Regional Transportation Authority

RTA 2025 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION STUDY

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of its ongoing effort to understand customer satisfaction across the six-county Chicago region, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) conducted a regional Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) from January through April 2025. The RTA provides funding, planning, and oversight to three Service Boards: the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), which operates rail and bus service in the city of Chicago and 35 suburban municipalities; Pace, which operates bus service in the suburban areas and provides regional paratransit; and Metra, which provides commuter rail service in Chicago and the surrounding counties.

This report summarizes the findings of the 2025 CSS and compares them with results from the 2022 survey to highlight changes in customer satisfaction over time. Respondents reported on their satisfaction with their individual Service Board as well as with regional transit overall. Feedback was collected across seven dimensions: service delivery, information and communication, safety and security, appearance and comfort, employee performance, regional integration, and overall satisfaction.

A total of 25,684 respondents completed the 2025 CSS, including 10,216 from CTA, 5,084 from Pace, and 10,384 from Metra. Metra respondents accounted for the largest share of the unweighted sample (40.4%), followed by CTA (39.8%) and Pace (19.8%). Compared to 2022, the number of CTA respondents increased modestly (+3.4%), while Pace (+136%) and Metra (+105%) saw significant gains. To ensure representativeness, results were weighted and expanded at the Service Board level so that overall findings accurately reflect each Service Board's contribution to regional ridership.

The 2025 CSS highlights both areas of stability and emerging challenges for transit in a post-pandemic environment. Overall satisfaction remains strong but has declined slightly since 2022, reflecting continued pressures on the system. Riders continue to value the availability of transit service, and satisfaction with personal security has modestly improved. However, concerns persist about the condition of transit infrastructure and the cleanliness of vehicles—both critical drivers of satisfaction.

Demographic shifts are also evident. The rider population is trending older and more highly educated. This may suggest a gradual return of "choice riders" who have alternatives to transit, alongside continued reliance among riders with fewer transportation options. These findings underscore the importance of maintaining reliable, safe, and accessible service, while prioritizing infrastructure investments that can sustain and strengthen satisfaction across the region.

2.0 OBJECTIVES & BACKGROUND

This report presents findings from the 2025 Regional Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS), conducted on behalf of Pace, CTA, Metra, and the RTA. Building on the 2022 CSS, this is the first survey administered entirely in the post-pandemic era. As ridership continues to recover across all three Service Boards, it is more important than ever to understand the factors that attract (or deter) customers from using public transportation.

The primary goal of the 2025 CSS was to assess rider perceptions of service quality and overall experience across the three Service Boards. By aligning core questions, adopting a common scale, and employing as consistent as possible administration methods across agencies, the regionwide survey produces data that can be aggregated for meaningful systemwide reporting. While differences exist—for example, Metra did not field a paper survey but instead distributed on-ground postcard handouts—the use of common metrics allows for broad comparisons across systems, highlighting both similarities and differences, as well as overall regionwide results. It is important to note, however, that demographic and ridership profiles vary across the participating systems. These underlying differences help provide context to any variations in satisfaction metrics.

Results based on these comparable measures help identify areas of excellence as well as opportunities for improvement. To date, RTA has conducted regionwide CSS efforts in 2011, late 2013/early 2014, 2016, 2022, and 2025.

The 2025 survey was fielded during a period of transition for the regional transit network. All Service Boards experienced severe disruptions in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to sharp ridership declines. Although ridership has partially rebounded, total boardings as of 2024 remain below pre-pandemic levels. In response, CTA, Pace, and Metra have invested in revitalizing infrastructure, improving accessibility, and restoring service frequency. However, all three continue to face fiscal pressures as federal COVID-19 relief funding phases out.

In this context of shifting ridership and financial constraints, understanding the rider experience is critical. The 2025 survey highlights what riders value, where improvements are needed, and how RTA can support its Service Boards in addressing ongoing recovery and revitalization challenges.

To ensure broad and representative participation, the survey used both digital and in-person distribution methods. More than 328,000 email invitations were sent to recent CTA, Pace, and Metra riders who used Ventra and opted into communications. Trained field staff distributed paper surveys on selected CTA and Pace routes, and 20,000 postcards were placed across all Metra trains during the final week of March. At downtown Metra stations, field staff conducted tablet-based surveys and distributed an additional 17,500 postcards inviting riders to participate online.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

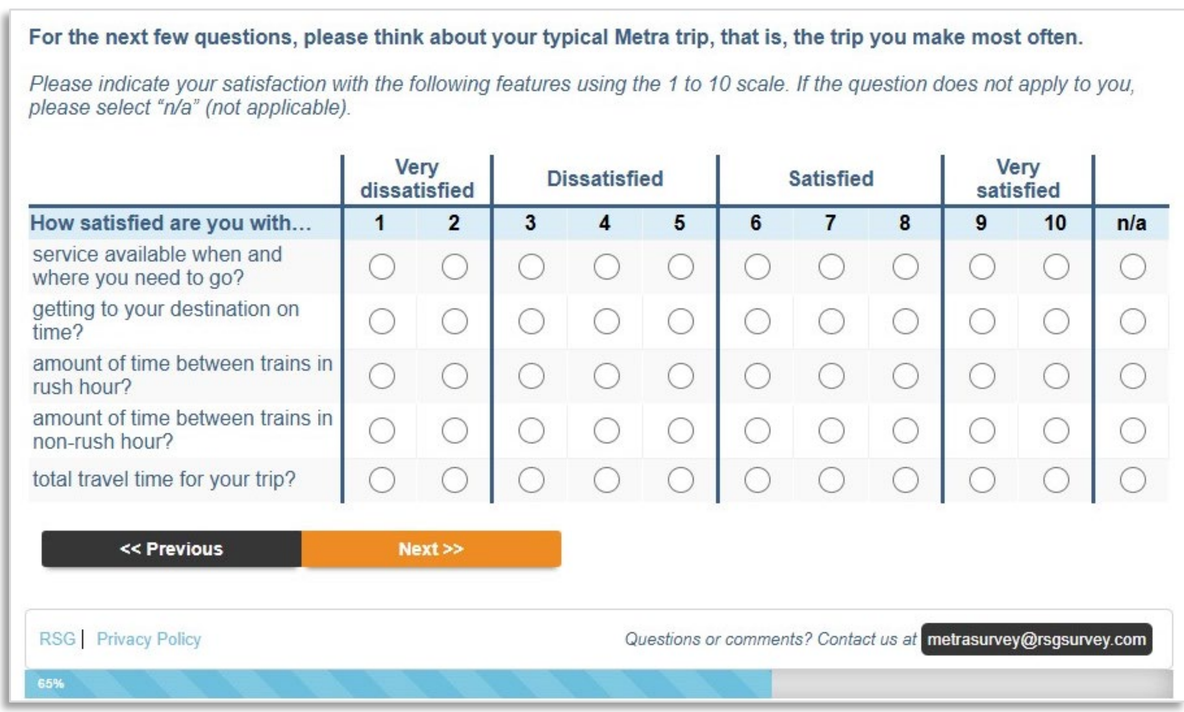
3.1 SURVEY DESIGN

The final Customer Satisfaction Survey closely mirrors the 2022 design. Maintaining this structure allows for reliable comparison across years, with updates added to better capture current rider needs and experiences.

CTA, Pace, and Metra surveys all began with questions regarding general usage of the respective services. This section included questions about the frequency of the customers' rides, when they ride, the typical purpose of their trip, and how they access and exit the system.

The core of each questionnaire was a series of satisfaction questions specific to the service being used. While these questions were not grouped into service dimensions, they continued to reflect key themes such as cleanliness, comfort, communication, safety, staff performance, and service delivery. Respondents rated each item on a 10-point scale from "Very Dissatisfied" to "Very Satisfied", with an option to select "not applicable" ("n/a") where relevant (see Figure 1 for an excerpt from service dimension of the Metra survey).

FIGURE 1: SERVICE DIMENSION EXCERPT FROM METRA SURVEY

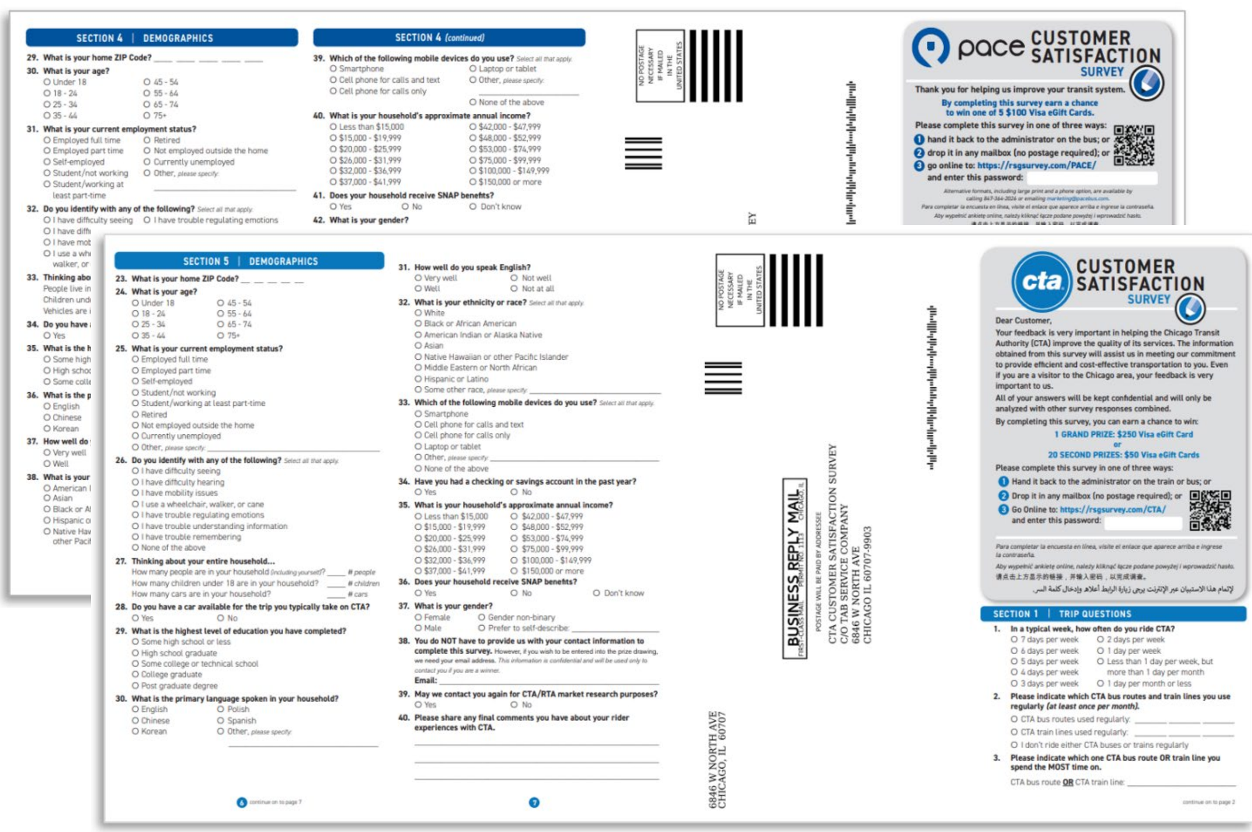


Respondents were also asked about their likelihood of continuing to use CTA, Pace, or Metra a year from now as well as whether they would recommend that service to others. These questions provide additional context for interpreting the satisfaction scores, as riders may express dissatisfaction with certain aspects of service while still feeling that CTA, Pace, or Metra meets their overall expectations.

Finally, respondents were asked a series of demographic questions, such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income. As in previous years, incentive prizes were used to encourage participation for CTA and Pace. Those who opted in provided their email addresses, which were checked for duplicates to ensure only unique entries were included.

For Metra, the survey instrument was offered exclusively online, in English and Spanish. For Pace and CTA, the survey instrument was available as a paper survey (in English and Spanish, see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: FIRST PANELS OF CTA AND PACE PAPER SURVEYS



In addition, CTA and Pace participants could complete the survey online in English, Spanish, Chinese, Polish, or Arabic, while Metra's online survey was available in English or Spanish. Offering the survey across multiple modes and languages ensured accessibility and encouraged broad participation from diverse rider populations.

3.2 SAMPLING PLAN

Sampling plans were developed separately for each agency. For CTA, the plan was based on October 2024 ridership data and structured around bus route groups and train branches that CTA uses to report ridership data. For Pace, the plan drew on December 2024 ridership and automatic passenger count (APC) data by trip (route, direction, and time), and was structured around its nine operating divisions, with contractor-operated routes grouped into a tenth category. For Metra, the plan used October 2024 average daily ridership data to determine postcard distribution targets for both on-train seat drops and in-person handouts.

Online Sampling and Initial Response Monitoring

For CTA and Pace, the first phase of data collection began= on January 17, 2025, with an initial email blast to Ventra customers who had recently used either system and were opted into communications. For Metra, online outreach began on February 19, 2025, with email invitations sent to Ventra customers who had recently ridden Metra, as well as to the approximately 13,000 subscribers of Metra's newsletter. RSG monitored survey completions by key metrics -- bus routes and train branches for CTA, operating divisions for Pace, and train lines for Metra -- to track response rates and identify where additional outreach was needed.

Onboard Sample Size Targets

RSG monitored response rates from the initial email outreach for each of the three Service Boards. Using these results, onboard sample size targets for CTA and Pace were established, and distribution plans were refined to reflect ridership patterns, with particular focus on areas under sampled during the initial phase.

CTA

Based on CTA's ridership and satisfaction levels from past Customer Satisfaction Surveys, the study set a target of 296 completed surveys per bus group and train branch. At historical satisfaction levels (74%), this target allows for comparisons at a 95% confidence level with a ±5% margin of error.

Since bus riders account for about 60% of system ridership and rail riders account for about 40%, resources were allocated proportionally. Groups representing less than 1% of total ridership did not receive significant paper distribution. Because the email sample skewed slightly more White, less Hispanic, and higher income than the system overall, RSG distributed additional surveys in areas with typically lower response rates to balance the sample while still aligning with ridership patterns and sample size goals.

Pace

Onboard sample targets were set by division, proportional to each division's share of average ridership. Automatic Passenger Count (APC) data from December 2024 (by route, direction, and time) informed these targets. Smaller garages, such as Fox Valley, received extra attention due to lower ridership and the difficulty of reaching sample goals.

Fielding shifts were selected using a block-based approach, ensuring buses started and ended at the same location, typically one of Pace's nine garages. For Pace-operated divisions, survey handouts were allocated according to each division's share of annual ridership, with minimum thresholds applied to smaller divisions. For contractor-operated divisions, 500 surveys were allocated across the system.

Metra

Metra's October 2024 average daily ridership data were used to set postcard distribution targets for on-train seat drops. Allocations were calculated at the train-line level, with a minimum of 200 postcards per line to ensure baseline coverage. Counts were rounded to practical bundle sizes for ease of distribution.

For station-based distribution, allocations were based on aggregated ridership at each downtown terminal (Union, Ogilvie, LaSalle, Millennium, and Van Buren), with no minimum applied. Across both methods, postcard distribution was proportional to ridership, ensuring systemwide coverage aligned with demand.

3.3 SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Online Recruitment

For CTA and Pace, the online survey was available from January 17 to April 17, 2025. For Metra, the survey was accessible from February 19 to April 17, 2025. Invitations were sent to Ventra users who had recently used each service and opted into communications. In total, 76,549 invitations were sent to CTA riders, 55,342 to Pace riders, and 196,850 to Metra riders. An additional 13,076 invitations were sent to subscribers of Metra's passenger magazine and other updates. Reminder emails were periodically sent to nonrespondents to encourage participation.

All three surveys were programmed using Jibunu, a survey programming platform and programming service, which enabled a customized experience designed to improve data quality and reduce respondent fatigue. The online surveys were structured to mirror the paper surveys, ensuring consistency across formats.

Intercept Recruitment

Before in-person recruitment began, surveyors and supervisors for all three surveys attended a training session on March 7, 2025, at the RTA headquarters in downtown Chicago. RSG staff led this training, which reviewed processes and expectations. RTA's project manager, as well as staff representatives from CTA and Metra, also attended.

CTA

From March 8 to April 4, 2025, field staff distributed and collected onboard surveys. Shifts were designed in accordance with the sampling plan to cover routes and trains at various times of the day and days of the week, rather than following specific runs or exact times. Riders could complete the paper survey onboard and return it to a surveyor, mail it back postage-paid, or complete it online using the link and unique password printed on the cover. To boost response rates, surveyors encouraged riders to fill out the survey while riding.

Paper surveys were offered in English and Spanish, with instructions in Spanish, Chinese, Polish, and Arabic on how to access the online survey, which was offered in all the aforementioned languages. By the end of fielding, surveyors had distributed 14,323 questionnaires.

Pace

From March 10 to April 4, 2025, field staff distributed and collected onboard surveys. While respondents could mail back a postage-paid survey or complete it online, surveyors strongly encouraged riders to finish the survey during their trip to maximize response rates.

Each paper survey included a link/QR code and a unique password on the cover to ensure that each respondent could only complete the survey once. Paper surveys were available in English and Spanish, with instructions in Spanish, Chinese, Polish, and Arabic for accessing the online version, which was offered in all of these languages. Surveyors also carried badges with QR codes that linked directly to the survey, an option particularly useful for bus riders who preferred not to complete a physical form.

As a supplemental onboard recruitment method, Pace staff placed 20,000 postcards in schedule holders across the system.

Metra

During the week of March 31, 2025, Metra staff conducted a systemwide postcard seat drop, placing 20,000 postcards on trains (see Figure 3 for the recruitment postcard).

FIGURE 3: TWO-SIDED ENGLISH/SPANISH METRA RECRUITMENT POSTCARD

Allocations were based on prior ridership data to align sampling with passenger volume. Each postcard included a unique password for online access and was printed double-sided, with one side in English and the other in Spanish.

Also in March, survey staff held eight postcard distribution events -- six on weekdays and two on weekends -- at Metra's five downtown Chicago stations (Union, Ogilvie, LaSalle, Millennium, and Van Buren). A total of 17,500 postcards in English and Spanish were handed out to passengers arriving and departing at these stations. In addition, select staff used tablets to administer the survey on-site and provided assistance to respondents as needed.

3.4 DATA CLEANING

Before weighting and analysis, RSG merged paper and web survey data for CTA and Pace (the two Service Boards that offered both formats). Each survey was assigned to a primary route. This process was most complex for CTA, where bus routes and train lines were grouped into route groups or branches. Respondents were first categorized based on their answer to: "Please indicate which one CTA bus route OR train line you spend the MOST time on." If no primary route was provided, the first additional bus route or train line listed was used. If both a train and a bus were listed, or if both items were blank, other route information was reviewed to assign the most likely primary route. Where no usable information was available, the respondent's unique survey password was matched to surveyor count sheets to assign the route or line where the survey was likely collected.

For Pace, each response was linked to a route within one of the ten divisions. When a route was unclear or missing, the survey's unique password was cross-referenced with distribution logs to identify the appropriate division. For Metra, each survey was assigned to the line the respondent reported using for their most typical trip, with responses grouped by line.

Because the online surveys included programmed logical checks, most data cleaning focused on the paper surveys collected during CTA and Pace onboard recruitment. This cleaning process ensured logical consistency, validated open-ended responses, and confirmed that recorded values were reasonable. Invalid surveys were excluded from the dataset. After cleaning, 983 CTA paper surveys and 2,631 Pace paper surveys were determined valid. Finally, once processing was complete, variables consistent with the 2022 dataset were merged with the 2025 data. For questions with revised answer options, categories were collapsed into broader ranges to enable comparisons over time.

Table 1 shows average weekly ridership for each Service Board. Also reported are unweighted counts which represent the number of valid surveys completed by respondents on paper or online.

TABLE 1: RIDERSHIP AND 2025 UNWEIGHTED SURVEY COMPLETES BY SERVICE BOARD

SERVICE BOARD	AVERAGE WEEKLY RIDERSHIP	PERCENT DAILY RIDERSHIP	UNWEIGHTED SAMPLE SIZE	UNWEIGHTED PERCENT OF SAMPLE
CTA	567,5684	82.4%	10,216	39.8%
Metra	900,557	13.1%	10,384	40.4%
Pace	310,128	4.5%	5,084	19.8%
Total	**6,886,369**	***100%***	***25,684***	***100%***

3.5 DATA WEIGHTING AND EXPANSION

The cleaned data were weighted and expanded to Service Board ridership counts to ensure the survey sample accurately reflected the overall traveling population. Initial weights were calculated using aggregated ridership data for March 2025, provided by all three agencies. This initial weighting aligned the proportion of survey responses per line, route, or division with the reported ridership of each service. For CTA, these weights also served as the final weights used in analysis.

For both Pace and Metra, demographic differences were observed between respondents recruited through intercept methods (onboard recruitment, station-based postcard handouts, and seat drops) and those recruited through other methods. This same pattern was noted in the 2022 survey. Because intercept sampling was systemwide and designed to reflect actual ridership volumes by Pace division or Metra line, these responses were considered more representative of the rider populations. Therefore, respondents recruited through other methods (primarily email outreach) were reweighted to match intercept demographics.

Reweighting was conducted using an iterative proportional fit (IPF) algorithm based on household income (all levels), English proficiency (very well, well, not well, not at all), and race/ethnicity (White, Black or African American, Asian, Hispanic or Latino). The resulting IPF weights were applied to online respondents, while intercept respondents retained weights from the initial ridership-based calculations.

Finally, expansion adjusted each respondent's weight proportionally across the three Service Boards so that combined totals reflected regionwide weekly ridership data for March 2025. This weekly total incorporates weekend activity: the study team calculated an average daily figure (weekday weighted by its share of the week, plus Saturday and Sunday) and multiplied it by seven to produce an "average week." Using this consistent framework across all Service Boards ensured that weighted results aligned with actual ridership and prevented Service Boards, routes, branches, lines, or divisions with larger samples from being overrepresented. All tabulations in this report use these expanded weights to accurately reflect regional ridership.

3.6 RESPONSE RATES

In total, the 2025 survey effort resulted in 25,684 surveys being completed by passengers of CTA, Metra, and Pace. Table 2 details the completed surveys and response rates by recruitment method for each Service Board.

TABLE 2: SURVEY COMPLETES BY RECRUITMENT METHOD AND SERVICE BOARD

	RECRUITMENT METHOD	INVITATIONS	RETURNED SURVEYS	RESPONSE RATE
CTA	Email Invitation: Ventra List	76,549	8,480	11%
	On-board Recruitment	14,323	1,736	12%
Metra	Email Invitation: Marketing list	13,076	766	6%
	Email Invitation: Ventra	196,850	6,898	4%
	Station-Based Postcard Handout / Postcard Seat Drop	37,500	2,561	7%
	Tablet	--	159	--
Pace	On-board Recruitment	7,708	2,924	38%
	On-board Postcard	20,000	91	<1%
	Email Invitation: Ventra and GovDelivery	55,342	2,069	4%
Total		***421,348***	***25,684***	***6.1%***

**Note: Results reflect unweighted, collected surveys. Total response rate calculation excludes Metra tablet intercept since it is impossible to determine how many potential respondents were reached.*

CTA

A total of 10,216 respondents completed a usable CTA survey. To be considered usable, each survey had to be linkable to a bus group or train branch. Of the 76,549 Ventra users who received an email invitation, 8,480 completed surveys, yielding an 11.1% response rate. Surveyors also distributed 14,323 paper surveys onboard, which produced 1,736 usable surveys for a 12.1% response rate. Most riders who received a paper survey returned it in person or by mail, although 753 respondents chose to complete the survey online instead of using the printed form. In total, 337 surveys (3.3%) were completed in a language other than English: 298 in Spanish, 27 in Chinese, 8 in Polish, and 4 in Arabic. Final counts by recruitment method are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3: SURVEY COMPLETES BY RECRUITMENT AND COMPLETION METHOD

RECRUITMENT METHOD	PAPER COMPLETES	WEB COMPLETES	TOTAL
Email	--	8,480	8,480
Onboard	983	753	1,736
Total	**983**	**9,233**	**10,216**

Pace

A total of 5,084 usable Pace surveys were collected. To be considered usable, each survey had to be linkable to a division. Email invitations were sent to 55,342 Ventra users with valid addresses, resulting in 2,069 completed surveys for a 3.7% response rate. Surveyors also distributed 7,708 paper surveys onboard, yielding 2,924 usable responses for a 37.9% response rate. While the vast majority of those who received a paper survey returned it in person or by mail, 293 respondents chose to complete the survey online instead of using the printed form. An additional 91 respondents completed the survey using a postcard link from onboard schedule holders. In total, 257 surveys (5%) were completed in a language other than English: 244 in Spanish, 5 in Chinese, 5 in Polish, and 3 in Arabic. Final survey completes by recruitment type and completion method are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4: SURVEY COMPLETES BY RECRUITMENT AND COMPLETION METHOD

RECRUITMENT METHOD	PAPER COMPLETES	WEB COMPLETES	TOTAL
Email	--	2,069	2,069
Onboard Paper Survey	2,631	293	2,924
Onboard Postcard	--	91	91
Total	***2,631***	***2,453***	***5,084***

Metra

A total of 10,384 usable Metra surveys were collected. To be considered usable, each survey had to be linkable to a Metra line. An open web link was sent to 196,850 Ventra users who had ridden Metra within the past three to six months and had agreed to participate in surveys, yielding 6,898 completed surveys for a 3.5% response rate. In addition, email invitations were sent to 13,076 subscribers of Metra's passenger magazine and other communications, producing 766 completed surveys for a 5.8% response rate. Postcard distribution generated additional responses. The 20,000 postcards distributed onboard Metra trains and 17,500 at downtown stations resulted in 2,561 complete surveys, for a 6.8% response rate. Finally, 159 surveys were completed using tablets administered by field staff. In total, 43 surveys across these recruitment methods were completed in Spanish. A final tally of completes by recruitment method is shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5: SURVEY COMPLETES BY RECRUITMENT METHOD

RECRUITMENT METHOD	TOTAL COMPLETES
Email	766
Postcard	2,561
Open Links	6,898
Tablet	159
Total	**10,384**

4.0 RESULTS

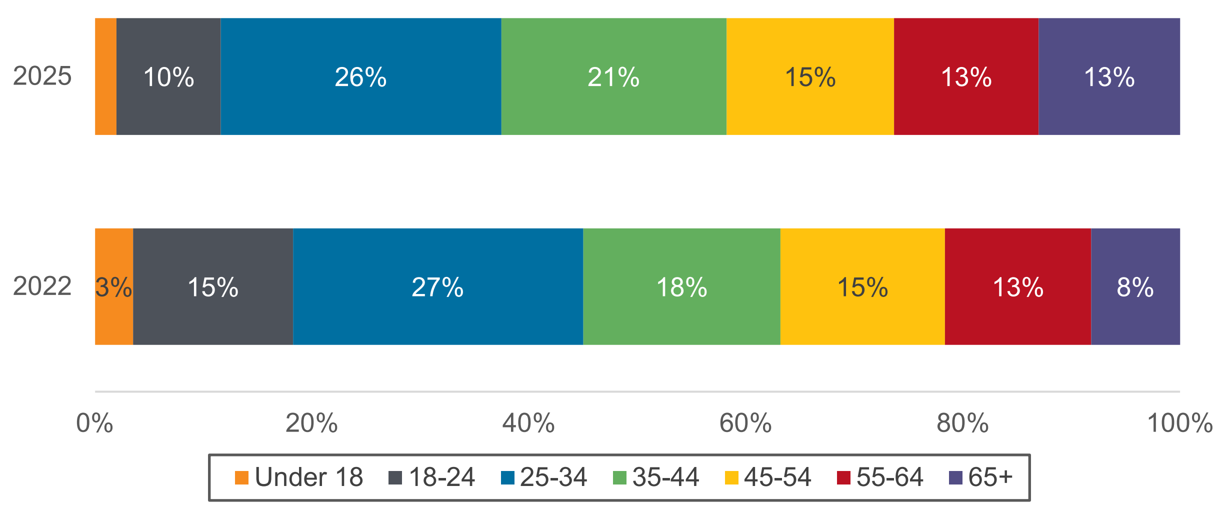
The following section details the results of combining the CTA, Metra, and Pace customer satisfaction surveys into findings at the regional level and is divided into the following subsections: Demographic, Trip Details, Satisfaction (including regionwide satisfaction), and Quadrant Charts. All tabulations were conducted on the weighted regional dataset.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics by Year

Figure 4 shows that overall ridership across the three Service Boards skews older in 2025 compared to 2022. As a percentage of weighted respondents, the 18-24 age group declined by 5 percentage points, while the 65+ age group increased by 5 percentage points. The share of riders in the 35-44 age group also showed a modest increase.

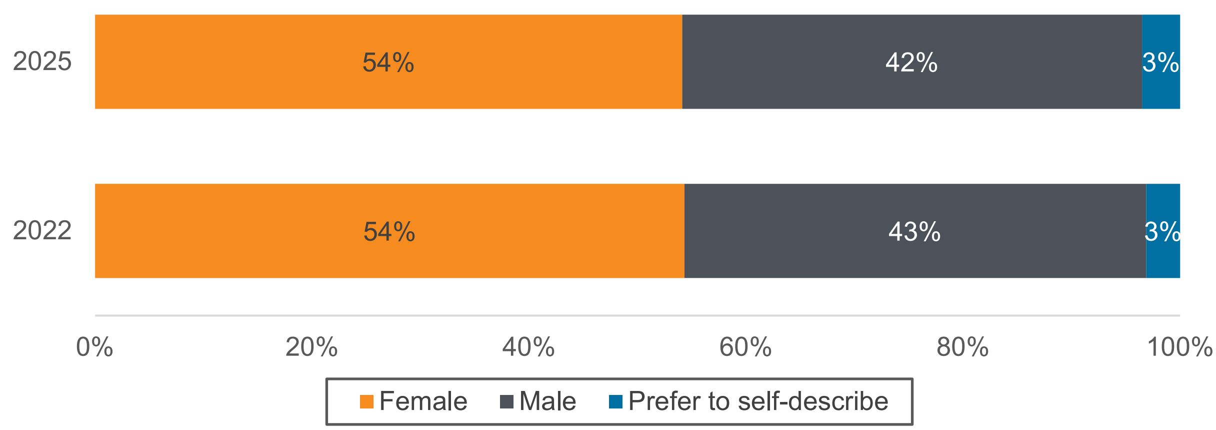
FIGURE 4: AGE BY YEAR



Overall, n = 41,388; 2025, n = 24,976; 2022, n = 16,412

The gender distribution of ridership showed little change from 2022 to 2025 (Figure 5).

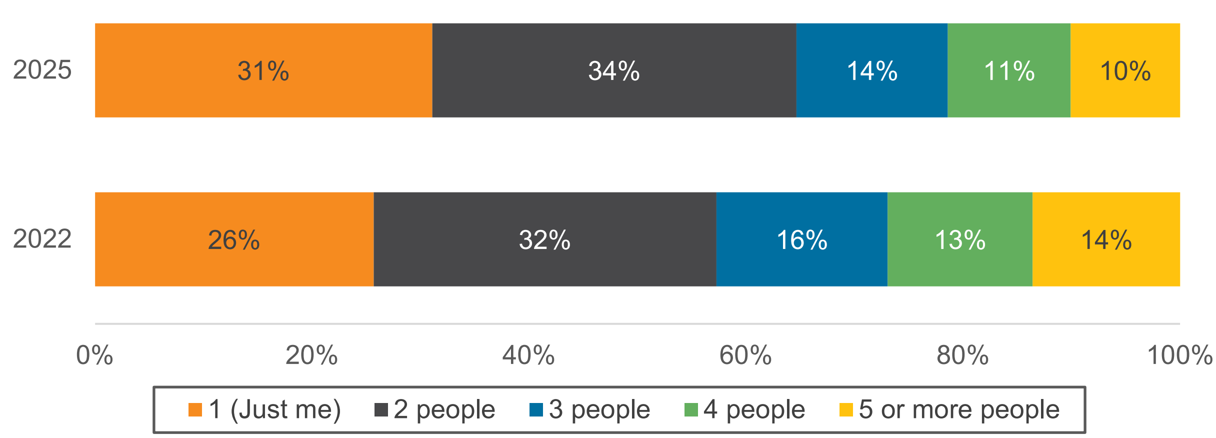
FIGURE 5: GENDER BY YEAR



Overall, n = 41,230; 2025, n = 24,941; 2022, n = 16,289

While the majority of riders lived in single- or two-person households in both years, in 2022 riders were somewhat more likely than those in 2025 to live in households of three or more people. Single-person households showed the largest growth, increasing by 5 percentage points, from 26% in 2022 to 31% in 2025 (Figure 6).

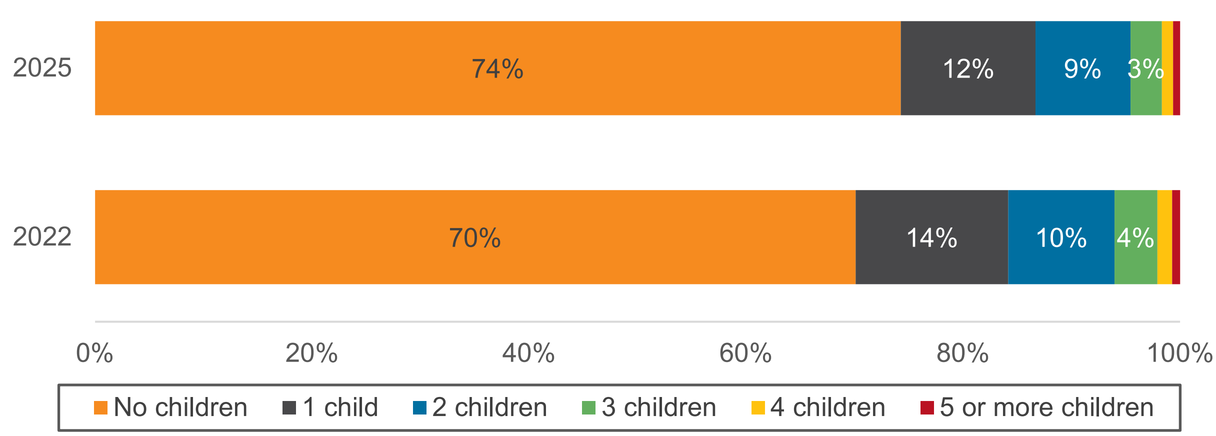
FIGURE 6: HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY YEAR



Overall, n = 40,738; 2025, n = 24,499; 2022, n = 16,239

Households with no children saw a 4 percentage point increase among riders of the three Service Boards (70% in 2022 to 74% in 2025; Figure 7).

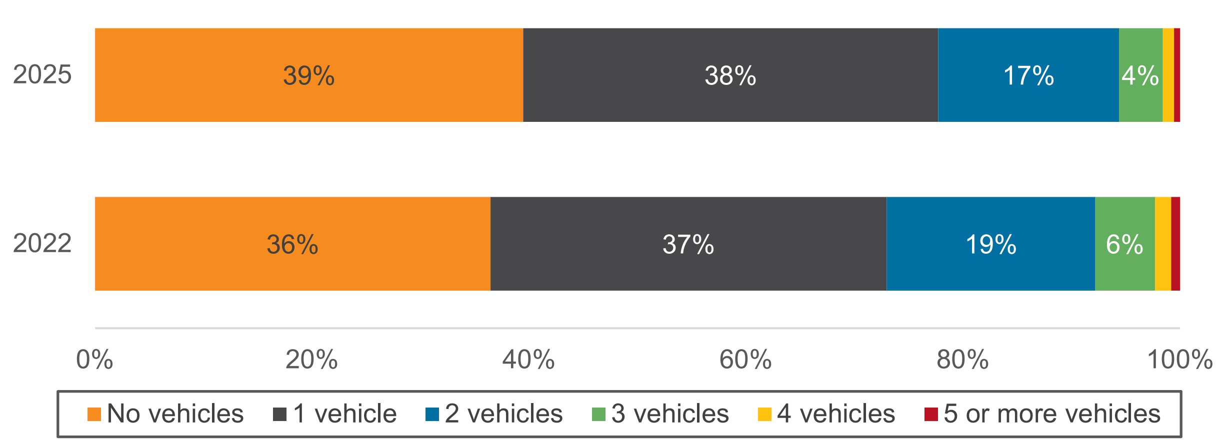
FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD BY YEAR



Overall, n = 39,655; 2025, n = 23,632; 2022, n = 16,023

Figure 8 shows that the share of riders with no vehicles increased by 3 percentage points, from 36% in 2022 to 39% in 2025. Over the same period, the share of households with two vehicles declined by 2 percentage points, from 19% in 2022 to 17% in 2025.

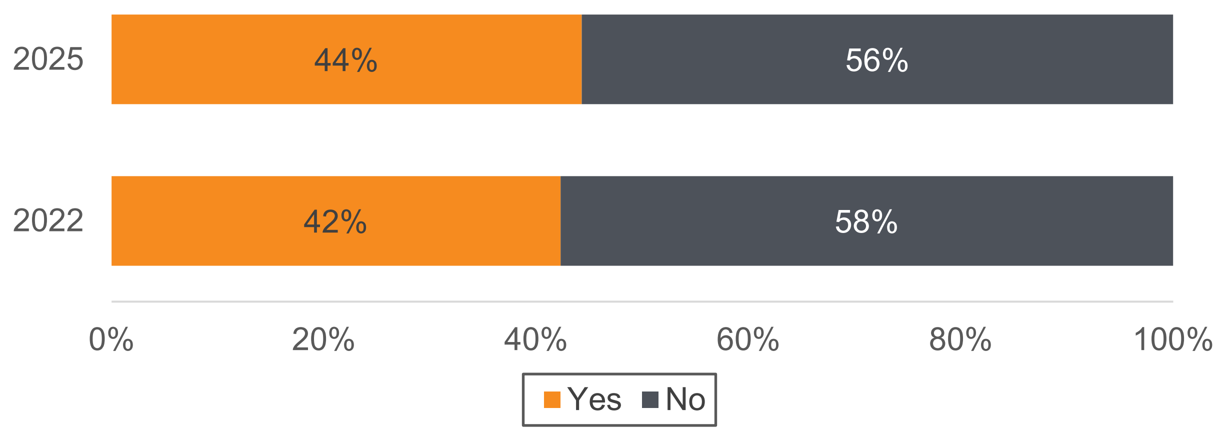
FIGURE 8: NUMBER OF VEHICLES IN HOUSEHOLD BY YEAR



Overall, n = 38,848; 2025, n = 23,857; 2022, n = 15,991

In 2025, 56% of riders reported having no access to a car, a decrease of 2 percentage points compared with 2022 (Figure 9).

FIGURE 9: CAR AVAILABILITY BY YEAR

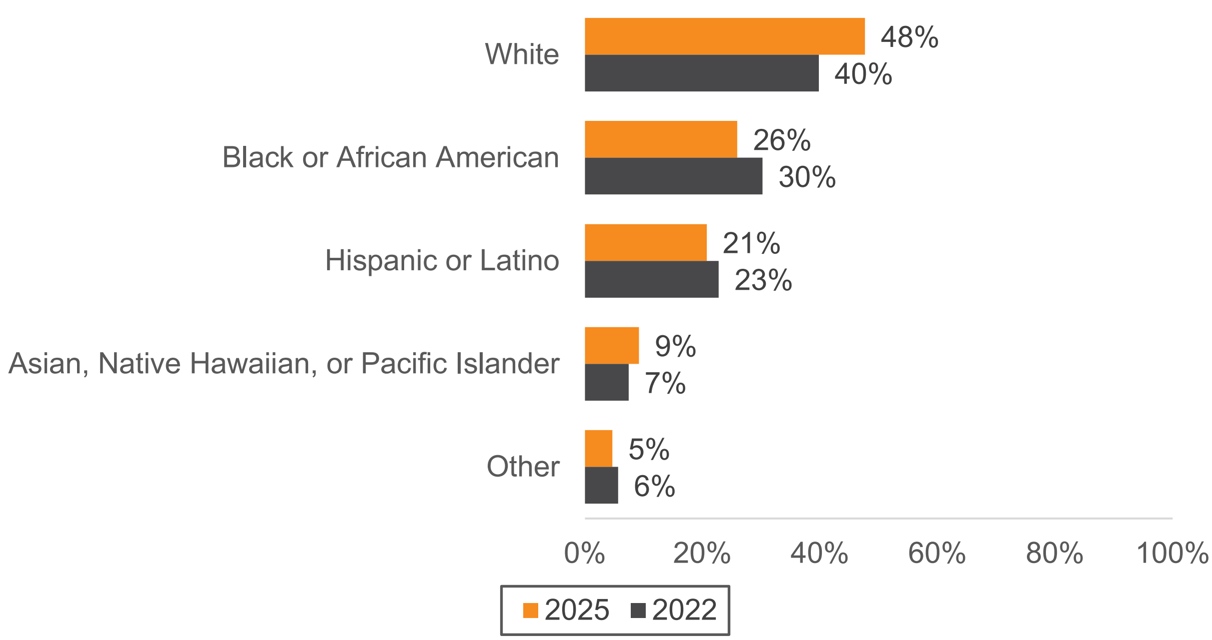


Overall, n = 41,265; 2025, n = 24,845; 2022, n = 16,420

In 2025, the share of riders identifying as White increased by 8 percentage points compared with 2022 (48% vs. 40%). The proportion of Black or African American riders decreased slightly, from 30% in 2022 to 26% in 2025, while Hispanic or Latino riders declined from 23% to 21%. Asian riders—including Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander respondents in 2025—increased from 7% to 9%. Riders categorized as “Other” accounted for 5% in 2025, down from 6% in 2022.

To allow comparison across years, new categories introduced in 2025 were recoded to align with 2022 reporting: Middle Eastern or North African and American Indian or Alaska Native respondents were grouped into “Other,” while Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander respondents were grouped with “Asian” (Figure 10).

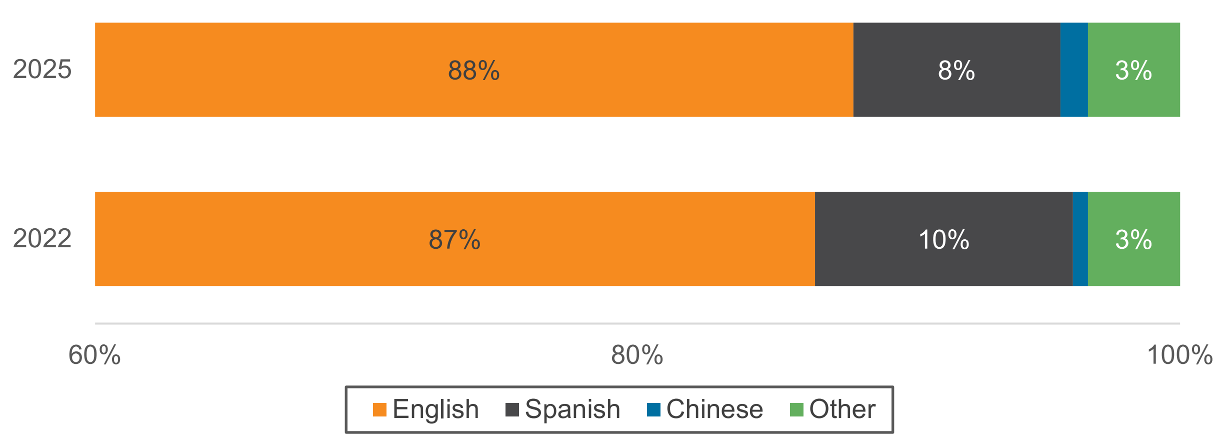
FIGURE 10: RACE AND ETHNICITY BY YEAR



Overall, n = 40,892; 2025, n = 24,532; 2022, n = 16,360
**Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.*

The share of riders reporting English as their primary language at home rose slightly, from 87% in 2022 to 88% in 2025. Over the same period, Spanish declined by 2 percentage points (10% to 8%), while Chinese and Other languages remained stable at 3% each (Figure 11).

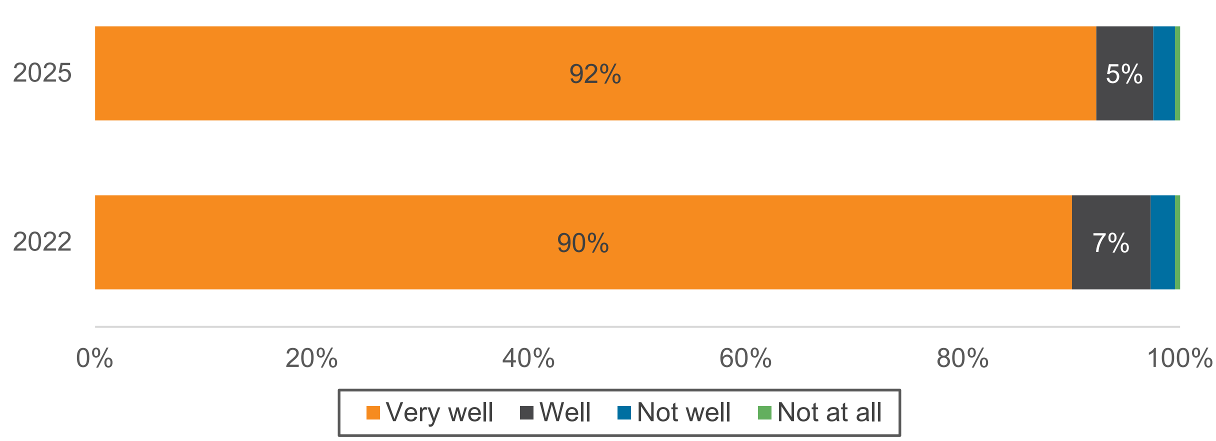
FIGURE 11: PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOUSEHOLD BY YEAR



Overall, n = 41,138; 2025, n = 24,761; 2022, n = 16,377

Between 2022 and 2025, the share of riders reporting they speak English "very well" increased by 2 percentage points (90% to 92%). Over the same period, the share reporting they speak English "well" declined from 7% to 5%. Responses of "not well" or "not at all" remained negligible in both years (Figure 12).

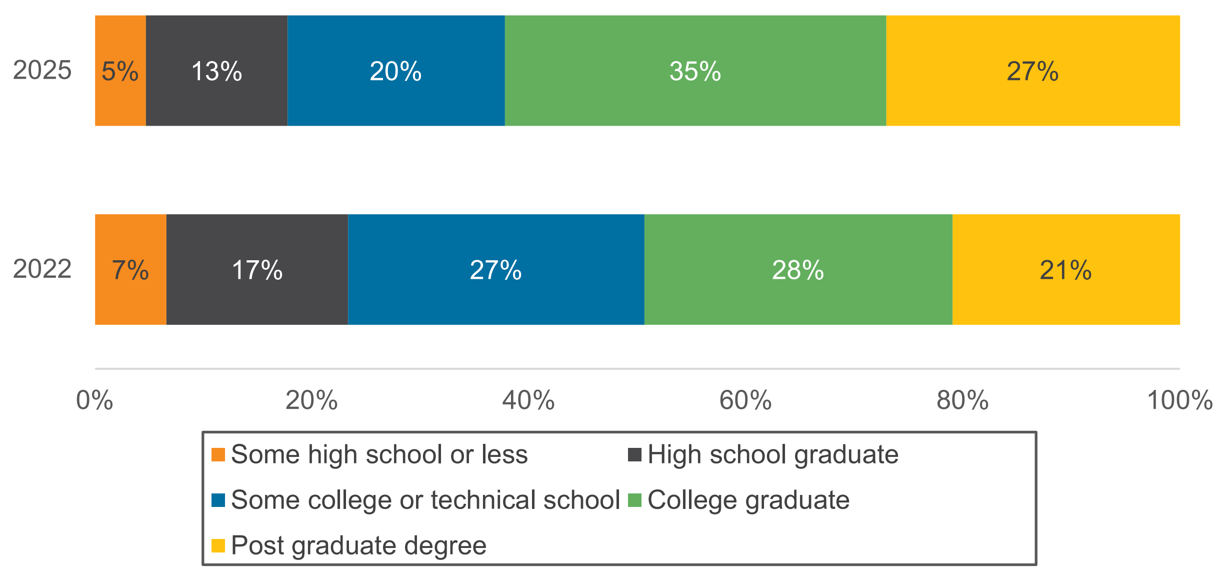
FIGURE 12: ENGLISH ABILITY BY YEAR



Overall, n = 41,308; 2025, n = 24,936; 2022, n = 16,372

From 2022 to 2025, the share of riders with a college degree increased by 7 percentage points (28% to 35%), and those with a postgraduate degree rose by 6 points (21% to 27%). Over the same period, riders with some college or technical school declined by 7 points (27% to 20%), and high school graduates declined by 4 points (17% to 13%). Riders with some high school or less made up a small share in both years, shifting slightly (7% to 5%). Overall, the rider base in 2025 is more highly educated than in 2022 (Figure 13).

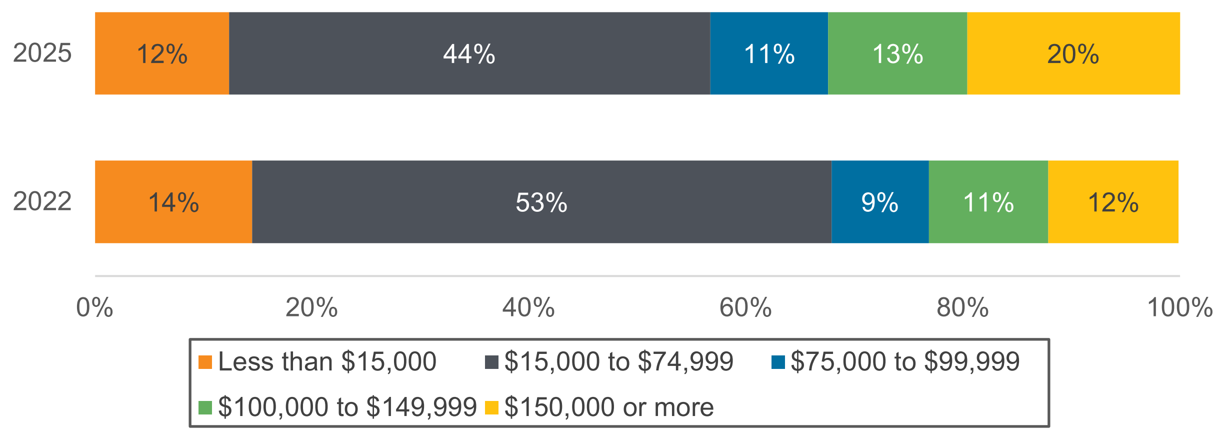
FIGURE 13: EDUCATION STATUS BY YEAR



Overall, n = 41,221; 2025, n = 24,859; 2022, n = 16,362

Between 2022 and 2025, the most notable change was a 9 percentage point decline in riders with household incomes between $15,000 and $74,999 (53% to 44%). At the same time, the share of riders earning $150,000 or more grew by 8 percentage points (12% to 20%), marking a clear increase in higher-income representation. Smaller gains were also seen among riders in the $75,000 to $99,999 and $100,000 to $149,999 brackets (Figure 14).

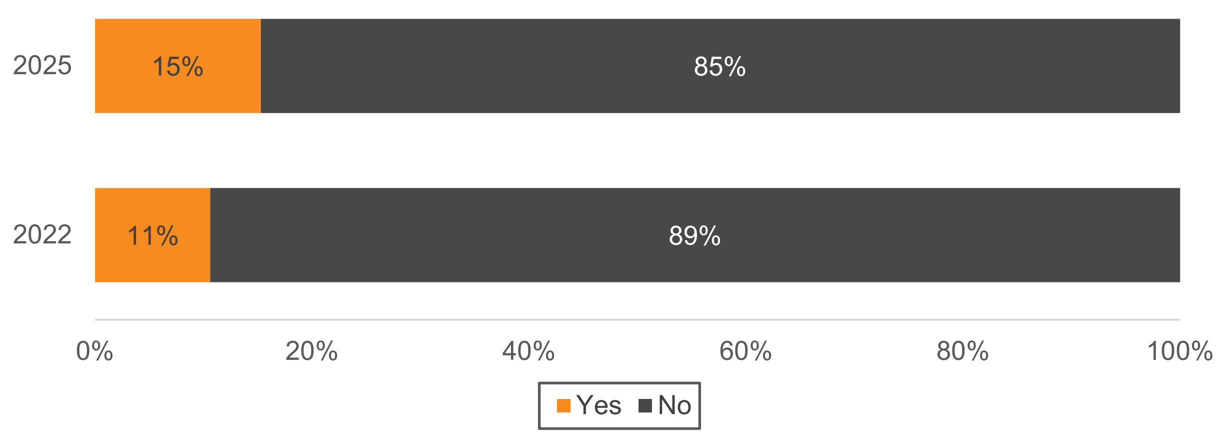
FIGURE 14: HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY YEAR



Overall, n = 38,834; 2025, n = 23,253; 2022, n = 15,581

The 2025 survey recorded a 4 percentage point increase in riders reporting a disability, rising from 11% in 2022 to 15% in 2025 (Figure 15).

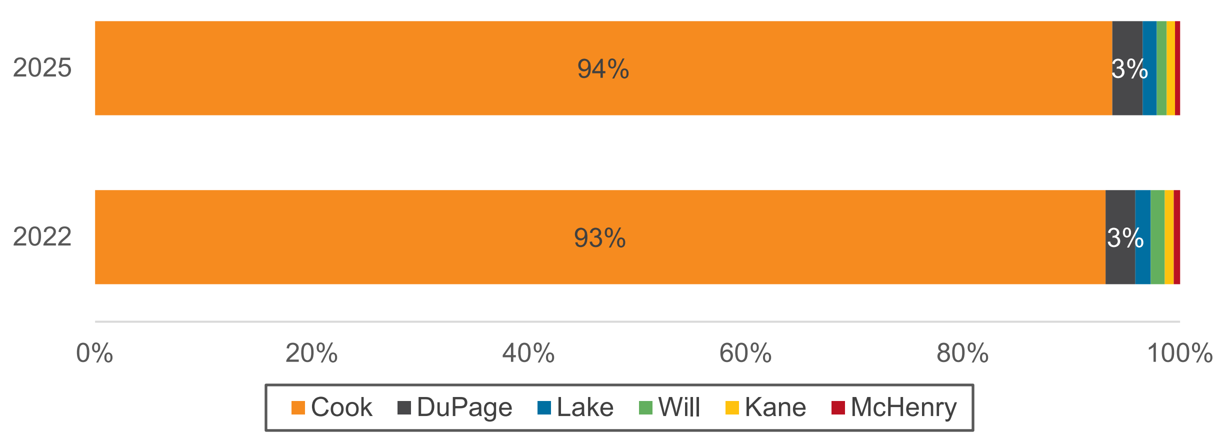
FIGURE 15: DISABILITY STATUS BY YEAR



Overall, n = 40,978; 2025, n = 24,651; 2022, n = 16,327

County of residence showed little change in the three years between surveys. The majority of riders continue to reside within Cook County (94% in 2025; Figure 16).

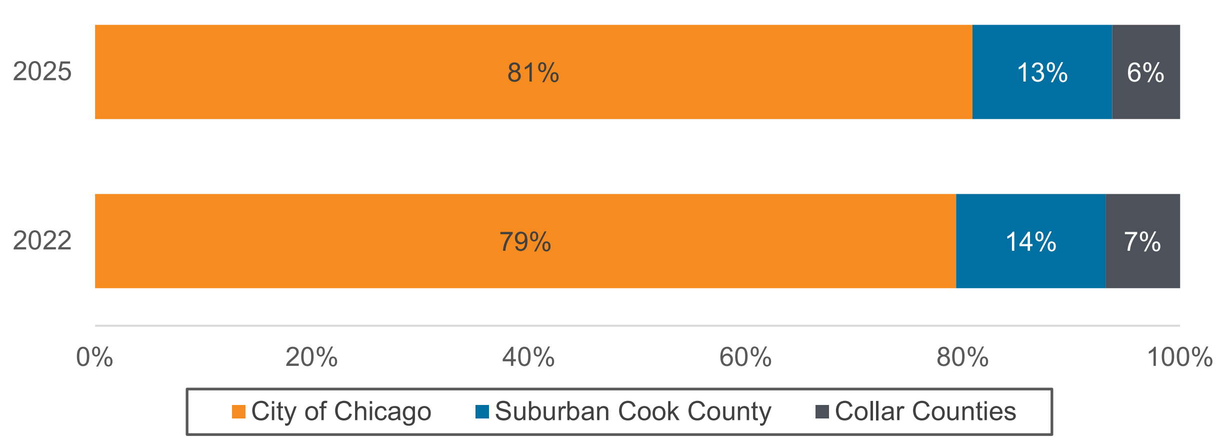
FIGURE 16: COUNTY OF RESIDENCE BY YEAR



Overall, n = 39,975; 2025, n = 24,068; 2022, n = 15,907

Consistent with Figure 16, Figure 17 shows little change in the distribution of riders between urban and suburban counties. A slightly higher share of riders reported residing within the City of Chicago, while the proportions in suburban Cook County and the collar counties declined marginally.

FIGURE 17: URBAN AND SUBURBAN COUNTIES BY YEAR

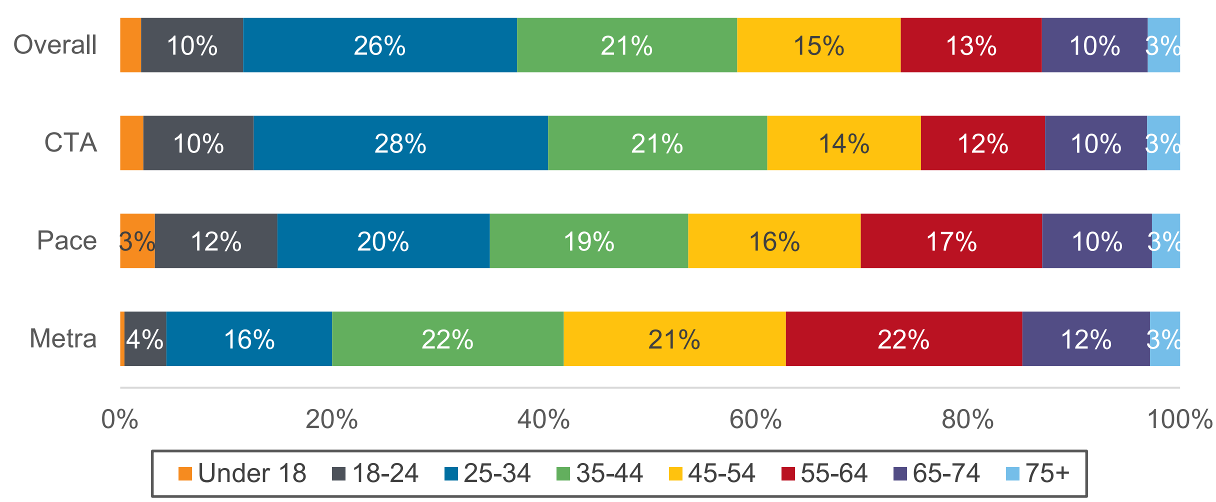


Overall, n = 39,975; 2025, n = 24,068; 2022, n = 15,907

2025 Demographics by Service Board

CTA riders skew younger than those on Pace or Metra, with 40% of CTA riders age 34 or younger, compared with 35% of Pace riders and 20% of Metra riders. Despite these differences, all three Service Boards serve a similar share of riders age 65 and older (Figure 18).

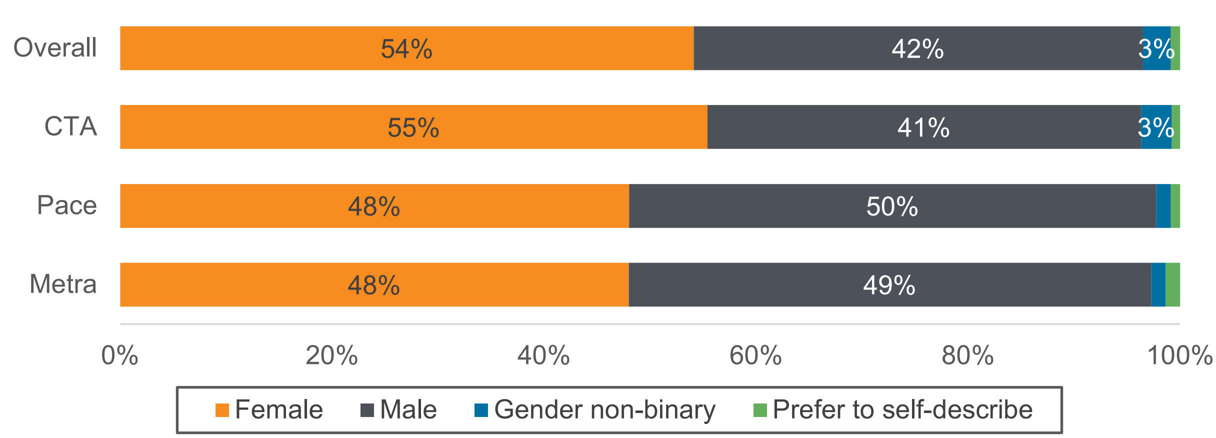
FIGURE 18: AGE BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,976; CTA, n = 10,145, Pace, n = 4,447, Metra, n = 10,384

Overall, a majority of riders identified as female (54%), compared to 42% male. Four percent identified as gender non-binary or chose to self-describe. CTA showed the highest share of female riders at 55%, while both Pace and Metra had a more balanced split, with 48% female and about half identifying as male (50% for Pace, 49% for Metra; Figure 19).

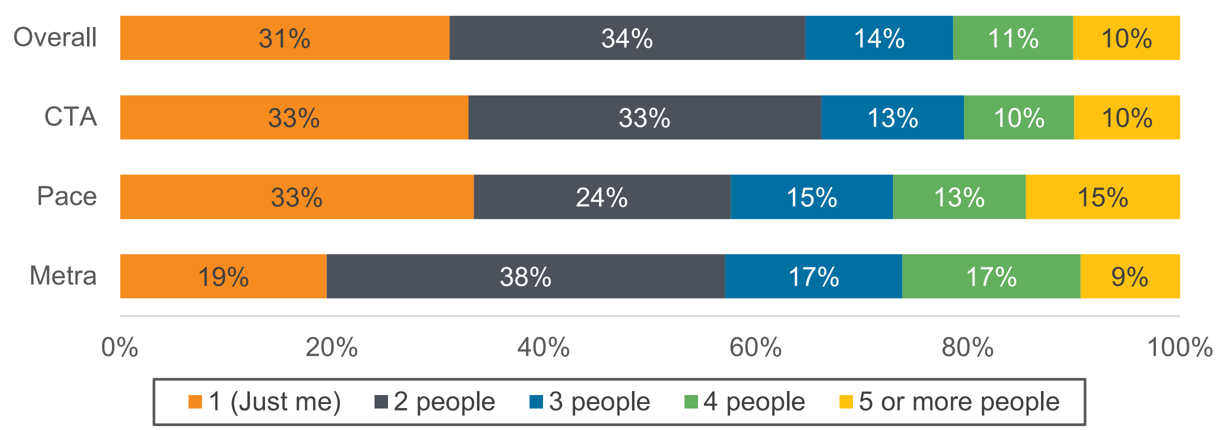
FIGURE 19: GENDER BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,941; CTA, n = 10,121, Pace, n = 4,436, Metra, n = 10,384

Across all Service Boards, the largest share of riders (34%) lives in two-person households, followed by single-person households (31%). The remaining respondents are divided fairly evenly among three-, four-, and five-or-more-person households (14%, 11%, and 10%, respectively). Notably, Metra riders are much less likely to live in single-person households (19%) than CTA or Pace riders (33% each; Figure 20).

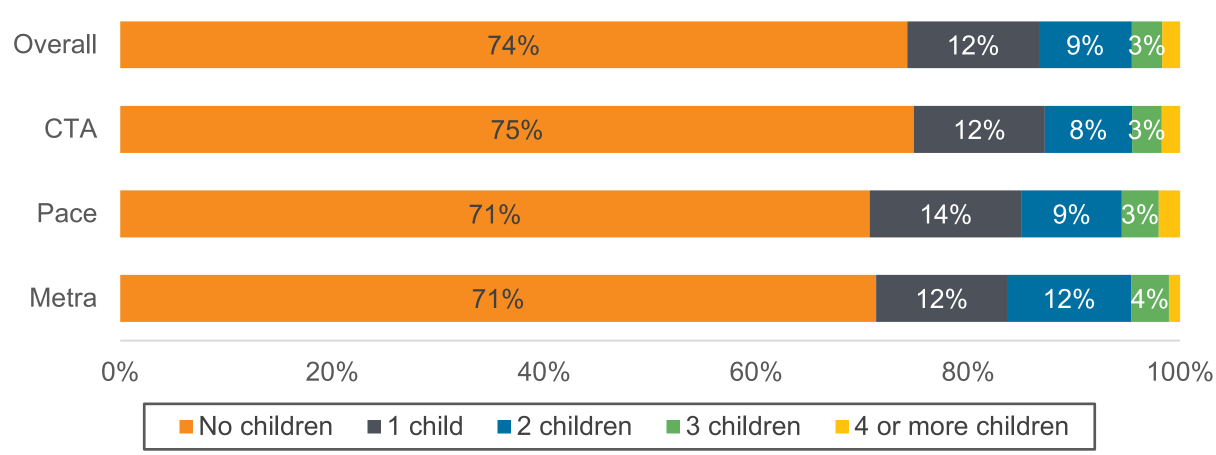
FIGURE 20: HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,499; CTA, n = 10,067, Pace, n = 4,048, Metra, n = 10,384

Most riders among all three Service Boards (74% overall) report having no children. Pace and Metra riders are slightly more likely to report having children in their household than CTA riders (29% for Pace and Metra vs 25% for CTA; Figure 21).

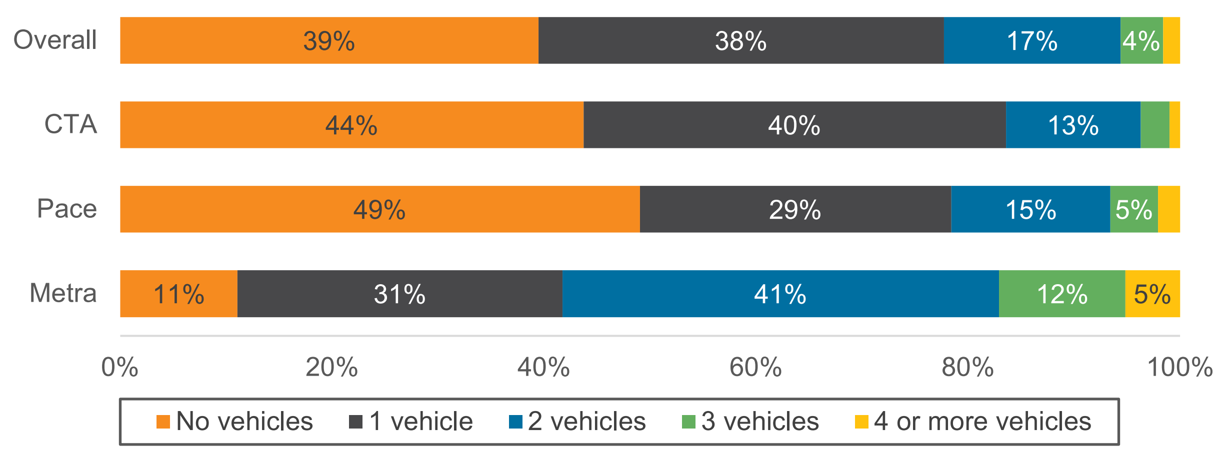
FIGURE 21: NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 23,632; CTA, n = 9,841, Pace, n = 3,407, Metra, n = 10,384

Ownership of multiple cars is most common among Metra riders: 41% report having two cars in their household, while having no cars at all is relatively uncommon (11%). In contrast, CTA and Pace riders are much more likely to live in households without a car (44% for CTA and 49% for Pace). Among those CTA and Pace riders who do own a vehicle, most report having just one (40% and 29%, respectively; Figure 22).

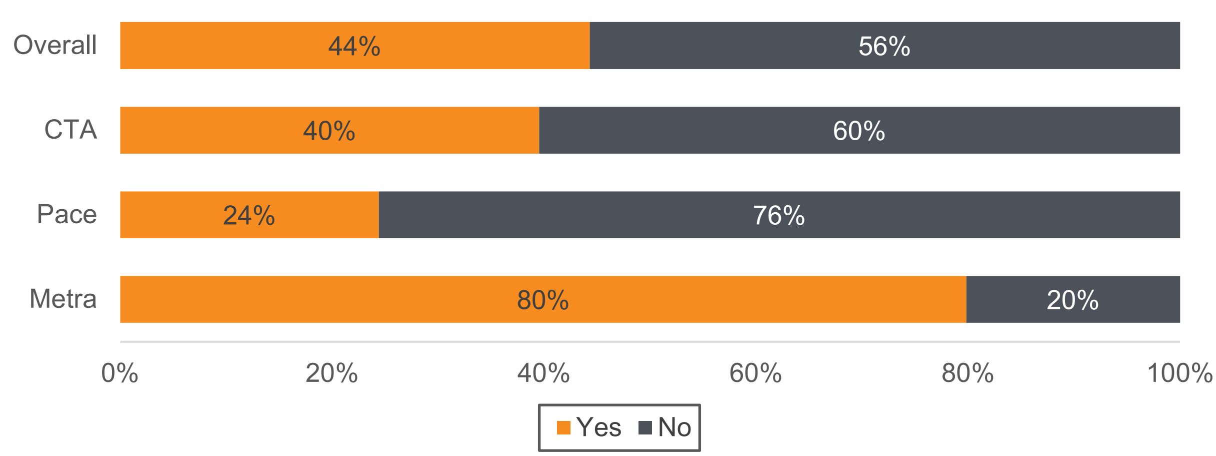
FIGURE 22: NUMBER OF VEHICLES IN HOUSEHOLD BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 23,857; CTA, n = 9,908, Pace, n = 3,565, Metra, n = 10,384

Car availability differs sharply between Metra and the other two Service Boards. Most Metra riders (80%) report having a car available for their typical trip, compared with 40% of CTA riders and 24% of Pace riders (Figure 23).

FIGURE 23: CAR AVAILABILITY BY SERVICE BOARD

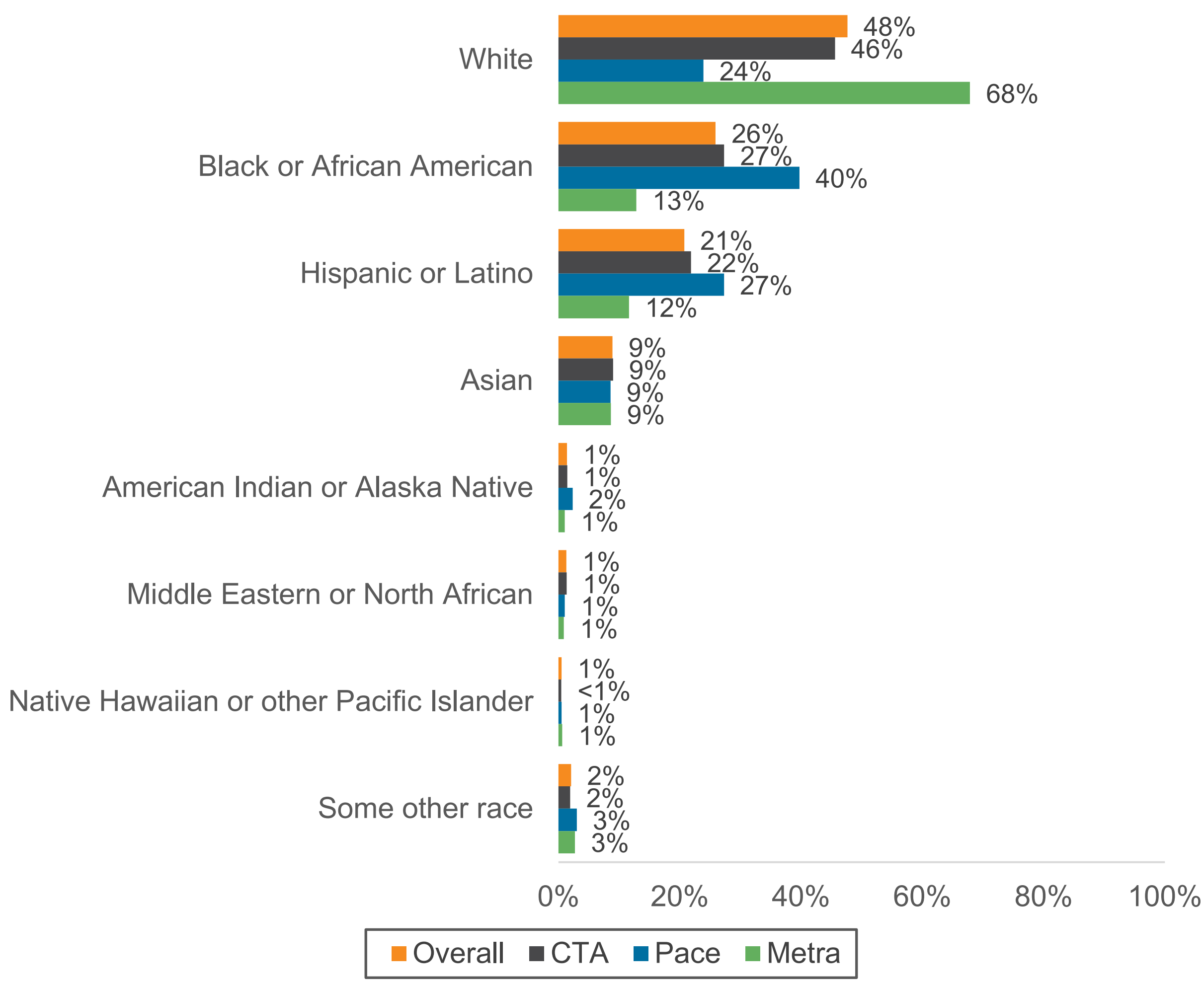


Overall, n = 24,845; CTA, n = 10,115, Pace, n = 4,346, Metra, n = 10,384

Racial and ethnic composition varied across the three Service Boards. Metra riders were predominantly White (68%), compared with 46% of CTA riders and 24% of Pace riders. Black or African American riders made up 40% of Pace's rider base, versus 27% on CTA and 13% on Metra. Hispanic or Latino riders accounted for 27% of Pace riders, 22% of CTA riders, and 12% of Metra riders.

Asian riders represented about 9% of riders across all three Service Boards. Smaller proportions of respondents identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or another race, with each category making up 3% or less of riders systemwide (Figure 24).

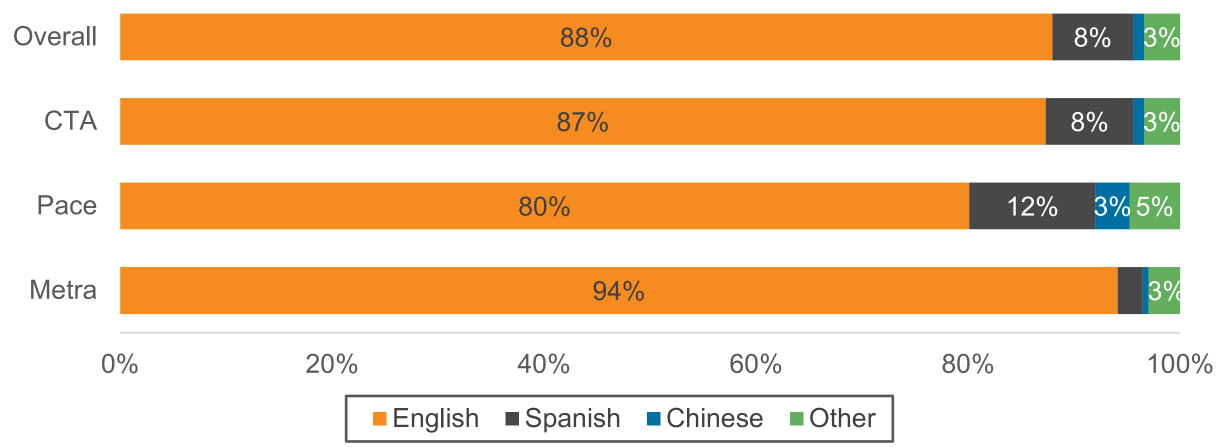
FIGURE 24: RACE AND ETHNICITY BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,532; CTA, n = 10,000, Pace, n = 4,347, Metra, n = 10,185
**Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.*

English is the primary language spoken in the households of riders across all three Service Boards. Metra riders overwhelmingly speak English at home (94%), while Spanish-speaking households account for 12% of Pace ridership and 8% of CTA ridership (Figure 25).

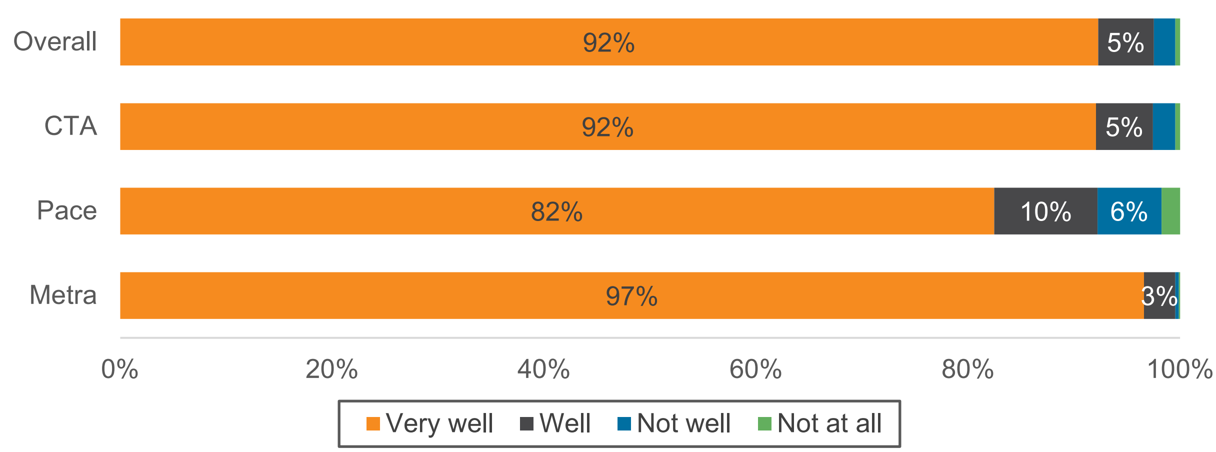
FIGURE 25: PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOUSEHOLD BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,761; CTA, n = 10,096, Pace, n = 4,281, Metra, n = 10,384

Over 90% of riders across all three Service Boards reported speaking English “very well” or “well.” Eight percent of Pace riders reported speaking English “not well” or “not at all,” while almost no Metra riders reported difficulty with English (Figure 26).

FIGURE 26: ENGLISH ABILITY BY SERVICE BOARD

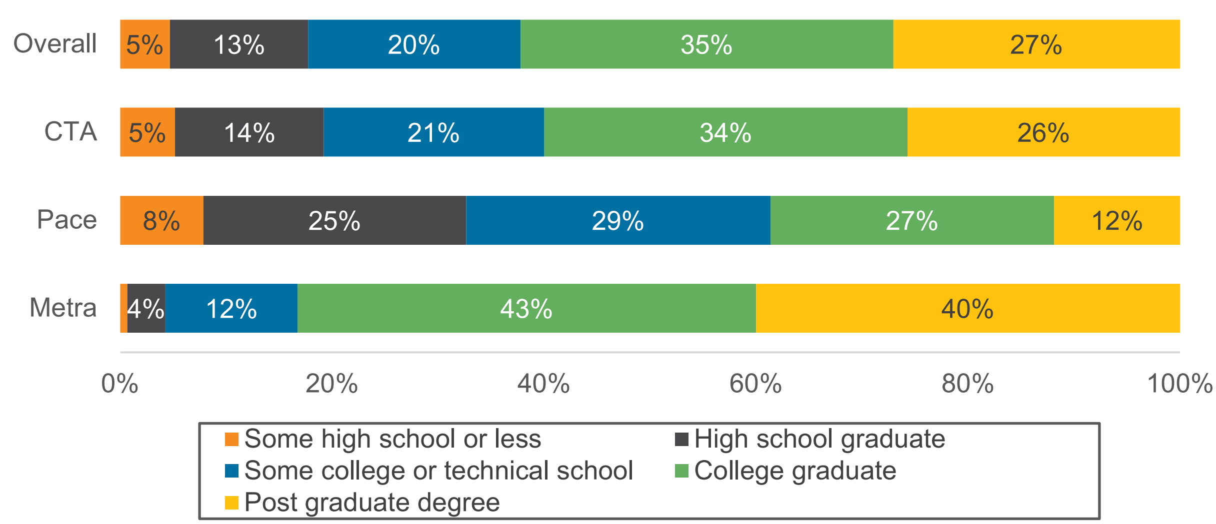


Overall, n = 24,936; CTA, n = 10,136; Pace, n = 4,416; Metra, n = 10,384

Riders across all three Service Boards report relatively high levels of educational attainment. Overall, 62% have completed a college or postgraduate degree (35% and 27%, respectively).

By Service Board, Metra riders stand out, with a majority holding either a college degree (43%) or a postgraduate degree (40%), and only 1% reporting some high school or less. CTA riders closely mirror the overall pattern, with 34% college graduates and 26% holding postgraduate degrees. Pace riders, however, differ somewhat: while 27% are college graduates and 12% hold postgraduate degrees, a larger share report completing some college or technical school (29%) or graduating high school (25%; Figure 27).

FIGURE 27: EDUCATION STATUS BY SERVICE BOARD

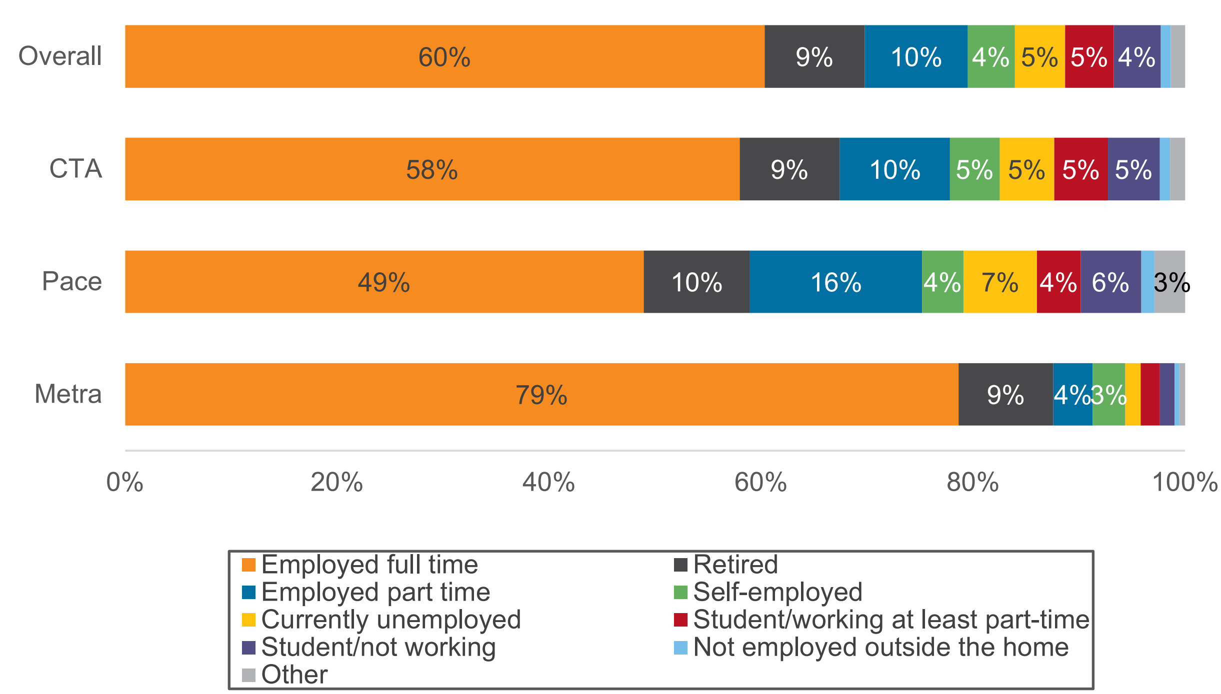


Overall, n = 24,859; CTA, n = 10,128; Pace, n = 4,347; Metra, n = 10,384

Most riders across all Service Boards are employed full time (60% overall). This trend is especially pronounced among Metra riders, nearly four out of five of whom (79%) report full-time employment. CTA riders align closely with the overall average, with 58% employed full time. Pace riders, by contrast, are less likely to be employed full time (49%) and more likely to work part time (16%).

Retirement rates are similar across Service Boards, with 10% of Pace riders and 9% of both CTA and Metra riders reporting retirement. Smaller shares of riders identify as self-employed (3% to 5%), currently unemployed (1% to 7%; Figure 28).

FIGURE 28: EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY SERVICE BOARD

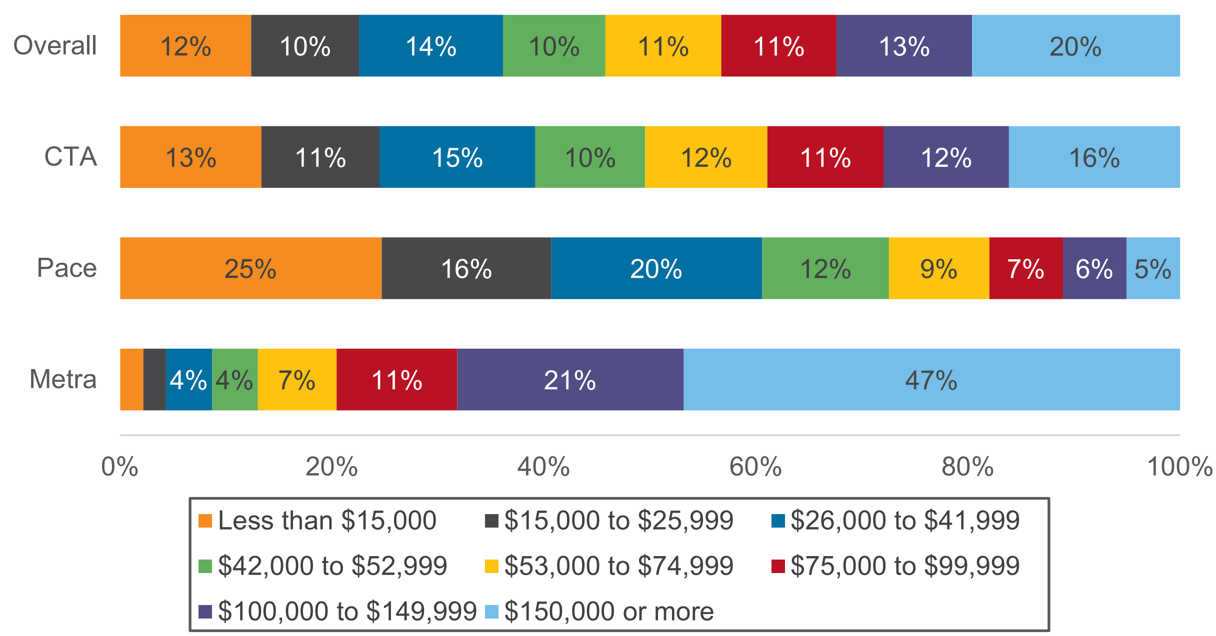


Overall, n = 24,886; CTA, n = 10,113; Pace, n = 4,389; Metra, n = 10,384

Household income distribution varied substantially across the three Service Boards. Metra riders skewed higher income, with 47% reporting annual household incomes of $150,000 or more and another 21% between $100,000 and $149,999. In contrast, Pace riders were more concentrated at lower income levels, with 25% reporting less than $15,000 and 16% between $15,000 and $25,999. CTA riders were more evenly distributed across income ranges.

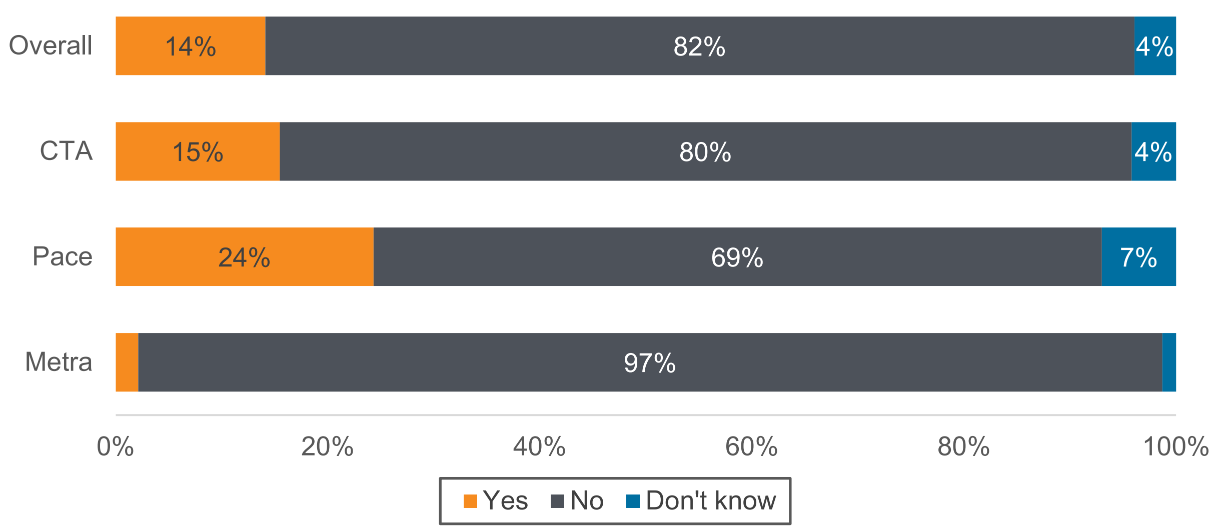
Overall, the results highlight a clear distinction: Metra serves a comparatively more affluent rider base, Pace serves riders with lower household incomes, and CTA falls in between with a broad mix of income levels (Figure 29).

FIGURE 29: HOUSEHOLD INCOME



The 2025 survey introduced a new question on whether households receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits. Among Pace riders, nearly one-quarter (24%) reported that their household received SNAP benefits, compared with 15% of CTA riders. By contrast, receipt of SNAP benefits was uncommon among Metra riders, with 97% indicating their household did not receive them (Figure 30).

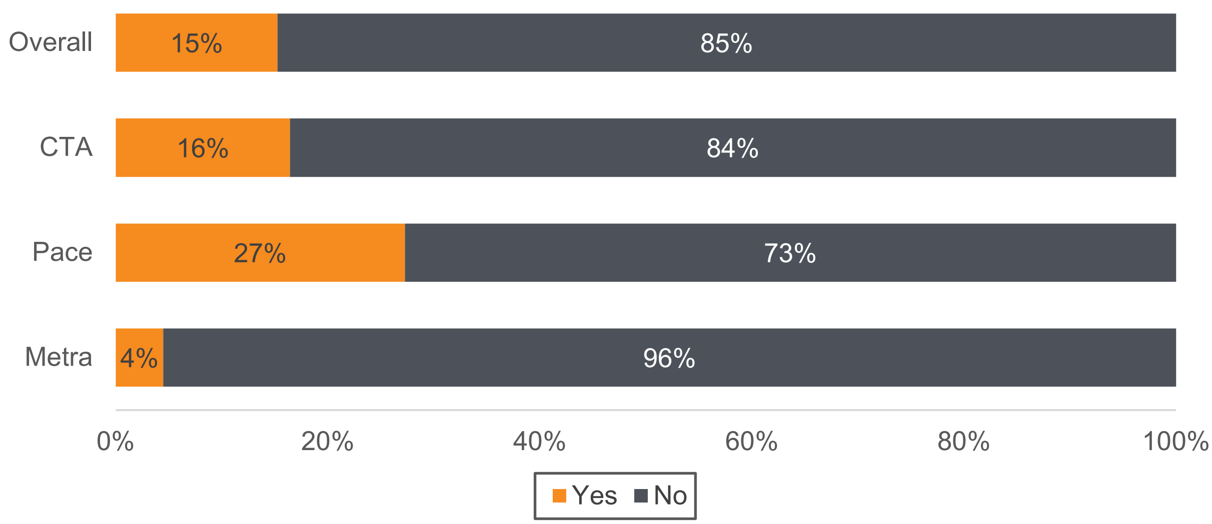
FIGURE 30: SNAP BENEFITS BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 23,161; CTA, n = 9,670; Pace, n = 4,016; Metra, n = 9,475

Across all Service Boards, 15% of riders reported having a disability, though the percentages varied substantially. Rates were higher among Pace riders (27%) and CTA riders (16%), while only 4% of Metra riders reported a disability (Figure 31).

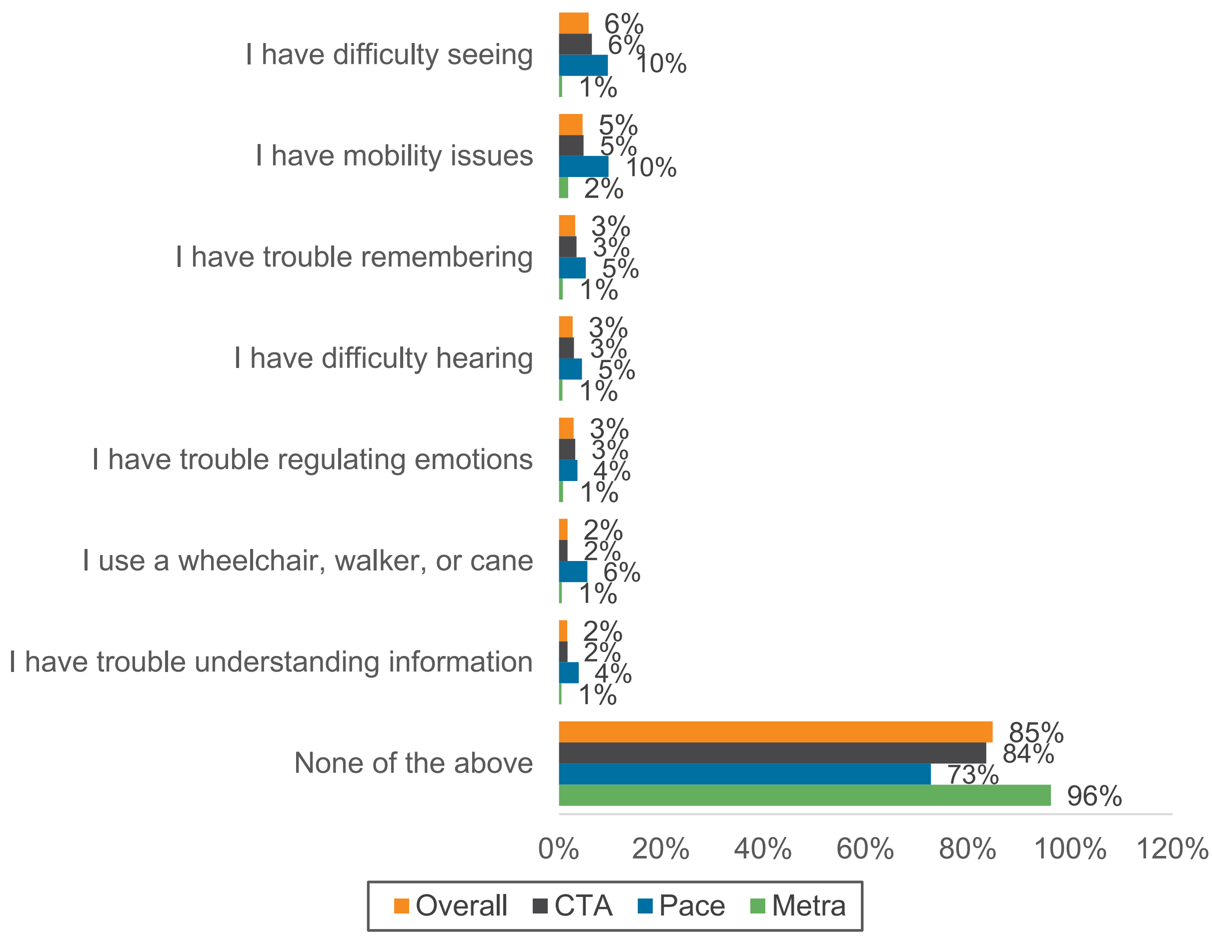
FIGURE 31: DISABILITY STATUS BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,651; CTA, n = 9,950; Pace, n = 4,327; Metra, n = 10,374

The two most common types of disability overall are difficulty seeing (6%) and mobility issues (5%). Among Pace riders, 10% reported having either or both of these types of disabilities. For comparison, 6% of CTA riders and 1% of Metra riders reported difficulty seeing, while 5% of CTA riders and 2% of Metra riders reported mobility issues (Figure 32).

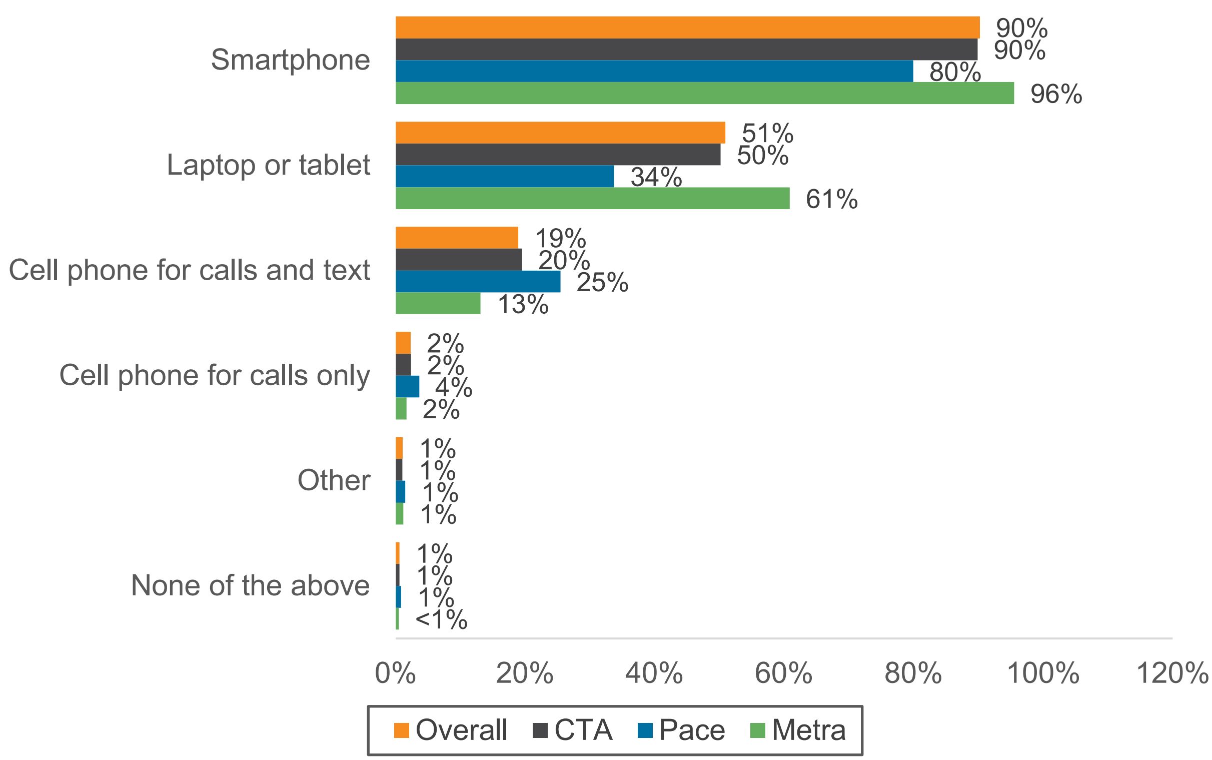
FIGURE 32: DISABILITY TYPE



Overall, n = 24,582; CTA, n = 9,950, Pace, n = 4,327, Metra, n = 10,305
**Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.*

Smartphone usage is widespread among riders of all three Service Boards; however, a 16 percentage point gap exists between Pace riders (80%) and Metra riders (96%). The difference in laptop or tablet usage is even larger, with 34% of Pace riders reporting use compared with 61% of Metra riders. Cell phones used only for calling and texting are less common than laptops among all three Service Boards, and cell phones used exclusively for calls are rare (Figure 33).

FIGURE 33: USE OF MOBILE DEVICES BY SERVICE BOARD



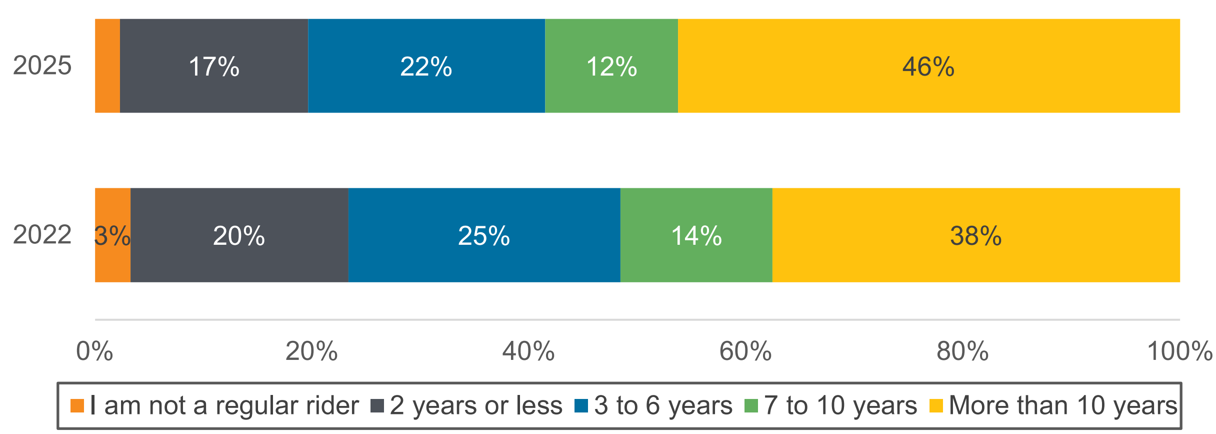
Overall, n = 24,953; CTA, n = 10,133; Pace, n = 4,436; Metra, n = 10,384
**Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.*

4.2 TRAVEL BEHAVIOR

Travel Behavior by Year

Between 2022 and 2025, the proportion of riders with more than ten years of experience riding their respective Service Board rose by 8 percentage points, from 38% in 2022 to 46% in 2025. This could indicate that regular riders have resumed their travel routines after disruptions from COVID-19. Over the same period, riders with three to six years of tenure declined by 3 percentage points, from 25% to 22%. Other tenure categories shifted slightly, by 2 points or less (Figure 34).

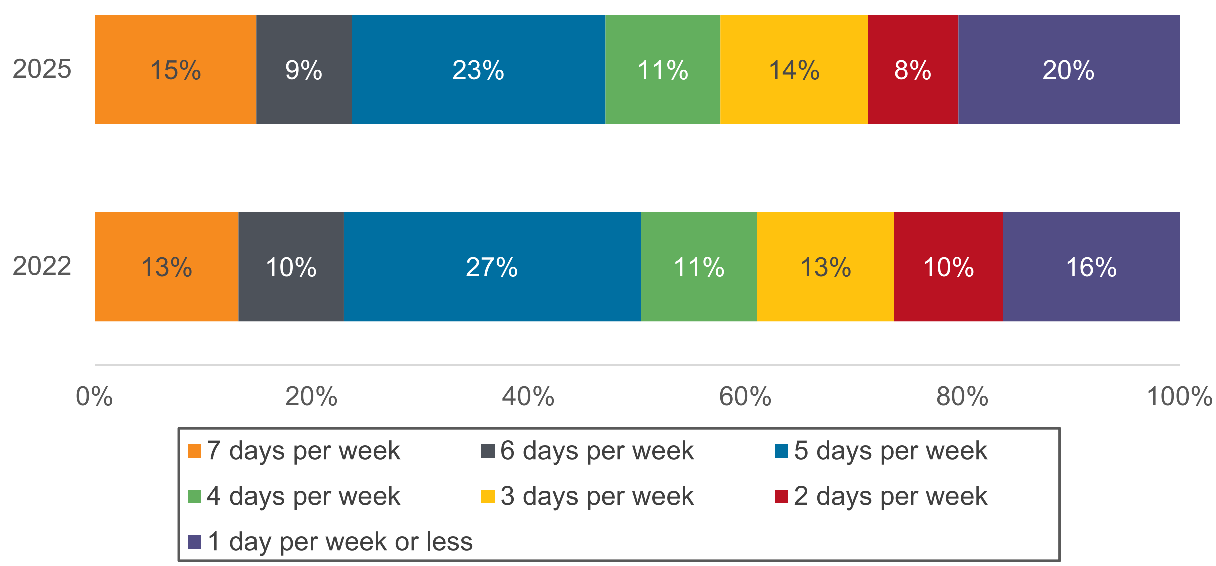
FIGURE 34: REGULAR RIDER DURATION BY YEAR



Overall, n = 42,278; 2025, n = 25,401; 2022, n = 16,877

Compared with 2022, the 2025 results show a modest shift in how often riders use transit. The share riding five days per week declined by 4 percentage points (from 27% in 2022 to 23% in 2025), while the share riding one day per week or less increased by 4 points (from 16% in 2022 to 20% in 2025). Daily riders (seven days per week) also edged up slightly, from 13% in 2022 to 15% in 2025. Other frequency categories changed little, shifting by one or two points (Figure 35).

FIGURE 35: FREQUENCY OF USE BY YEAR



Overall, n = 42,459; 2025, n = 25,552; 2022, n = 16,907

Fare Payment

Fare type distributions were largely unchanged between 2022 and 2025. In both years, 78% of riders reported paying full fare. The share of riders paying a reduced fare declined slightly, from 20% to 18%, while the share riding for free increased from 2% to 4% (Figure 36).

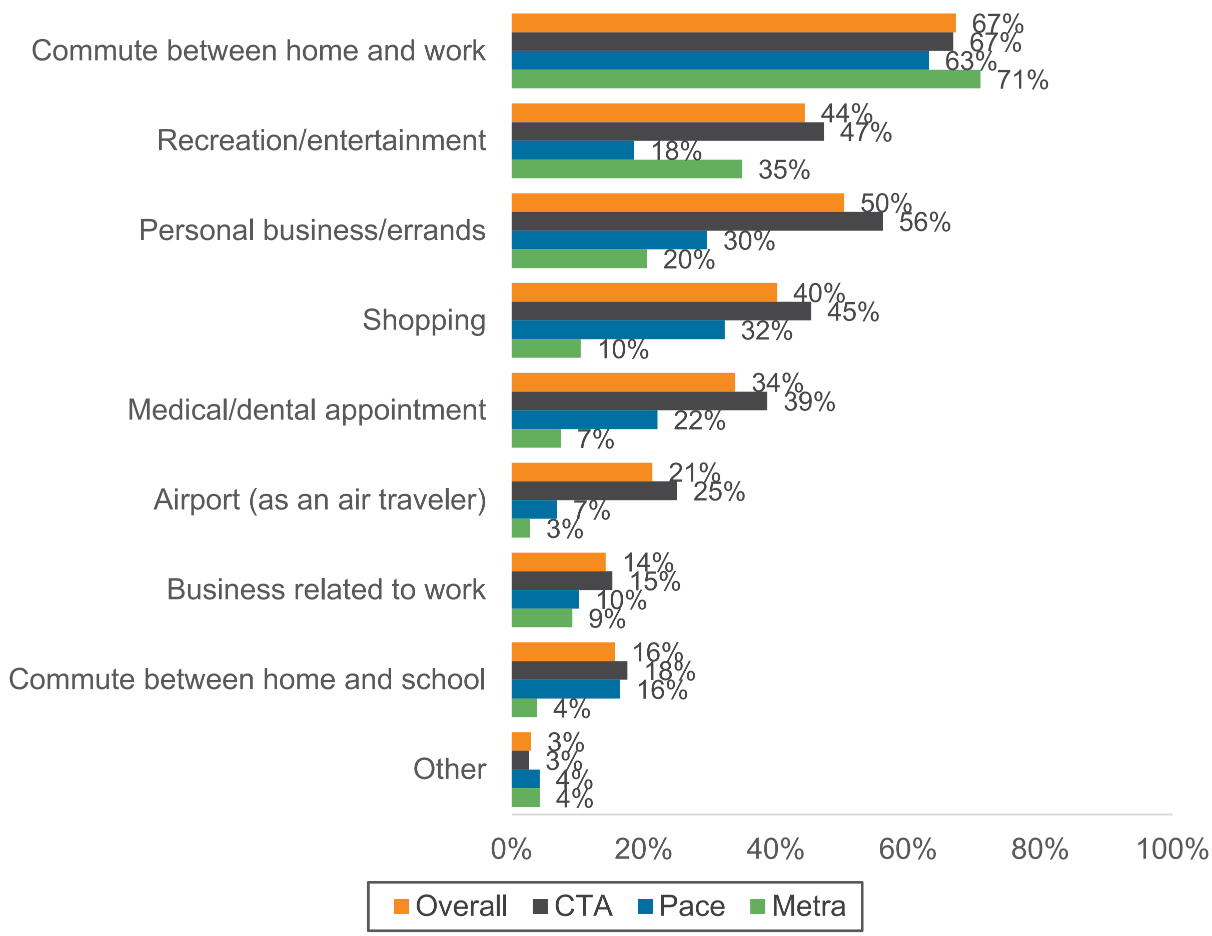
FIGURE 36: FARE LEVEL BY YEAR

Overall, n = 39,877; 2025, n = 24,821; 2022, n = 15,056

2025 Travel Behavior by Service Board

Work commutes were the most common trip purpose across all Service Boards, reported by 71% of Metra riders, 67% of CTA riders, and 63% of Pace riders. CTA riders were the most likely to report traveling for personal business or errands (56%), while shopping (45%) and recreation or entertainment (47%) were also frequent purposes. Pace riders reported relatively high use for medical or dental appointments (22%) and school commutes (18%). Beyond commuting, Metra riders most often used transit for recreation or entertainment (35%). While commuting to work remained the dominant purpose across all three Service Boards, differences emerged: CTA showed broader use for errands and recreation, Pace for school and medical needs, and Metra for work-related travel (Figure 37).

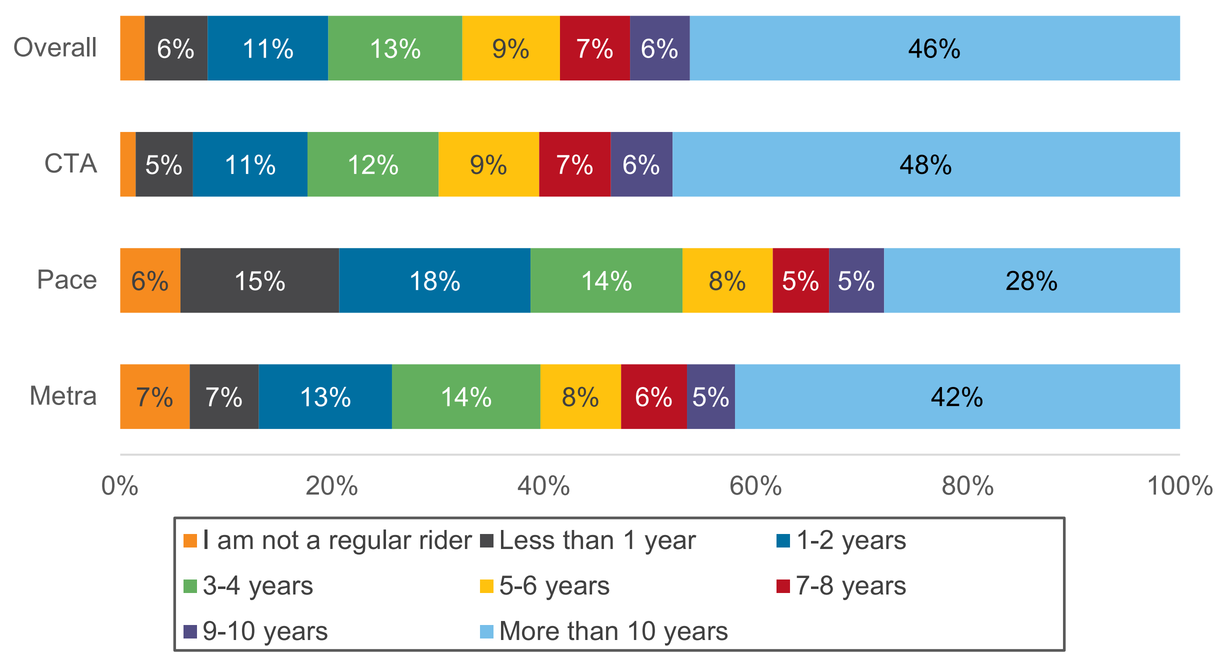
FIGURE 37: PURPOSE(S) BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 25,562; CTA, n = 10,202; Pace, n = 4,976; Metra, n = 10,384

Pace riders generally reported shorter tenure on their system than riders of either CTA or Metra. Nearly one in five Pace riders (21%) have been using Pace for less than a year or are not a regular rider, compared with 14% of Metra riders and 6% of CTA riders. Conversely, long-term riders are more common on CTA and Metra: 48% of CTA riders and 42% of Metra riders have used their respective services for more than ten years, compared with 28% of Pace riders (Figure 38).

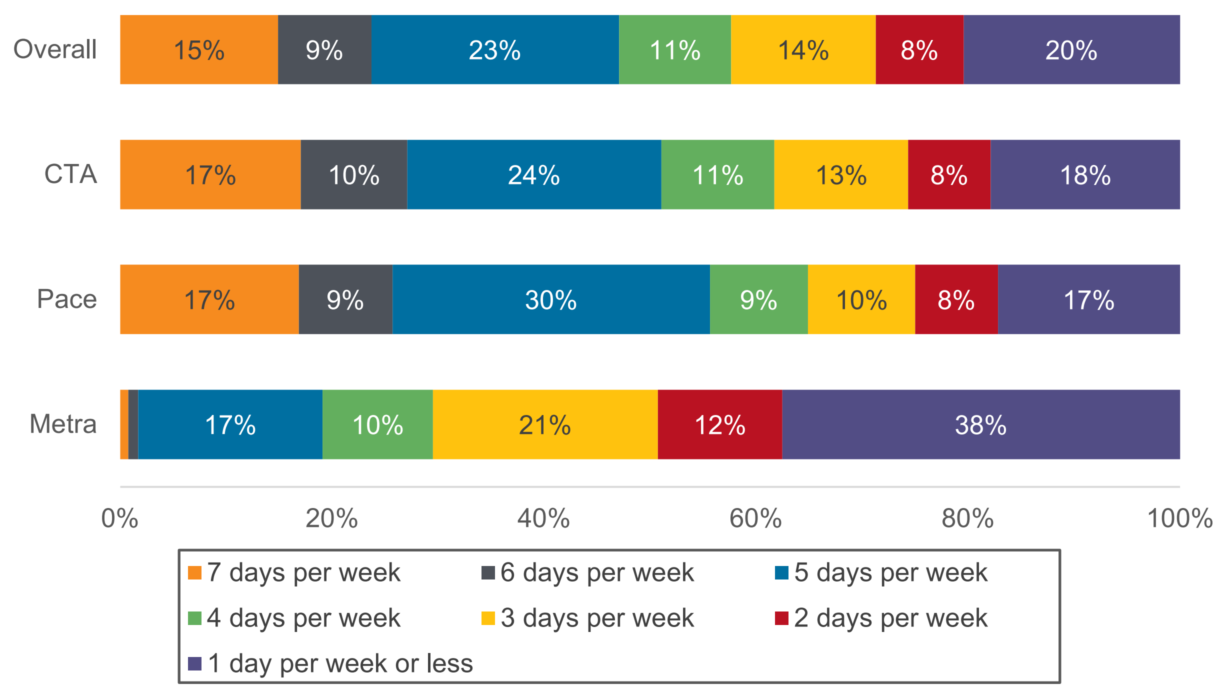
FIGURE 38: REGULAR RIDER DURATION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 25,401; CTA, n = 10,196; Pace, n = 4,821; Metra, n = 10,384

A plurality of Metra riders (38%) report using Metra only once a week or less, compared with 17% of Pace riders and 18% of CTA riders. In contrast, frequent use is more common on Pace and CTA: 56% of Pace riders and 51% of CTA riders use their respective services five or more days per week, compared with only 19% of Metra riders (Figure 39).

FIGURE 39: FREQUENCY OF USE BY SERVICE BOARD

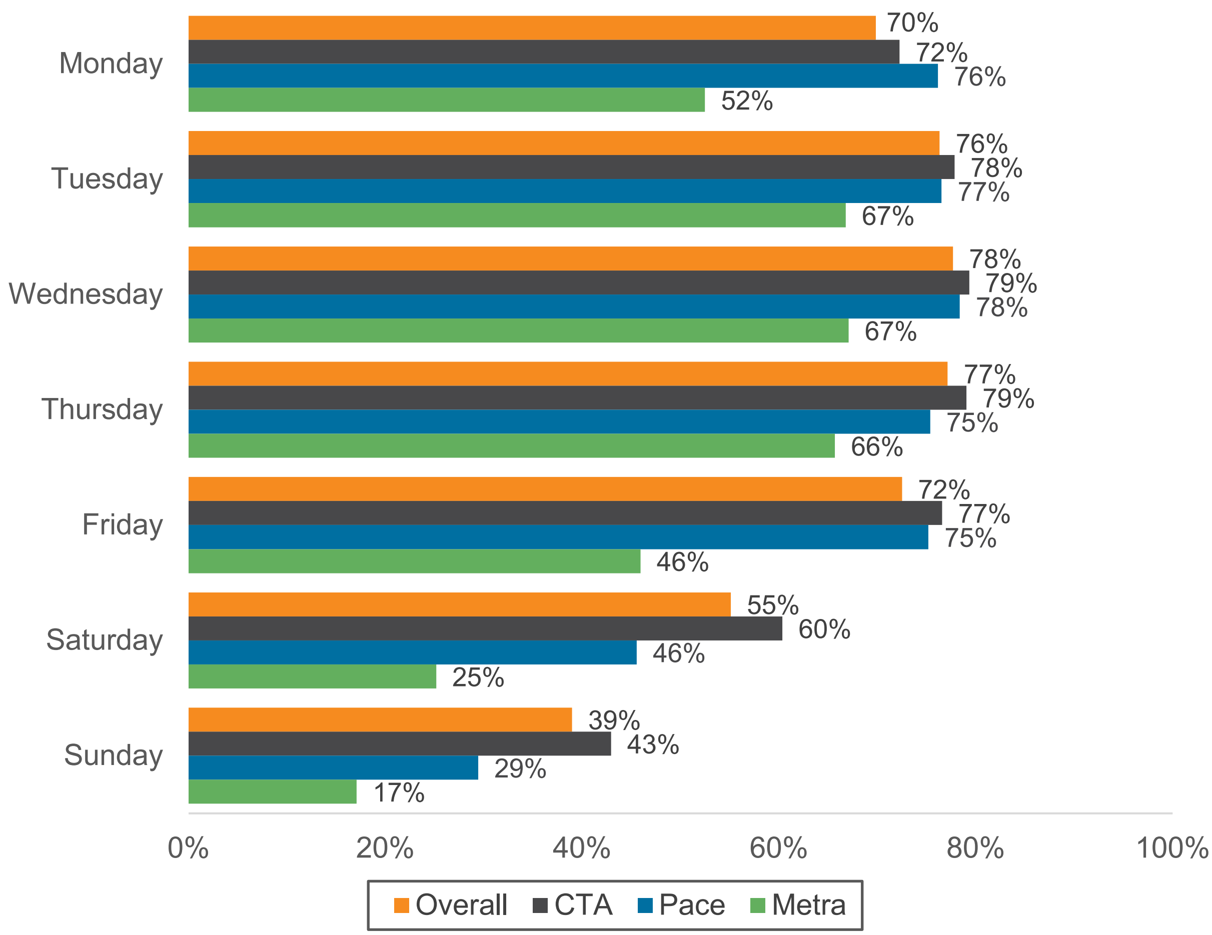


Overall, n = 25,552; CTA, n = 10,181; Pace, n = 4,987; Metra, n = 10,384

CTA and Pace ridership remains fairly steady throughout the work week, with 72% to 79% of CTA riders and 75% to 78% of Pace riders traveling Monday through Thursday. In contrast, Metra ridership peaks midweek, with 66% to 67% of riders using the service on Tuesday through Thursday, compared with 52% on Monday and just 46% on Friday -- a pattern likely reflecting the broader shift to hybrid work schedules among office workers.

Weekend ridership is notably stronger on CTA than on Pace or Metra. On Saturdays, 60% of CTA riders use the service, compared with 46% of Pace riders and 25% of Metra riders. On Sundays, 43% of CTA riders continue to ride, compared with 29% of Pace riders and 17% of Metra riders (Figure 40).

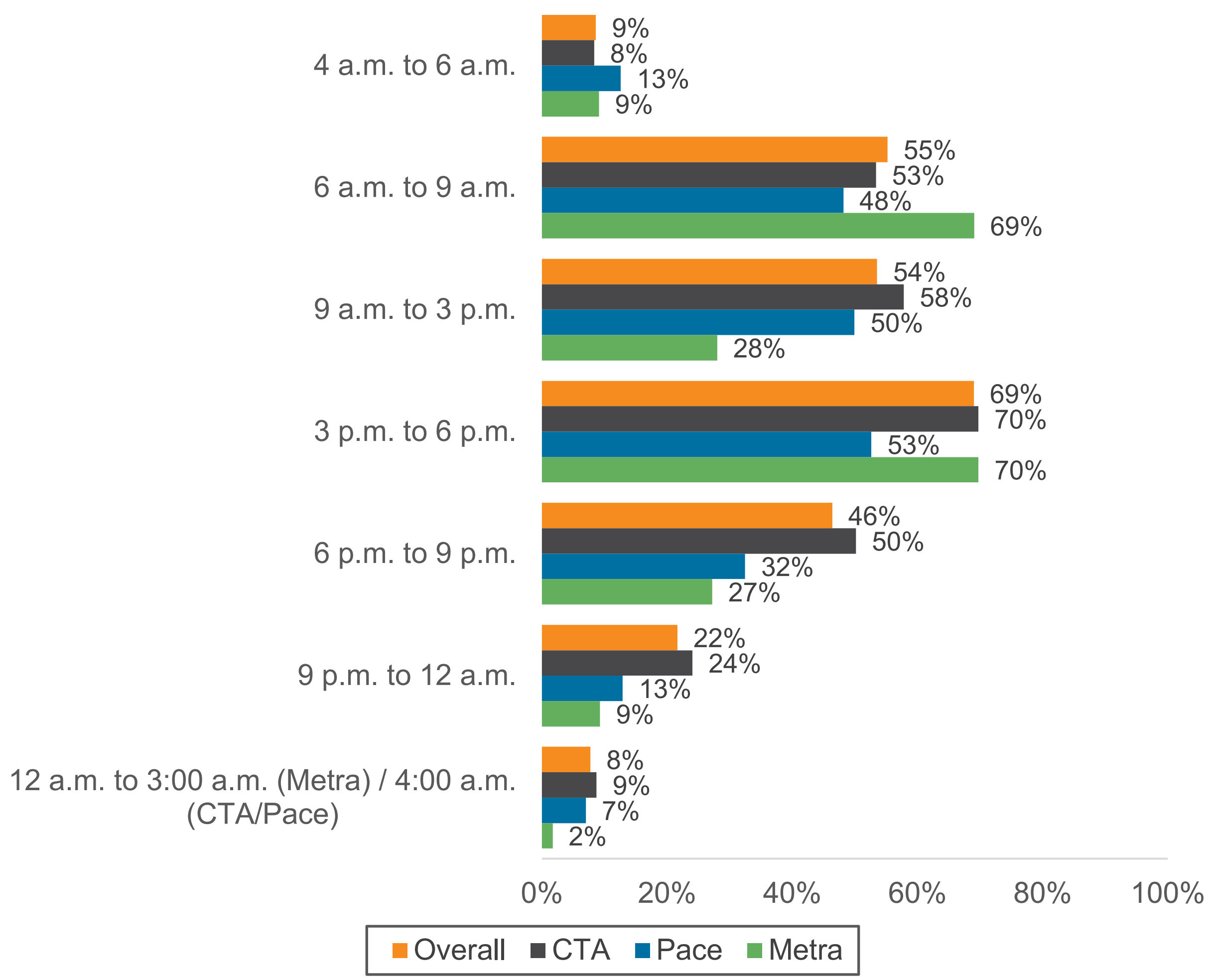
FIGURE 40: DAYS USED



Overall, n = 25,355; CTA, n = 10,194; Pace, n = 4,777; Metra, n = 10,384
Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.

Metra use is particularly strong during traditional rush-hour periods, with reported ridership peaking in the morning (6 a.m. to 9 a.m.) and evening (3 p.m. to 6 p.m.) rush hours. CTA riders reported a greater likelihood of riding during the evening rush but showed no comparable increase in the morning and no sharp decline across the broader 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. period. Pace riders reported relatively consistent likelihood of riding throughout the 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. period (Figure 41).

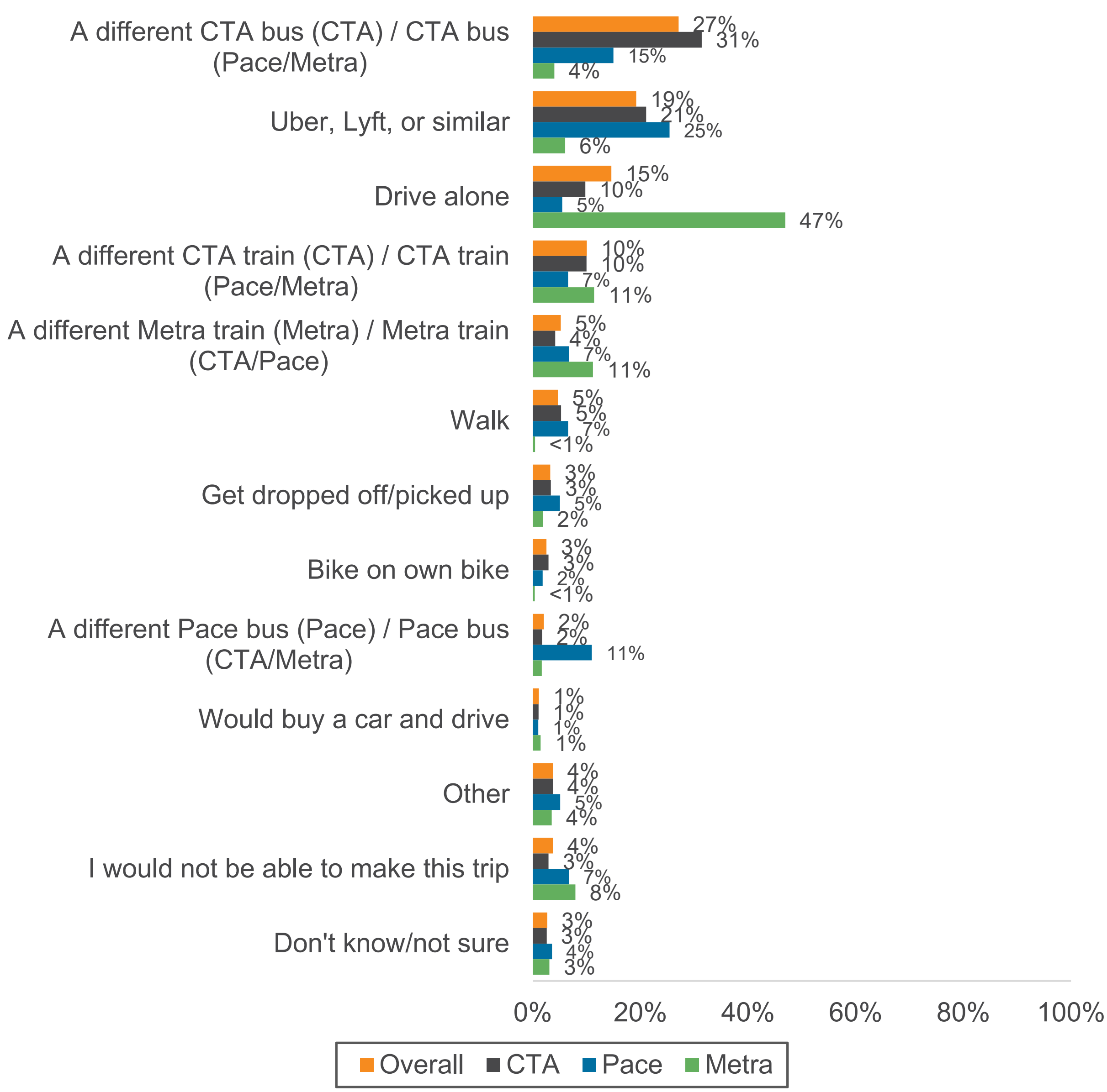
FIGURE 41: TIMES USED



Overall, n = 25,366; CTA, n =10,192; Pace, n = 4,790; Metra, n = 10,384
**Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.*

Metra riders were most likely to say they would switch to driving if their current train was unavailable, with 47% indicating this choice. In contrast, CTA and Pace riders were more inclined to remain on public transit or turn to rideshare options. Among CTA riders, 31% said they would take another CTA bus and 21% would use Uber, Lyft, or a similar service. For Pace riders, 25% would opt for rideshare and 15% would switch to a CTA bus (Figure 42).

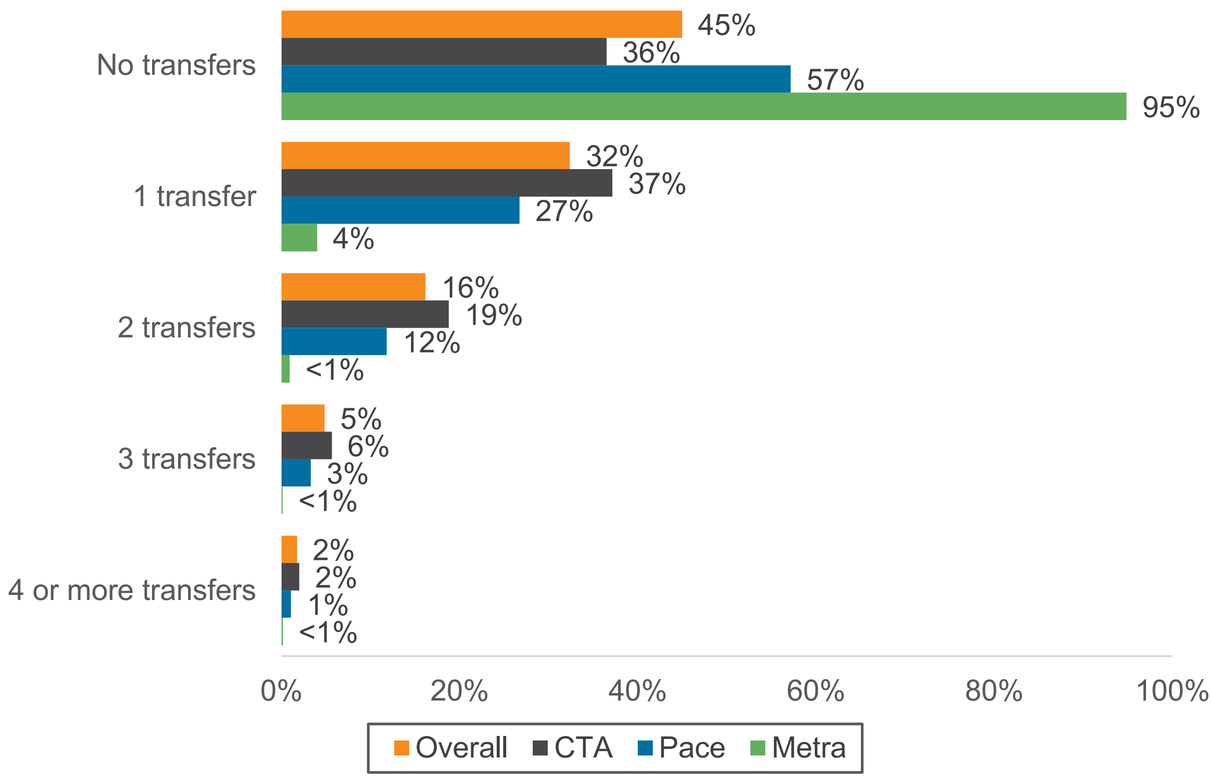
FIGURE 42: ALTERNATIVE MODE



Overall, n = 24,438; CTA, n = 9,953; Pace, n = 4,101; Metra, n = 10,384

Most riders reported making no transfers on their trip, though the likelihood varied by service board. Nearly all Metra riders (95%) traveled without transferring, compared to 57% of Pace riders and 36% of CTA riders. Among CTA riders, 37% made one transfer and 19% made two, while smaller shares reported three (6%) or four or more transfers (2%). Pace riders were less likely to transfer in comparison to CTA, with 27% making one transfer and 12% making two transfers (Figure 43).

FIGURE 43: NUMBER OF TRANSFERS BETWEEN ROUTES BY SERVICE BOARD

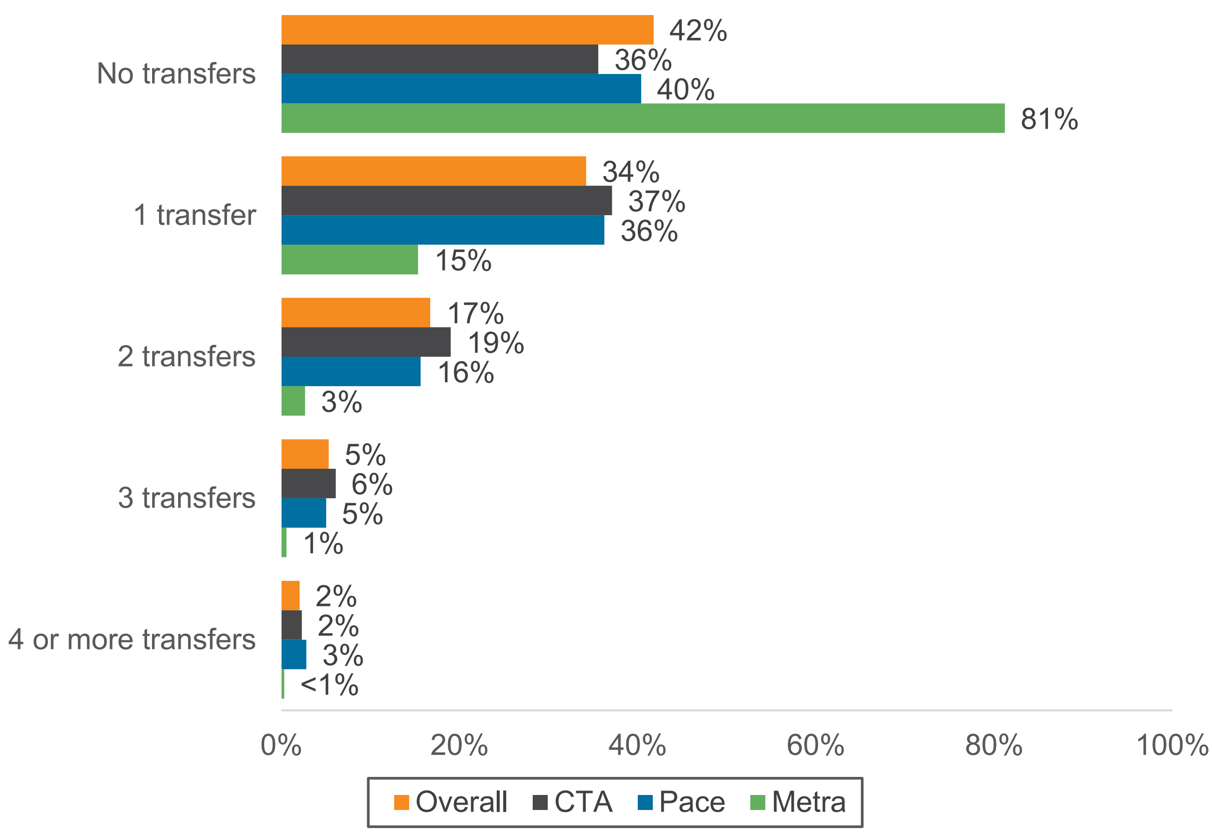


Overall, n = 24,643; CTA, n = 10,182; Pace, n = 4,077; Metra, n = 10,384

Overall, 42% of respondents reported making no transfers, while 34% made one transfer. Among Service Boards, Metra riders were the most likely to complete their trips without transferring (81%), reflecting its point-to-point, commuter-oriented service pattern. In contrast, CTA and Pace riders were more likely to make one transfers, 37% and 36%, respectively, with about one in five (19% CTA, 16% Pace) reporting two transfers. A small proportion of riders (5–6%) made three transfers, and very few made four or more (Figure 44).

These results should be interpreted with caution, as Pace access and egress questions allowed multiple responses. This means Pace riders could record additional transfers on either end of their trip, potentially up to two more than CTA or Metra riders, resulting in slightly higher reported transfer counts.

FIGURE 44: NUMBER OF TRANSFERS (BOTH INTRA AND INTER SERVICE BOARD)

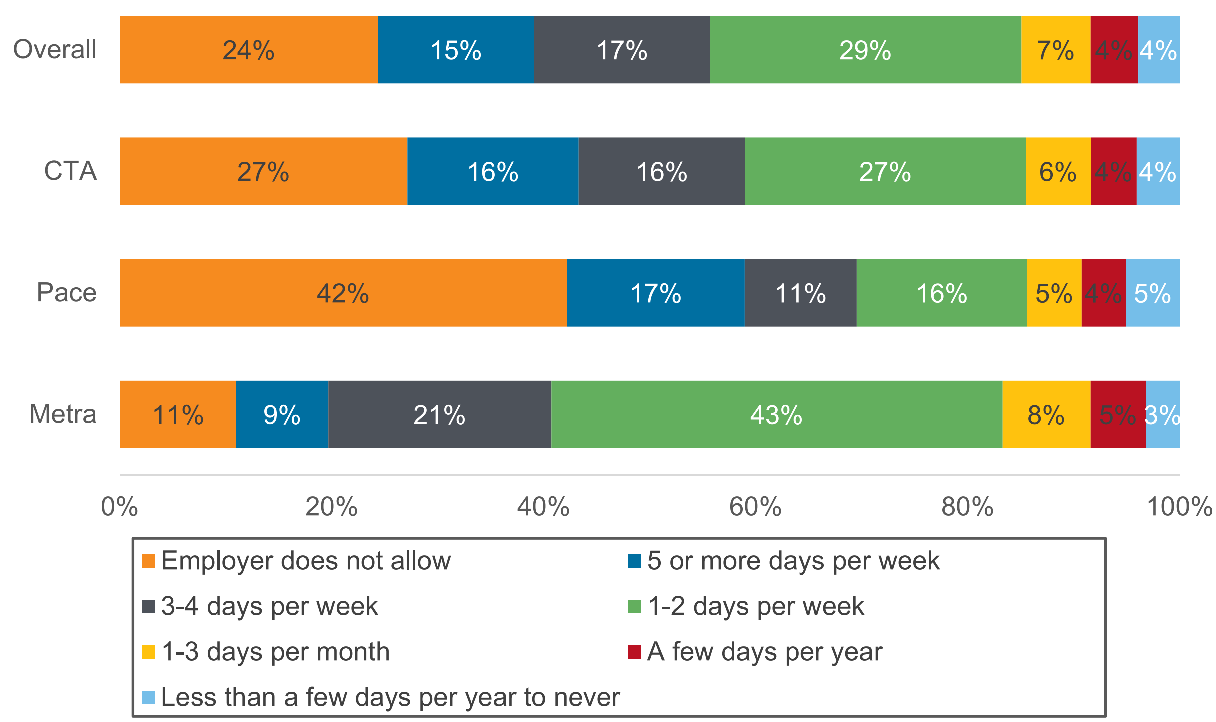


Overall, n = 24,643; CTA, n = 10,182; Pace, n = 4,077; Metra, n = 10,384
**Note: Transfer counts were calculated by combining all intra-agency transfers with any access or egress connections involving another Service Board. For Pace riders, the access and egress questions allowed multiple selections, meaning their total number of transfers could increase by up to two on either the access or egress side—compared to a maximum of one for CTA or Metra riders. Interpret with caution.*

Telecommute and Transit Benefits

Telecommuting patterns among full time employees varied significantly across service boards. Metra riders were the most likely to telecommute, with 43% working from home one to two days per week and another 21% telecommuting three to four days per week. By contrast, 16% of Pace riders telecommuted one to two days per week and 11% three to four days, while 42% reported their employer does not allow telecommuting. CTA riders fell in between, with 27% telecommuting one to two days per week and 16% three to four days, though 27% said their employer does not allow it (Figure 45).

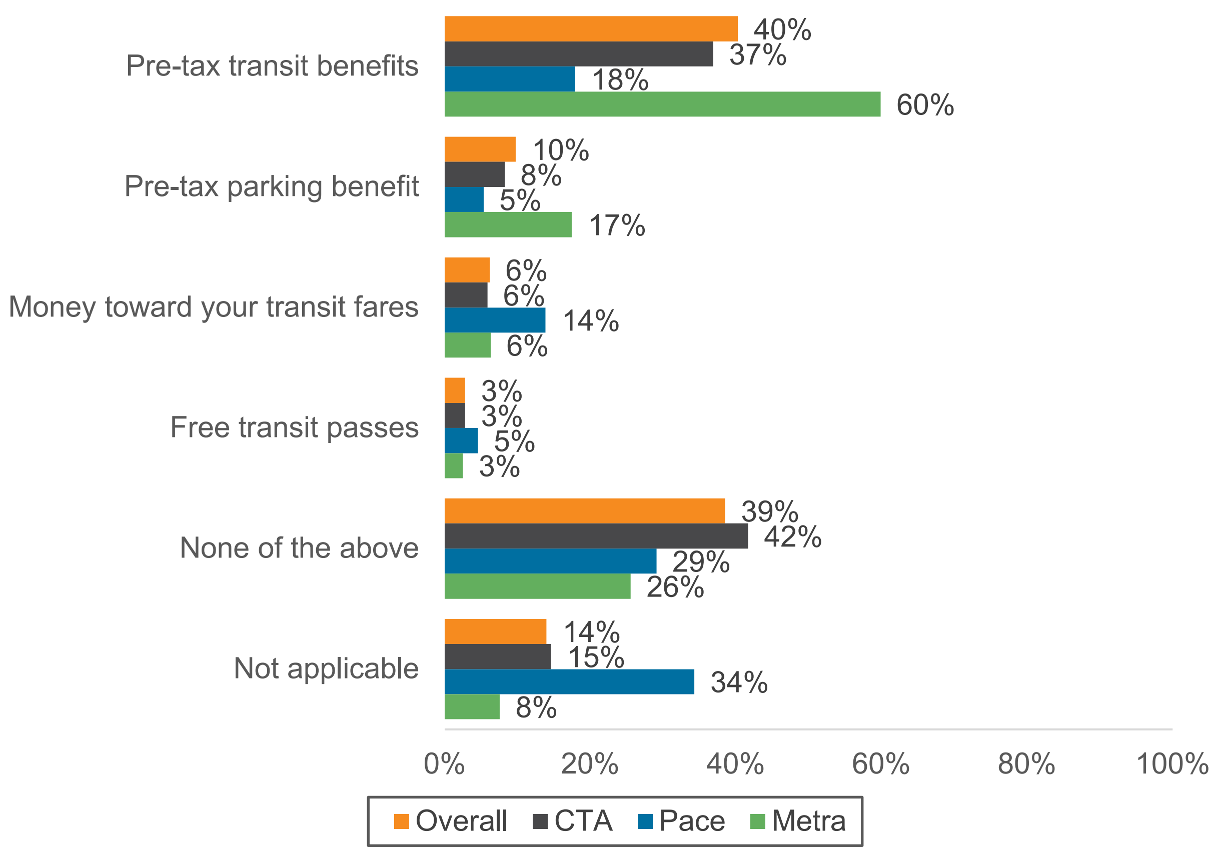
FIGURE 45: FREQUENCY OF TELECOMMUTING AMONG FULL TIME EMPLOYED RIDERS BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 14,255; CTA, n = 4,904; Pace, n = 1,613; Metra, n = 7,738

Pre-tax transit benefits were the most common benefit overall, reported by 40% of full time employed riders. This was particularly prevalent among Metra riders (60%), compared to 37% of CTA riders and 18% of Pace riders. Pre-tax parking benefits were most frequently reported by Metra riders (17%), while 5–8% of CTA and Pace riders received this benefit (Figure 46).

FIGURE 46: TRANSIT BENEFITS AMONG FULL TIME EMPLOYED RIDERS BY SERVICE BOARD

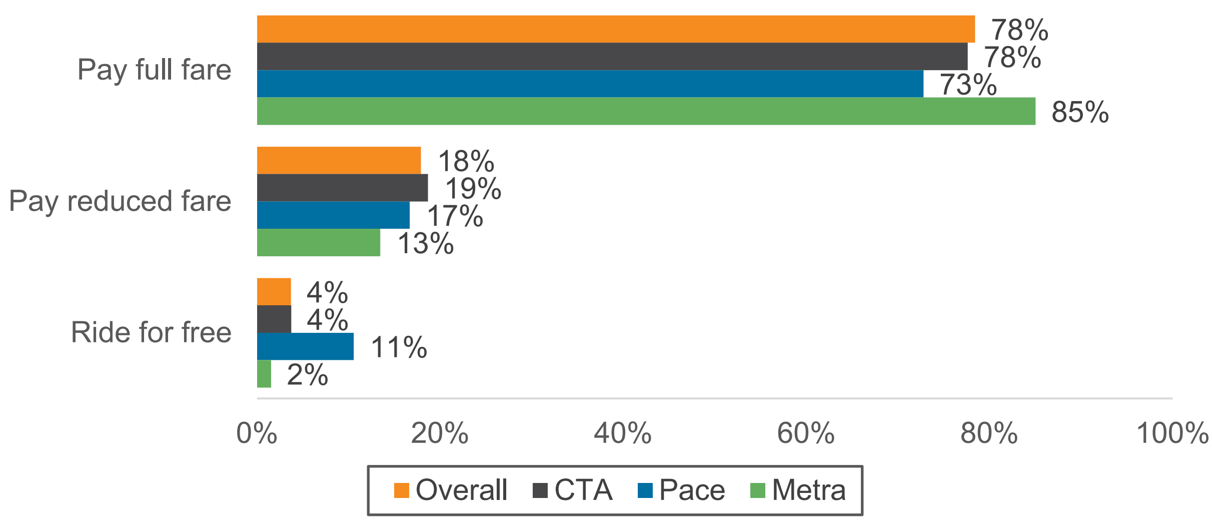


Overall, n = 16,378; CTA, n = 6,034; Pace, n = 2,166; Metra, n = 8,178
**Note: Respondents could select all options that applied.*

Fare Payment

The majority of riders across all three Service Boards paid full fare for their passes. Metra riders were most likely to pay full fare (85%), while Pace riders were the least likely to pay full fare (73%). Conversely, Pace riders were far more likely to ride for free (11%), while Metra riders were the least likely to ride for free (2%; Figure 47).

FIGURE 47: FARE LEVEL BY SERVICE BOARD



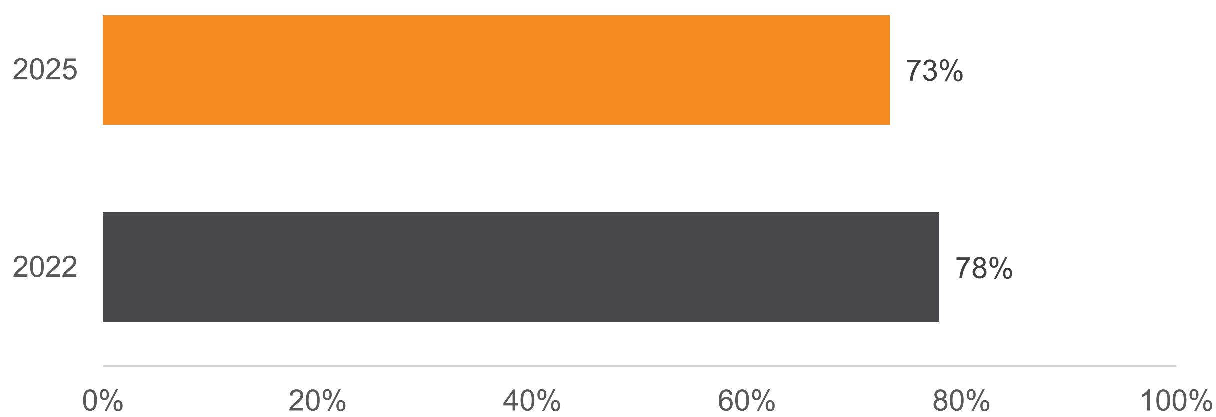
Overall, n = 24,821; CTA, n = 10,076; Pace, n = 4,361; Metra, n = 10,384

4.3 SATISFACTION

Satisfaction by Year

Overall satisfaction across the three Service Boards declined from 78% in 2022 to 73% in 2025 (Figure 48).

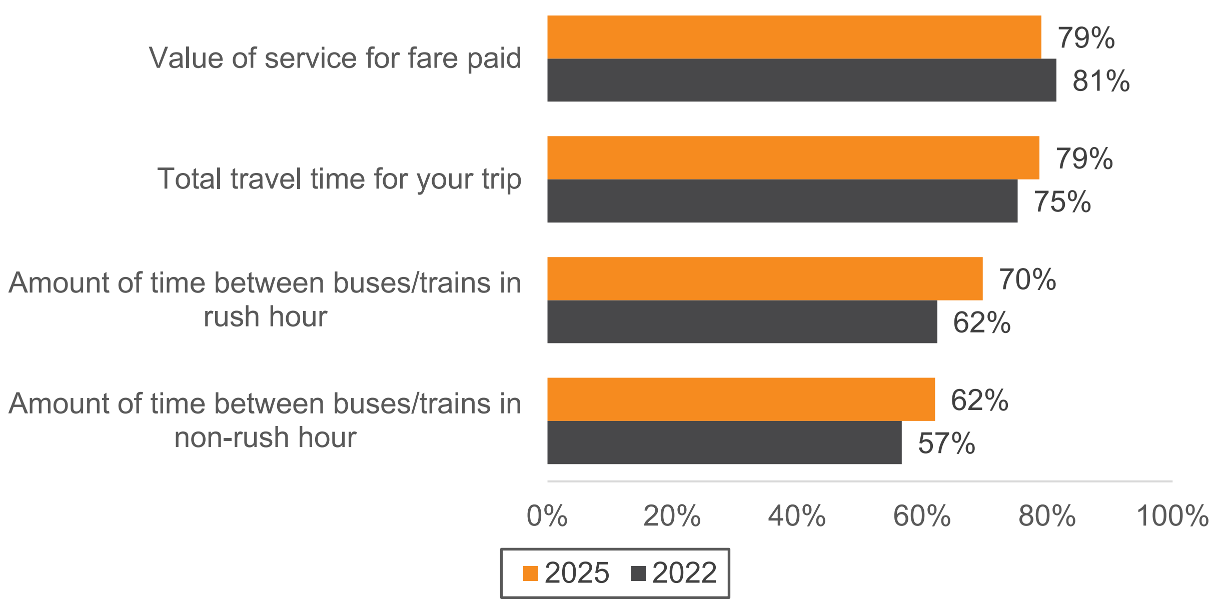
FIGURE 48: OVERALL SATISFACTION BY YEAR



Overall, n = 40,621; 2025, n = 24,450; 2022, n = 16,171

Between 2022 and 2025, satisfaction with the amount of time between buses and trains increased notably, rising 8 percentage points during rush hour (62% to 70%) and 5 percentage points during non-rush hours (57% to 62%). Satisfaction with total travel time also improved, from 75% to 79%. In contrast, satisfaction with value for fare paid declined by 2 percentage points, from 81% to 79% (Figure 49).

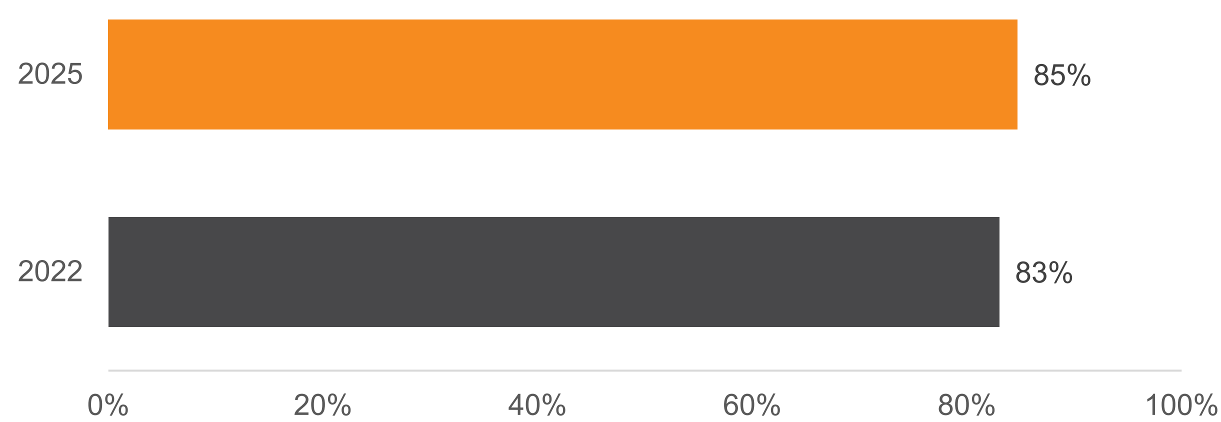
FIGURE 49: SERVICE DELIVERY SATISFACTION BY YEAR



Overall, n = 38,483 to 40408; 2025, n = 23,408 to 24,329; 2022, n = 15,075 to 16,079

Satisfaction with onboard staff courtesy remained high between 2022 and 2025. The share of riders rating courtesy positively increased slightly, from 83% in 2022 (when the attribute was phrased as *"Onboard personnel courtesy"*) to 85% in 2025 (Figure 50).

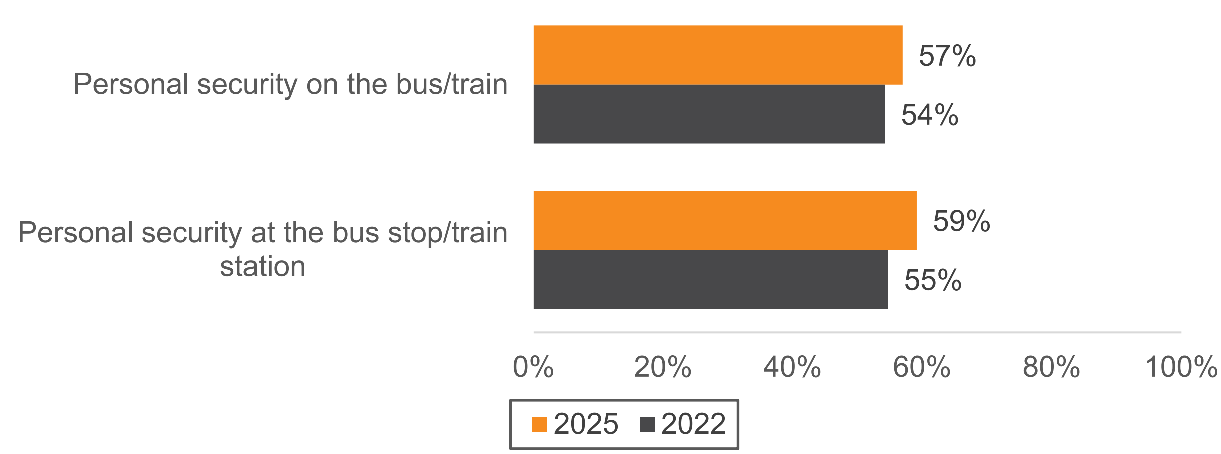
FIGURE 50: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE SATISFACTION BY YEAR



Overall, n = 38,483 to 40408; 2025, n = 23,408 to 24,329; 2022, n = 15,075 to 16,079
**Note: In 2022, this question referred to "Onboard personnel courtesy." Results are not directly comparable and should be interpreted with caution.*

Respondents reported higher satisfaction with their personal security in 2025 than in 2022, both onboard buses and trains and at stops and stations, as shown in Figure (Figure 51).

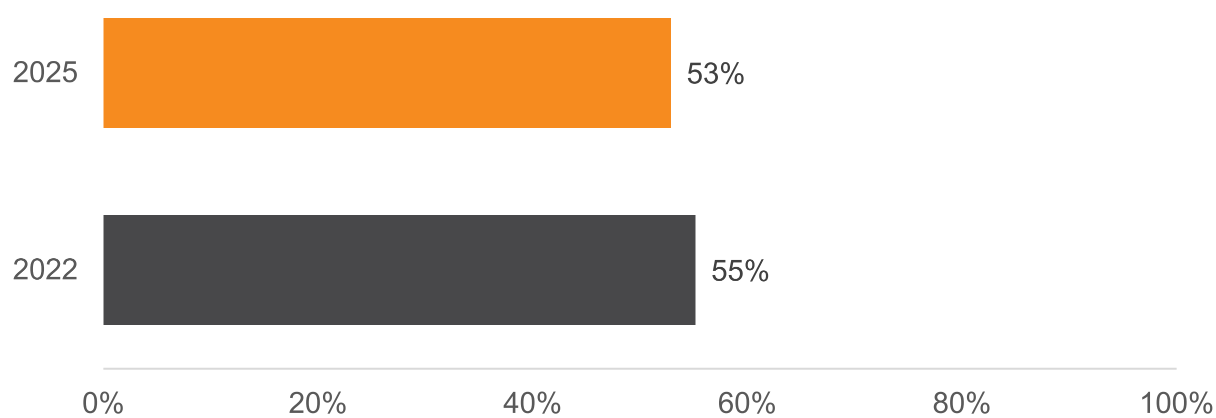
FIGURE 51: PERSONAL SECURITY SATISFACTION BY YEAR



Overall, n = 39,260 to 39,510; 2025, n = 23,843 to 23,926; 2022, n = 15,417 to 15,584
**Note: In 2022, this question referred to "safety" rather than "security." Results may not be directly comparable and should be interpreted with caution.*

Figure 52 shows that riders reported slightly lower satisfaction with the cleanliness of bus and train interiors in 2025 compared to 2022.

FIGURE 52: CLEANLINESS OF BUS/TRAIN INTERIOR SATISFACTION BY YEAR

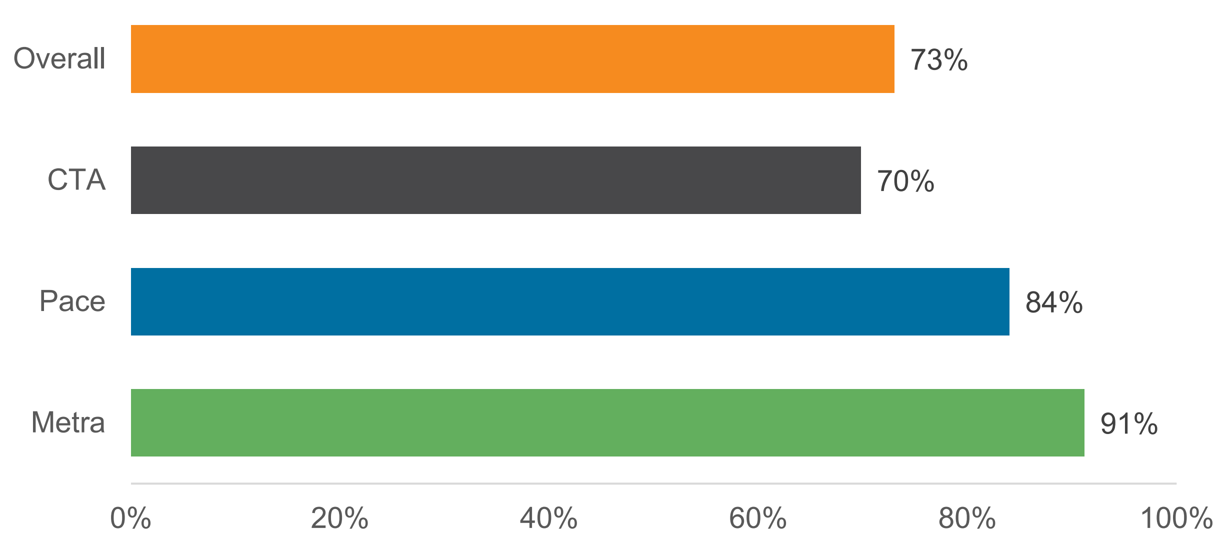


Overall, n = 39,971; 2025, n = 23,855; 2022, n = 16,116

2025 Satisfaction by Service Board

Satisfaction levels varied by Service Board in 2025. Among Metra riders, 91% were satisfied or very satisfied with overall service, compared to 84% of Pace riders and 70% of CTA riders, as shown in Figure 53.

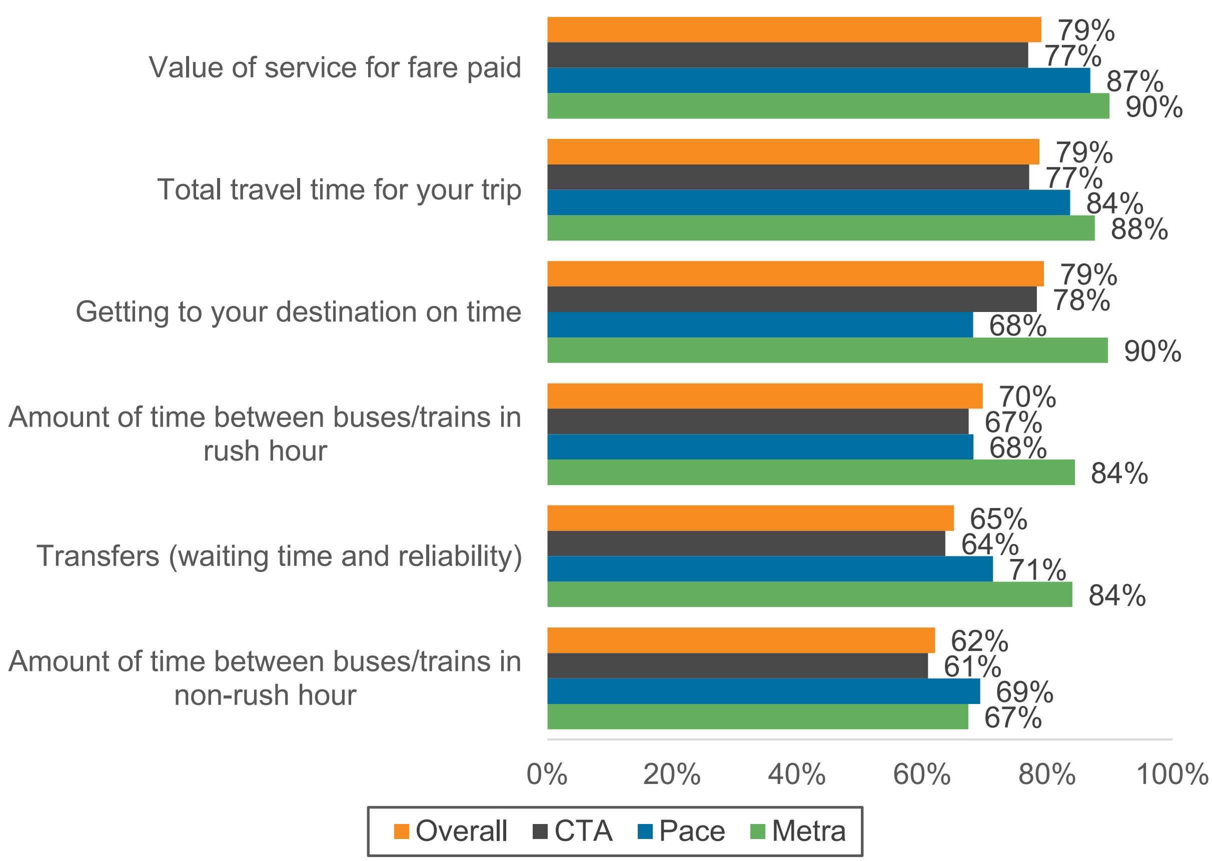
FIGURE 53: OVERALL SATISFACTION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,450; CTA, n = 10,030; Pace, n = 4,054; Metra, n = 10,366

Satisfaction varied by both attribute and Service Board in 2025. Metra riders reported the highest satisfaction across all measures, with particularly strong ratings for “Getting to your destination on time” (90%) and “Value of service for fare paid” (90%). Pace riders were most satisfied with “Value of service for fare paid” (87%) and “Total travel time” (84%). CTA riders reported comparatively lower satisfaction, with scores ranging from 61% for non-rush-hour frequency to 77% for value of service and total travel time. Looking across all Service Boards combined, satisfaction was highest for “Value of service for fare paid,” “Total travel time,” and “Getting to your destination on time” (each 79%), while the lowest ratings were for “Amount of time between buses/trains in non-rush hour” (62%) and “Transfers” (65%), as shown in Figure 54.

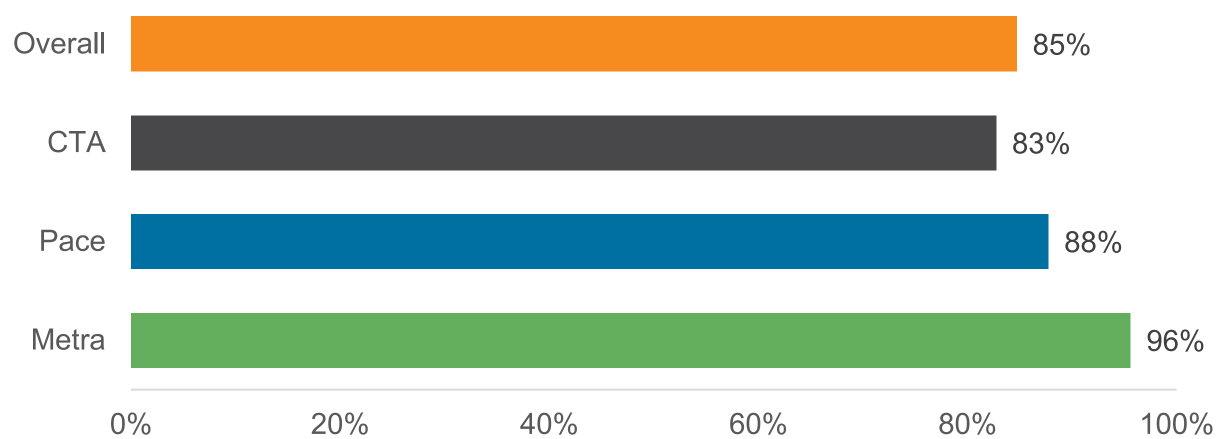
FIGURE 54: SERVICE DELIVERY SATISFACTION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 15,579 to 24,524; CTA, n = 9,025 to 10,058; Pace, n = 3,435 to 4,096; Metra, n = 3,119 to 10,370
**Note: In 2022, “Amount of time between buses/trains…” was phrased “Frequency of service…” Results are not directly comparable and should be interpreted with caution.*

Overall satisfaction with bus and train operator courtesy reached 85%. By service board, satisfaction was highest among Metra riders at 96%, followed by Pace at 88%, and CTA at 83% (Figure 55).

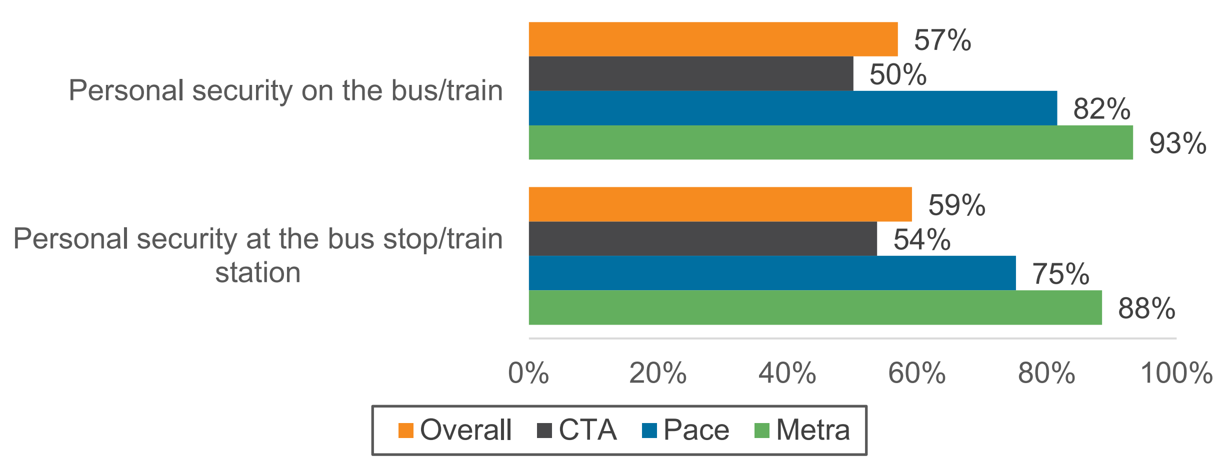
FIGURE 55: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE SATISFACTION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 23,855; CTA, n = 9,518; Pace, n = 4,014; Metra, n = 10,323

Satisfaction with personal security varied widely by service board. Metra riders reported the highest levels, with 93% satisfied with security on the train and 88% at stations. Pace riders followed, with 82% satisfied on the bus and 75% at stops. CTA riders expressed the lowest satisfaction, at 50% for security on buses and trains and 54% at stops and stations (Figure 56).

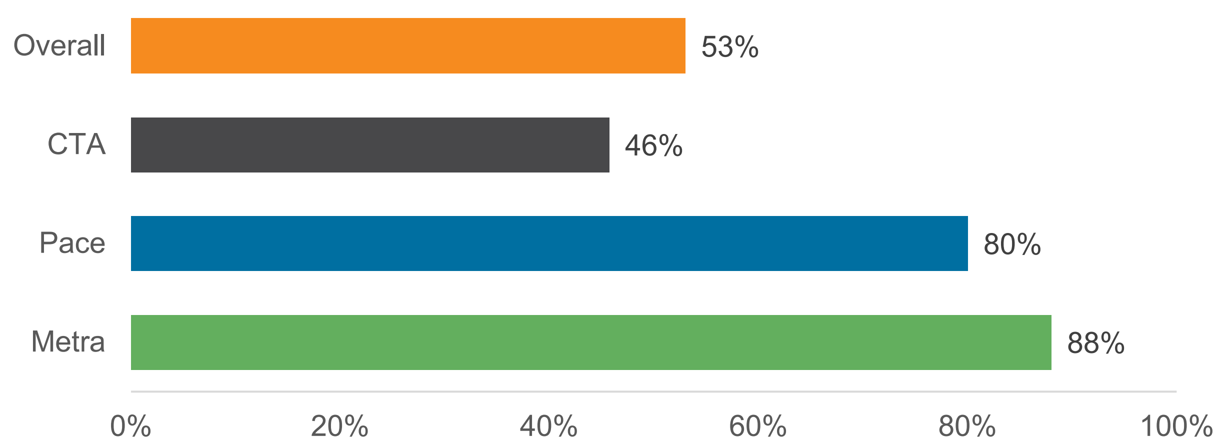
FIGURE 56: PERSONAL SECURITY SATISFACTION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 23,843 to 23,926; CTA, n = 9,858 to 9,873; Pace, n = 3,881 to 3,922; Metra, n= 10,104 to 10,131

Satisfaction with the cleanliness of buses and train interiors presents another stark contrast; while 88% of Metra riders and 80% of Pace riders were satisfied with the cleanliness of their respective service, less than half of CTA riders (46%) were satisfied with cleanliness on board CTA buses and trains (Figure 57).

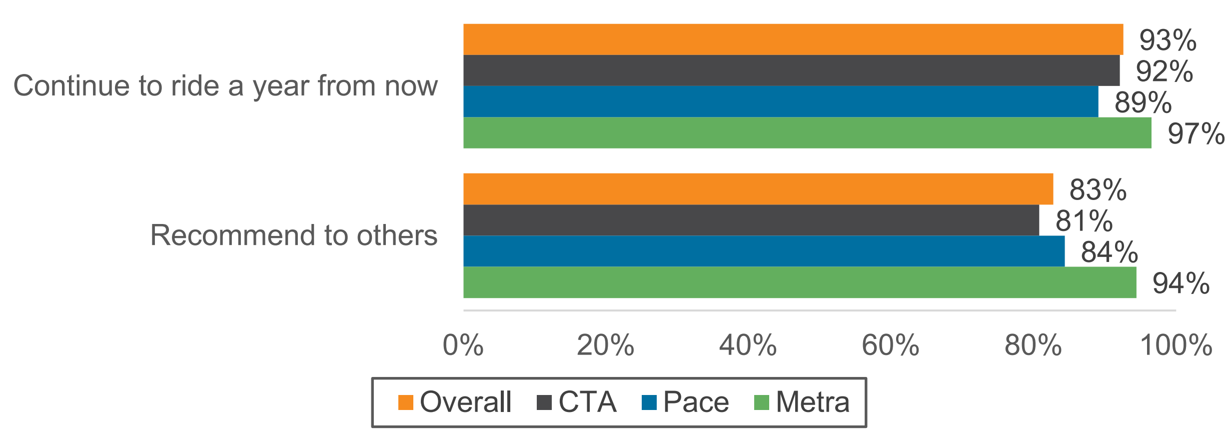
FIGURE 57: CLEANLINESS SATISFACTION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 24,470; CTA, n = 10,061; Pace, n= 4,070; Metra, n = 10,339

Across all service boards, most riders indicated strong loyalty and willingness to recommend their service. Overall, 93% said they expect to continue riding a year from now, with results highest among Metra riders (97%), followed by CTA (92%) and Pace (89%). Similarly, 83% overall said they would recommend their service to others, with Metra again highest at 94%, compared to 84% for Pace and 81% for CTA (Figure 58).

FIGURE 58: LIKELIHOOD TO...

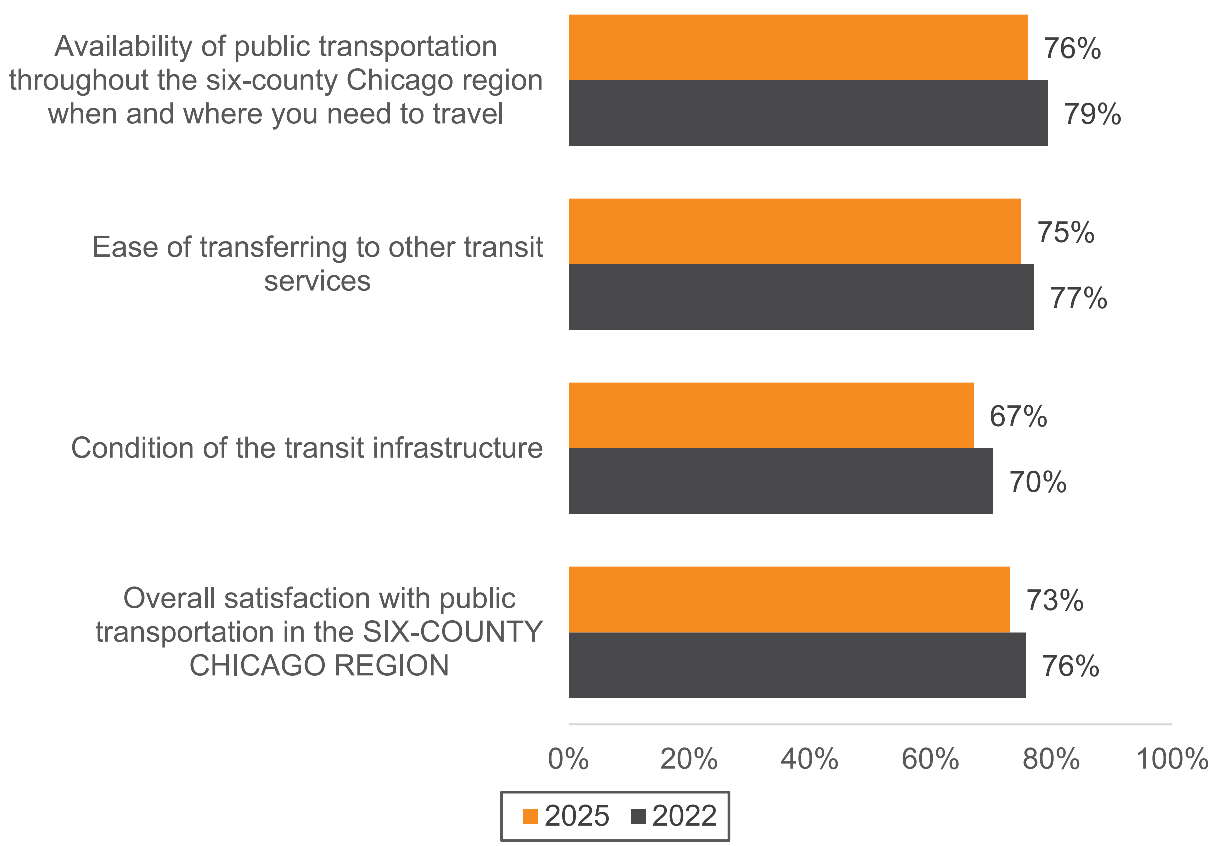


Overall, n = 24,325 to 24,401; CTA, n = 9,961 to 10,016; Pace, n = 4,042 to 4,073; Metra, n = 10,291 to 10,343

Regionwide Satisfaction by Year

Satisfaction with regional transit measures declined slightly between 2022 and 2025. Overall satisfaction with public transportation in the six-county region fell by 3 percentage points (76% to 73%). Smaller decreases were also seen in ratings of the availability of service (79% to 76%), ease of transferring between services (77% to 75%), and the condition of transit infrastructure (70% to 67%; Figure 59).

FIGURE 59: REGIONAL SATISFACTION BY YEAR

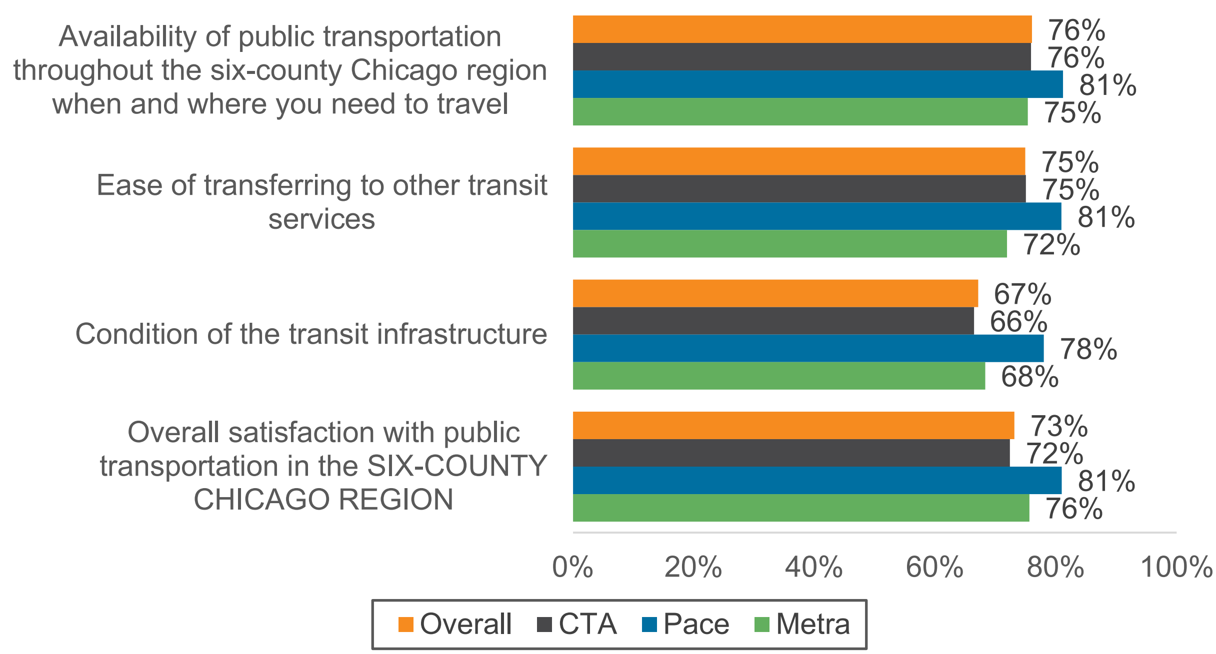


Overall, n = 33,653 to 37,725; 2025, n = 20,029 to 22,992; 2022, n = 13,624 to 14,733

Regionwide Satisfaction by Service Board

Pace exceeded Metra and CTA in the four regional satisfaction questions, including expressing the highest overall satisfaction with public transportation in the six-county Chicago region (81%). Both Metra and CTA riders expressed significantly less satisfaction with the condition of transit infrastructure (66% and 68%, respectively) than Pace riders (78%). Metra riders were also less satisfied with the ease of transferring to other transit services (72%) than either Pace or CTA riders (81% and 75%, respectively; Figure 60).

FIGURE 60: REGIONAL SATISFACTION BY SERVICE BOARD



Overall, n = 20,029 to 22,992; CTA, n = 9,035 to 9,710; Pace, n = 3,788 to 3,910; Metra, n = 7,186 to 9,372

QUADRANT CHART

A quadrant chart compares derived importance (Y-axis) and satisfaction (X-axis) for the regional attributes above. Each axis is split at its mean, creating four quadrants that guide priorities: Focus Now (high importance, low satisfaction), Maintain Strengths (high, high), Monitor (low importance, high satisfaction), and Lower Priority (low, low). This map highlights where the Service Boards can concentrate efforts to deliver the greatest gains in overall satisfaction. See Table 6 for quadrant definitions and recommended actions.

TABLE 6: QUADRANT CHARTS EXPLANATION

QUADRANT	LOCATION	SATISFACTION LEVEL	IMPORTANCE	ACTION
1	Top left	Relatively low	Relatively high	Attributes for improvement
2	Top right	Relatively high	Relatively high	Attributes to maintain
3	Bottom left	Relatively low	Relatively low	Attributes to monitor
4	Bottom right	Relatively high	Relatively low	Attributes with no immediate action

The availability of public transportation throughout the six-county Chicago region rests in the top-right quadrant of Figure 61, indicating that the three Service Boards are meeting rider expectations on an attribute of high derived importance. For continued customer satisfaction, it is important that the RTA and the three Service Boards work to maintain the availability of public transportation through the six-county region.

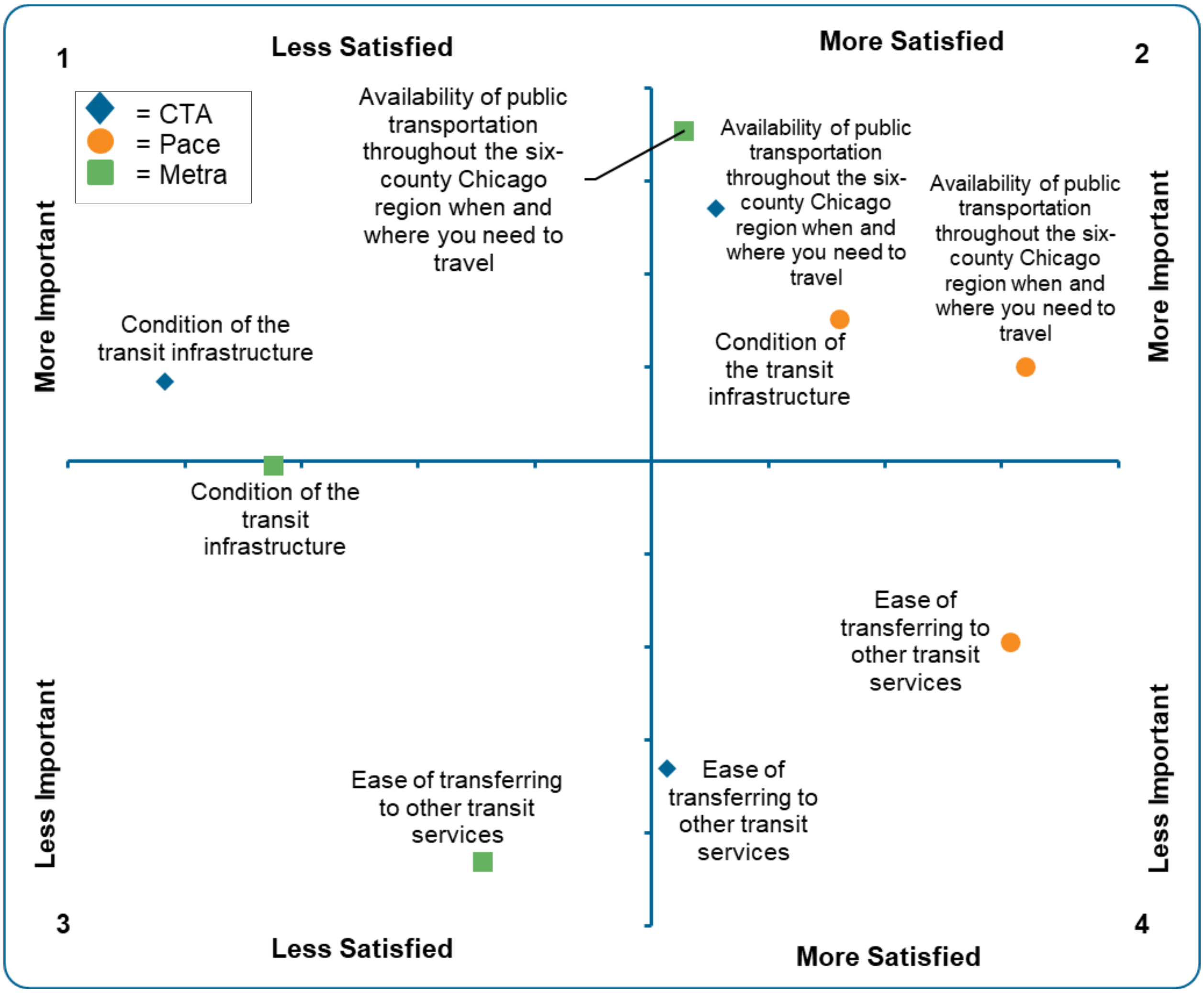
Ease of transferring to other transit services occupies the bottom-right quadrant, indicating that no immediate action is needed as riders are relatively satisfied with the attribute, and that the attribute is of less importance.

The condition of transit infrastructure throughout the region lies in the top-left corner of the chart. Riders expressed dissatisfaction with this attribute, which also has a high derived importance. Improving the condition of transit infrastructure should be a high priority for the RTA, as this likely would be associated with large gains in overall rider experience and satisfaction.

FIGURE 61: KEY DRIVERS OF REGIONAL SATISFACTION QUADRANT CHART

The availability of public transportation throughout the six-county Chicago region falls in the top-right quadrant of Figure 62 for all three Service Boards, underscoring its importance to sustaining customer satisfaction. Pace riders also reported relatively high satisfaction with the condition of Pace transit infrastructure, an attribute with high derived importance, making it critical to maintain. The top-left quadrant highlights attributes with below-average satisfaction but high importance; CTA riders identified infrastructure condition as a priority for improvement, suggesting that addressing it could yield meaningful gains in overall satisfaction. For Metra, infrastructure conditions lie on the border between the top-left and bottom-left quadrants, reflecting below-average satisfaction but only medium importance. Even so, improvements in this area would likely enhance the rider experience and contribute to higher overall satisfaction with Metra.

FIGURE 62: KEY DRIVERS OF REGIONAL SATISFACTION QUADRANT CHART BY SERVICE BOARD



5.0 CONCLUSION

The 2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey highlights a regional transit system that is adapting to an evolving rider base while facing ongoing challenges. Across all three Service Boards, most riders remain satisfied with the service they receive, though overall satisfaction has declined since 2022 (73% vs. 78%). This dip may reflect the pressures of operating in a post-pandemic environment, where ridership is still recovering, funding gaps persist, and customer expectations continue to evolve.

At the regional level, satisfaction remains strongest for service availability, travel time, and on-time performance, attributes that riders consistently view as central to their experience. Loyalty to the system is also high, with many respondents indicating that they plan to continue riding and would recommend their Service Board to others.

However, the survey also points to clear areas for improvement. Riders continue to express concern about the cleanliness of vehicles and the condition of transit infrastructure. Perceptions of personal security, particularly on CTA, remain an ongoing challenge despite modest gains since 2022. Addressing these issues will be critical to improving overall satisfaction and strengthening public confidence in transit.

Demographic trends also provide important context for planning. The rider population is trending older, more highly educated, and more affluent, while still including many individuals with limited transportation options. These dual dynamics highlight the need to maintain affordability and accessibility for transit-dependent riders while also meeting the expectations of those who have alternative travel options but are choosing transit.

Taken together, the 2025 findings reaffirm that availability of service across the six-county region remains the most important regional driver of satisfaction. Sustaining reliable service, investing in infrastructure, and ensuring that vehicles and facilities are clean and safe will be essential to maintaining customer confidence. As the region faces fiscal pressures in the coming years, prioritizing these key attributes offers the most direct path to protecting and improving rider satisfaction across CTA, Pace, and Metra.