



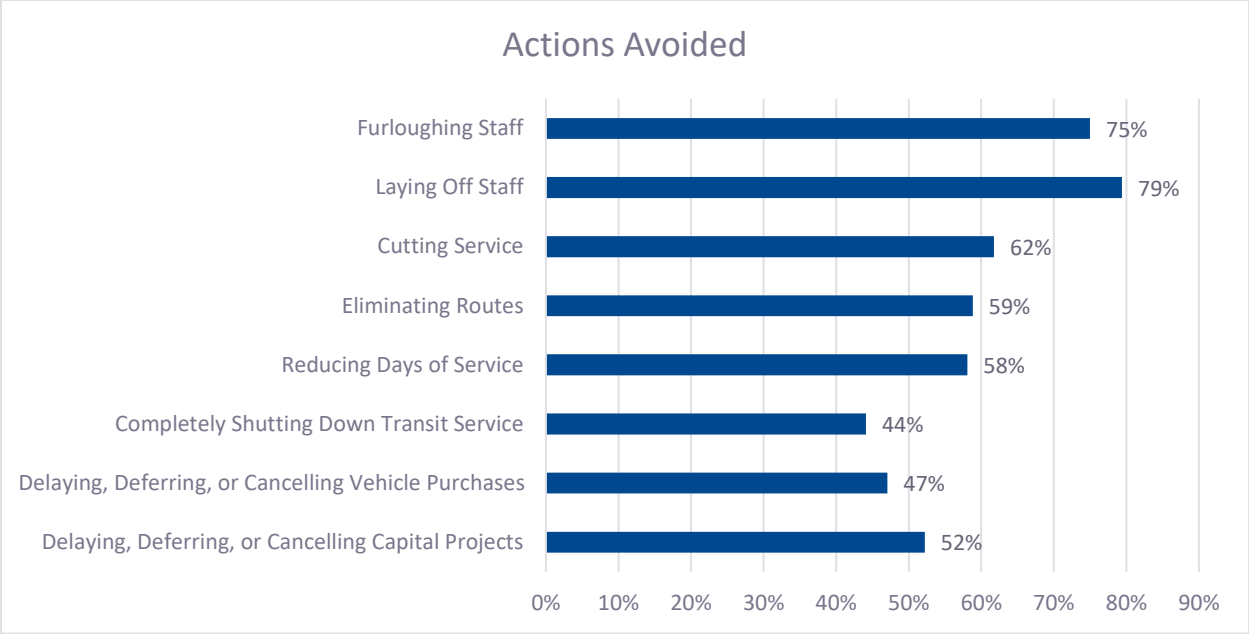
# COVID-19 Emergency Funding Critical to Public Transit's Survival

## Key Takeaways

1. Almost one-half of public transit agencies (44 percent) stated that COVID-19 emergency funding helped them avoid a complete shutdown of service
  2. In addition, the overwhelming majority of agencies said that COVID-19 funding helped them avoid layoffs (79 percent) and cutting service (62 percent)
  3. Today, two-thirds of public transit agencies (65 percent) are operating at 75 percent or more of their pre-pandemic service levels
  4. A majority of agencies (51 percent) expect to exhaust their COVID-19 emergency transit funding by January 2023. By January 2024, the vast majority of agencies (82 percent) will have expended all COVID-19 funding
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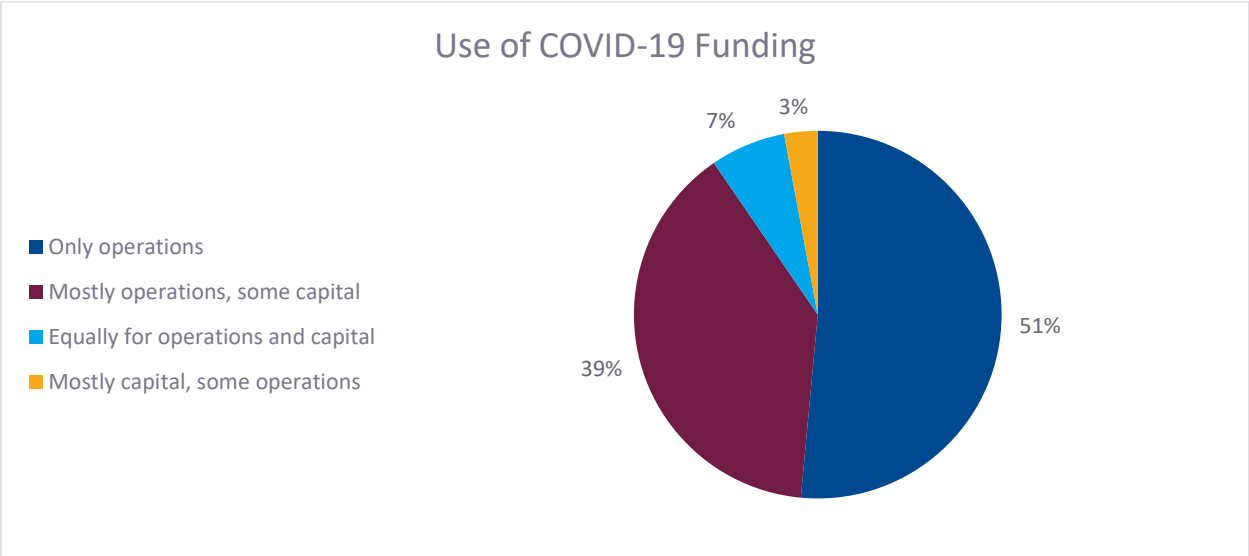
## COVID-19 Funding Helped Transit Agencies Avoid Shutdowns, Layoffs, and Service Cuts

