interrelate the above knowledge to investigate major railroad accidents, plus individual employee fatalities, to determine the root cause or causes, and suggest practical means of preventing future accidents, evaluate trends in railroad accidents and suggest new ways to improve safety or perform similar continuing or long-range projects.
- Thorough knowledge of the Federal laws, court cases and interpretations related to the Accident Investigation Laws, the Hours of Service Laws, Power Brake Law, Safety Appliance Acts, Federal Railroad Safety Act of 1970, Railroad Freight Car Safety Standards, and subsequent Safety Acts or Amendments.
- Thorough knowledge of Federal Railroad Administration's implementing regulations and orders covering employee qualifications, hours of service, occupational safety and health, radio rules, operating rules and practices, alcohol and drug program administration, and locomotive engineer certification.

What Are The Desired Knowledge, Skills And Abilities For This Job?

See the Qualification Requirements listed above.

Other Special Job Requirements

- If selected, you will be required to **possess a valid State driver's license at all times** while employed by the FRA in order to perform the duties of the position.
- If selected, you must pass a Drug Test prior to appointment unless you are presently employed in a DOT position that requires drug testing. You also will be subject to random drug testing while employed in this safety-sensitive position.
- The position requires extensive travel.
- This position is eligible for Mobile Work, and the selectee must work/reside within the geographic area of the duty location stated above. The duty location for a mobile worker is usually the residence or other approved telework site. The actual duty location is subject to approval by Supervisor. Salary will be adjusted based on the duty location. The actual duty location is subject to approval by the Deputy Staff Director and/or Railroad Safety management. Salary will be adjusted based on the duty location.

How Will The Qualified Applicants Be Further Evaluated And Rated To Identify The Best Qualified?

Railroad Safety Inspectors (Operating Practices) GS-2121-12, who are interested in voluntary reassignment may apply for the Railroad Safety Inspector, GS-2121-12 positions by applying in accordance with the application procedures outlined in vacancy announcements.

The employee must meet the following criteria below to receive consideration for the voluntary

reassignment:

- 1. Occupies the same Railroad Safety Inspector discipline as the vacancy.
- 2. Has not received any Letters of Reprimand or suspensions within the most recent twelve (12) months.
- 3. Is not currently under investigation for potential misconduct. If the employee is deemed ineligible due to an ongoing investigation, the employee must be informed they are under investigation.
- 4. Has a “Fully Successful” or better on their most recent performance appraisal and has not been on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) within the most recent twelve (12) months.
- 5. Has not been voluntarily reassigned within the most recent twelve (12) months.
- 6. Has the most seniority of applicants, which is defined as:
 - a. Being a Railroad Safety Inspector at the GS-2121-12 level with the earliest FRA Entrance on Duty date based on continuous FRA service; or
 - b. An FRA candidate with the earliest promotion date to the position of Railroad Safety Inspector, GS-2121-12.
 - Ties will be broken on the basis of the earliest Service Computation Date.

What Employee Benefits Do We Provide?

The Federal Government offers excellent benefits, flexible work schedules and family-friendly programs. You will receive paid annual leave and sick leave. Depending on whether the position you are applying for is permanent or time limited, you will be eligible for retirement, health insurance, life insurance and Long Term Care insurance. A brief summary of the Federal benefits for permanent employees can be found at www.usajobs.opm.gov/EI61.htm.

Before You Go Any Further, Here Are Some Other Things You Need to Know

- United States citizenship is required. (Proof of citizenship will be required to be shown upon appointment.)
- If you are a male between the ages of 18 and 26 or were born after December 31, 1959, certification is required at the time you are employed that you have registered with the Selective Service for the draft, unless Selective Service has approved a waiver for you.
- You must meet the qualification and time-in-grade requirements by the closing date of the announcement.
- The FRA has determined that railroad seniority rights, leaves of absence, and reemployment rights generally constitute an actual or an appearance of a conflict of interest. New employees may be required to divest themselves of such rights immediately upon hire if these rights are determined to constitute an actual or appearance of a conflict of interest. If new employees are permitted to retain such rights, which is generally the case for Railroad Safety positions, the rights must be divested at the end of the one year probationary period. No waivers of this requirement will be granted.
- FRA employees are prohibited from owning railroad stock, except, under certain circumstances, as part of a diversified mutual fund.
- If selected, you will be subject to the Standards of Ethical Conduct applicable to all DOT

employees.

- **TRAVEL EXPENSES:** Travel and transportation expenses WILL NOT be paid.
- **GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD REQUIREMENT:** You must be able to retain a Government contractor-issued travel card to be used for official business as a condition of employment. If unable to obtain and/or retain a card, you may be subject to removal. Those who fail to meet this condition of employment will have our offer of employment rescinded.

How To Apply For This Position

- 1) This vacancy announcement will only accept the Voluntary Reassignment Application Form for consideration for voluntary reassignment to Railroad Safety Inspector, GS-12 positions under Article 09, Section E of the Memorandum of Agreement between the FRA and the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 2814 dated September 1, 2013. If you are not eligible under the above Article 09, Section E, you must submit an application through USAJOBS.

Where To Send Your Application

- You may email your application to frarrsjobs@dot.gov and don.parker@dot.gov
- **Please use the following subject line: FRA-26-61DP**
- ALL applications must be emailed by the closing date of the announcement.
- Applications mailed in a government envelope will not be accepted.

Questions?

Contact the Office of Human Resources at FRARRSjobs@dot.gov Please reference the announcement number so we can help you more efficiently.

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS: If you need a copy of this announcement in an alternative format to accommodate a disability, please contact the Office at Human Resources with the email above.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: If you are requesting reasonable accommodation in connection with applying for this vacancy, please contact FRA Reasonable Accommodation Office at frareasonableaccommodation@dot.gov.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

VOLUNTARY REASSIGNMENT APPLICATION FORM

Complete the form and return to

NOTE: This form may only be used by FRA employees who are eligible for consideration for voluntary reassignment to Railroad Safety Inspector positions at the GS-12 grade level under Article 11, Section E of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Federal Railroad Administration and the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 2814, dated November 2024. All other applicants must file complete application forms in accordance with the instructions in the vacancy announcement.

Vacancy Announcement Number:

Duty Location of Vacancy:

Name of Applicant:

Address:

Telephone Number: Home

Office

Cell

Current Railroad Safety Inspector Discipline:

Current Duty Location:

Summary Rating of Last Performance Appraisal:

Date of Last Reassignment:

Reassigned From:

Reassigned To:

Entrance on Duty Date with the FRA:

Date Assigned to the GS-12 Grade Level:

Signature:

Date: