

BART Ambassador Pilot Program

The BART Ambassador pilot program was launched on February 10, 2020, with the goal of increasing the presence of uniformed personnel on trains to address customer concerns about safety and security.

The idea for the Ambassador program came from the BART Board of Directors, who initially asked that the program be modeled after the San Francisco MUNI Transit Assistance Program (MTAP), which was created by MUNI to address issues caused by youth traveling to and from school on MUNI busses. The MTAP program is staffed with community members who receive training in conflict resolution.

BART staff researched the MTAP model but determined that BART would be best served through Ambassadors with more training and experience. BART Ambassadors were recruited from the ranks of the BART Police Department's Community Service Officers, unarmed, non-sworn personnel who can perform a variety of services. The Ambassadors also received de-escalation and anti-bias training.

The initial pilot project deployment consisted of ten ambassadors assigned to walk trains in teams of two, seven-days-a-week from 2 pm to midnight, with overlapping coverage on Saturdays. The focus was on the most heavily travelled section of the system, the trans-bay corridor between 12th St. Oakland and Civic Center stations. During crowded evening commute hours, the focus shifted to other sections of the system such as Coliseum to Union City and Walnut Creek to Pittsburg/Bay Point.

The Ambassadors wear easily identifiable uniforms distinct from those of Community Service Officers or Fare Inspectors. They are equipped with radios to report safety and security concerns or biohazards. The Ambassadors are also trained to respond to customers' questions, complaints or requests for service. They also observe, report and call upon an officer when enforcement is needed.

The deployment beginning February 10, 2020, was as follows:

Monday	4 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight
Tuesday	4 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight
Wednesday	6 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight
Thursday	6 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight
Friday	6 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight
Saturday	10 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight
Sunday	4 Ambassadors, 2 pm to midnight

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, modifications were made to the Ambassador deployment. In the early days of COVID-19, BART worked tirelessly to procure personal protective equipment and to establish cleaning protocols. Our Ambassadors were deployed at a fixed post assignment in downtown San Francisco with limited presence on trains.

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An Ambassador tested positive for COVID-19 in early April, and the entire Ambassador team took a leave from April 6 through April 17, 2020. Some Ambassadors took additional intermittent COVID related leave.

Ridership on BART was significantly reduced, and BART revenue hours were changed. In response, all Ambassadors were re-scheduled to work Monday through Friday, from 1 pm to 9 pm beginning April 30, 2020. This deployment consisted of 2 Ambassadors at each of the four downtown San Francisco stations. The Ambassadors rode trains on a limited basis.

BART procured large quantities of personal protection gear and instituted a robust cleaning protocol. In time, the Ambassador team was re-deployed to ride the trains more often. Beginning May 25, 2020, all Ambassadors were scheduled to work Tuesday through Friday, from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Beginning September 7, 2020, the Ambassador deployment will be as follows:

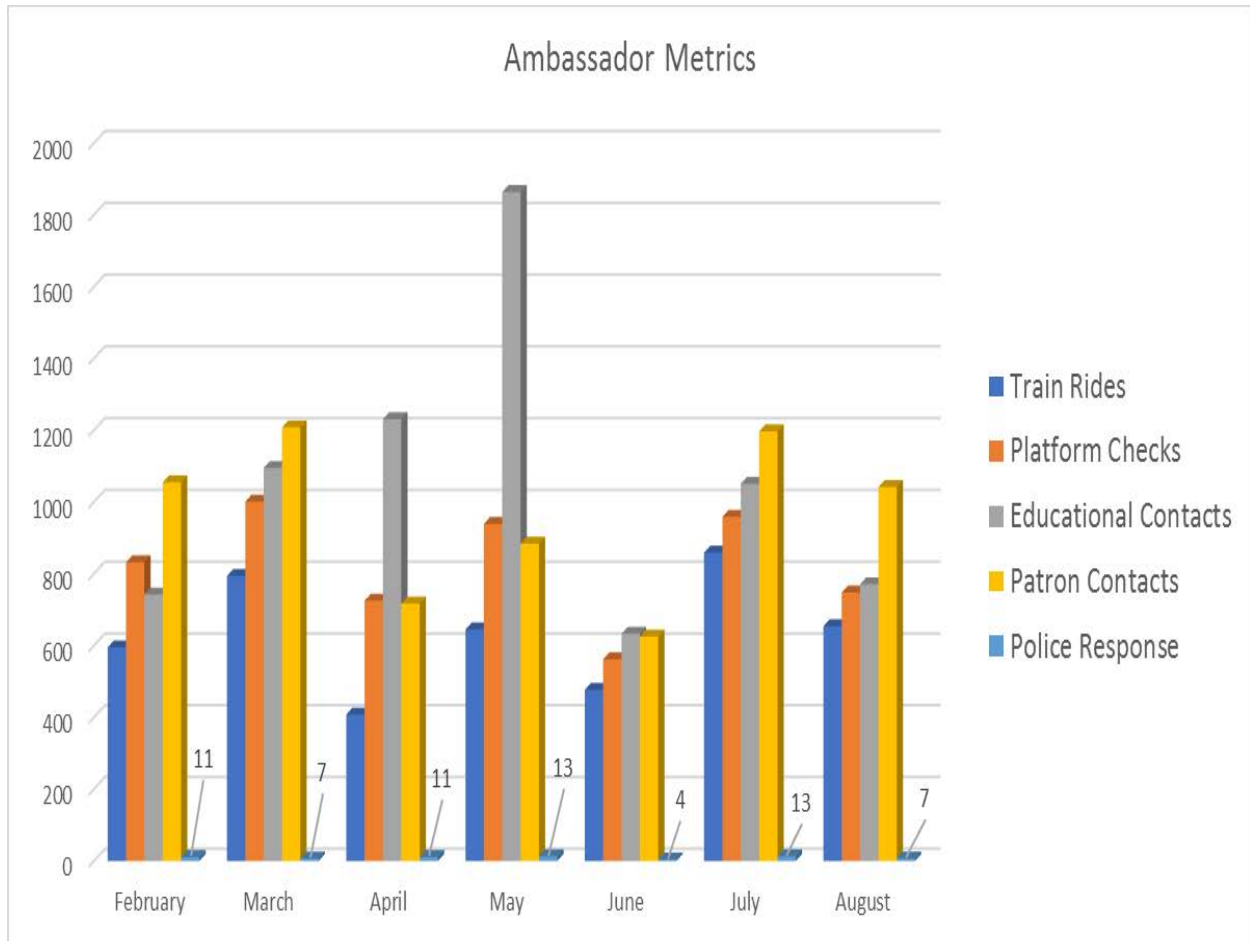
Monday	8 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
Tuesday	8 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
Wednesday	8 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
Thursday	10 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
Friday	10 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
Saturday	2 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm
Sunday	2 Ambassadors, 11:00 am to 9:00 pm

We collected data for the following performance metrics:

- Train Rides
- Platform Checks
- Educational Contacts: Ambassador initiates contact to explain a transit rule violation such as eating, bicycle on escalator, COVID-19 face covering requirement, welfare check, fare evasion advisement, loud music, etc.
- Patron Initiated Contacts: A patron initiates a contact to ask for assistance or information.
- Police Response: Incidents that result in a request for police response.

	Train Rides	Platform Checks	Educational Contacts	Patron Contacts	Police Response
February	595	832	742	1055	11
March	794	1001	1095	1208	7
April	408	725	1231	717	11
May	645	939	1864	884	13
June	477	562	633	625	4
July	859	959	1051	1197	13
August	654	748	771	1042	7

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*The launch date was February 10, 2020, so it was only a partial month of data.

**The month of May included a significant number of Educational Contacts for face covering requirement.

The following are examples of notable incidents:

- February 19: Ambassadors located subject at Civic Center who had apparently overdosed on narcotics, subject was revived by medical personnel
- March 3: Ambassadors located an unresponsive subject at Montgomery, subject was taken by medical and revived
- March 7: Ambassadors were flagged down by the victim of a battery at Lake Merritt, police officers responded, arrested the suspect, and located a firearm in the suspect's backpack.