The COVID-19 emergency transit funding helped public transit agencies avoid shutdowns, layoffs, service cuts, and other detrimental actions. Almost one-half of transit agencies (44 percent) stated that COVID-19 funding helped them avoid a complete shutdown of service. In addition, the overwhelming majority of agencies said that COVID-19 funding helped them avoid layoffs (79 percent), furloughs (75 percent), and cutting service (62 percent). COVID-19 funds also helped approximately one-half of agencies avoid delaying or cancelling capital projects and vehicle purchases.



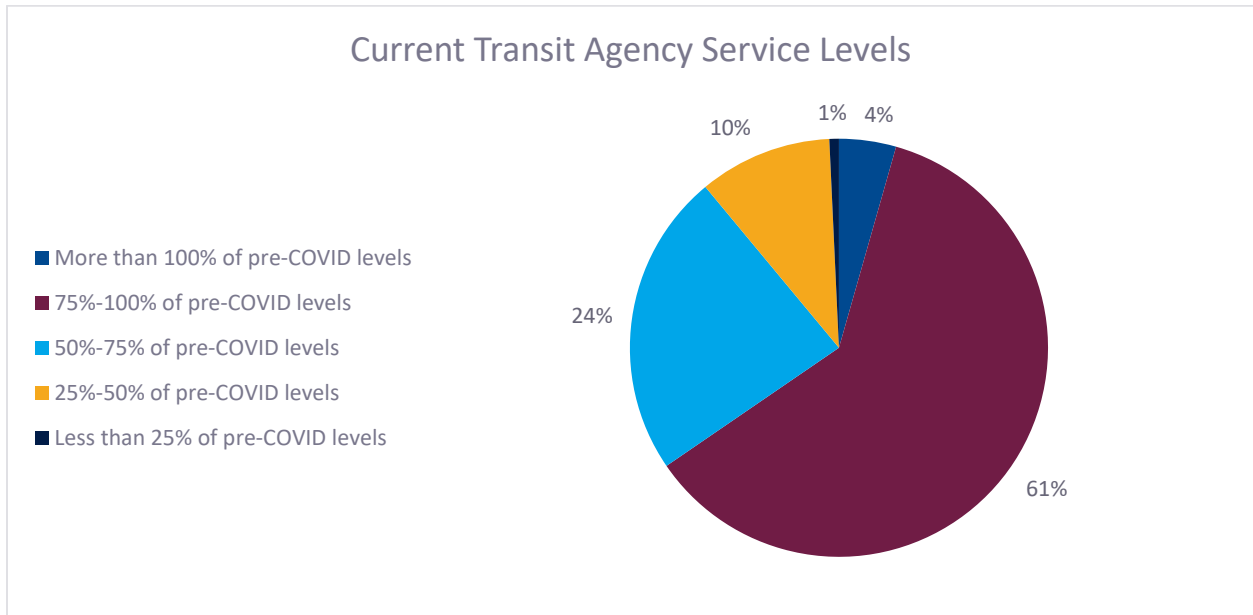
### Use of COVID-19 Transit Funds

Nine in 10 public transit agencies have used their COVID-19 funding for operations only (51 percent) or mostly for operations (39 percent). Only one in 10 agencies used the funding equally for operations and capital (7 percent), or mostly for capital expenses (3 percent).



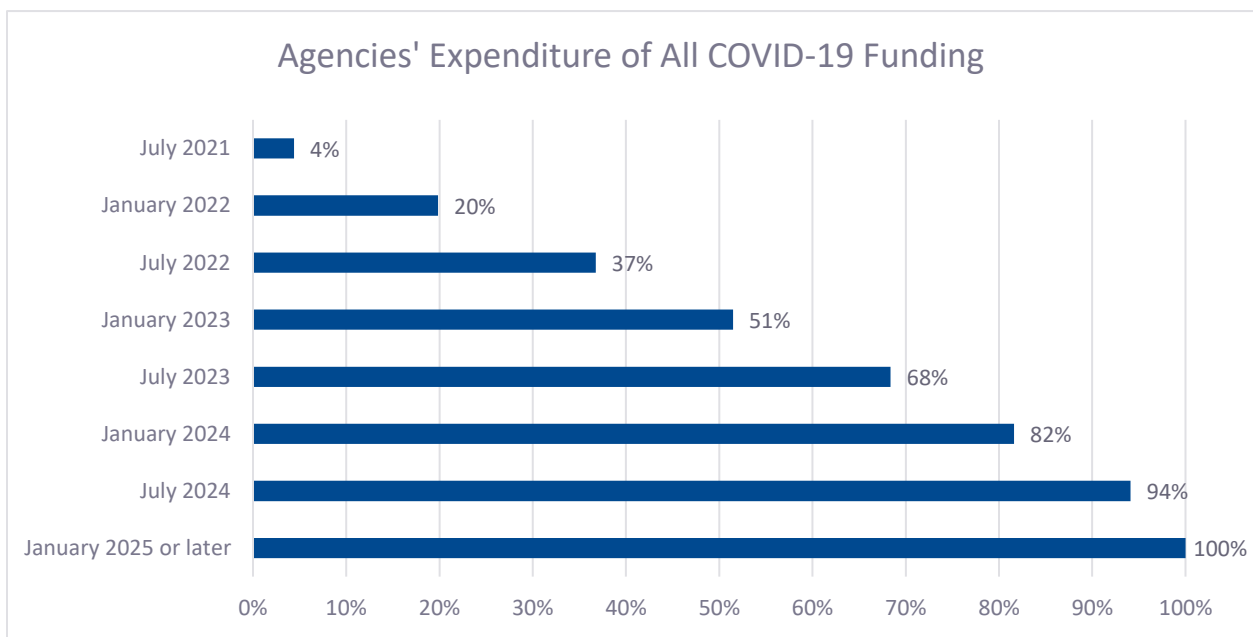
## Service Levels

COVID-19 emergency funding has enabled public transit agencies to ramp up service as people start traveling more and return to offices and other workplaces. Two-thirds of responding agencies (65 percent) are operating at 75 percent or more of their pre-pandemic service levels.



## Agencies' Expenditure of COVID-19 Funding

A majority of agencies (51 percent) expect to exhaust their COVID-19 funding by January 2023. By January 2024, 82 percent of agencies will have expended all COVID-19 funds.



## Agency Stories of the Impact of COVID-19 Funding

Throughout the pandemic, COVID-19 emergency funding has been critical to the very survival of public transit agencies, enabling them to continue to provide this essential service in their communities.

When asked to describe the impact of this emergency funding, agencies said:

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*“Receiving the CARES, CRRSAA, and ARP monies literally saved our region’s public transportation system. Pre-COVID we were already facing a deficit in our transit fund so without this infusion of funding we would have been forced to drastically reduce service levels, lay off staff, etc.”*

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*“COVID relief funding has prevented the outright cancelation of our commuter bus program. It has also been a valuable tool to pay front-line staff to self-isolate/quarantine when they showed symptoms of COVID. As a result, we have had no outbreaks amongst staff that have been tied to work.”*

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*“The biggest benefit we saw was the preservation/continuation of employment and pay for our employees and contract teams, and the provision of essential service to our community (especially essential workers). Other specific opportunities: pandemic sick-leave program for operations and administration; allowed flexibility to use funds to support our community via meal delivery, health transports, etc.; filled gap in lost revenue from sales tax and fare revenue (ongoing into 2021); we also used the funds for vehicle retrofitting to install air purification and safety improvements.”*

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*“COVID-related funding has been a major factor in being able to pay for PPE, purchase of ion electric cleaners, driver compartment plexiglass barriers, adding bus/facility cleaners for heightened cleaning to keep our employees and the public as safe as possible. We were able to offset loss of fare revenue when we offered free rides at the start of COVID. Plus, with ridership coming back so slowly, it continues to help cover for those revenue losses too. Using COVID funding, we covered our costs when we partnered with medical facilities to bring people to mass vaccination sites for free. In the past two months, we have partnered with a free medical clinic—their nurses riding our bus and going door-to-door to get jobs for those who are shut-in’s or without access to transportation. This partnership has had very positive feedback in our community.”*

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*“Bottom line, relief funding provides a level of security needed to appropriately assess our community’s needs and help us fully recover. Without these funds we would not be planning a recovery.”*

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## About the Survey

APTA conducted this survey of its transit agency members in July 2021. One hundred thirty-six (136) members responded to the survey. Combined, those agencies carry more than three-quarters of U.S. transit ridership.

## The American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 public- and private-sector organizations which represent a \$80 billion industry that directly employs 448,000 people and supports millions of private-sector jobs. APTA members are engaged in the areas of bus, paratransit, light rail, commuter rail, subways, waterborne services, and intercity and high-speed passenger rail. This includes: transit systems; planning, design, construction, and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; transit associations and state departments of transportation. APTA is the only association in North America that represents all modes of public transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical transit services and products.

### Author

Matthew Dickens  
Director, Policy Development and Research  
202.496.4817 | [mdickens@apta.com](mailto:mdickens@apta.com)

### For General Information

Ward W. McCarragher  
Vice President, Government Affairs and  
Advocacy  
202.496.4828 | [wmccarragher@apta.com](mailto:wmccarragher@apta.com)  
[www.apta.com/research-technical-  
resources/research-reports/](http://www.apta.com/research-technical-resources/research-reports/)

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### APTA Vision Statement

APTA leads public transportation in a new mobility era,  
advocating to connect and build thriving communities

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