

AGENDA ITEM 2 E  
Action Item

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 5, 2026

**TO:** El Dorado County Transit Authority

**FROM:** Steffi Ahart, Human Resources Manager

**SUBJECT:** Conclusion of Employee Referral and New Hire Incentive Programs

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

**BY MOTION,**

**Approve Conclusion of the Employee Referral and New Hire  
Incentive Programs**

**BACKGROUND**

The El Dorado County Transit Authority (El Dorado Transit) implemented the pilot Employee Referral and New Hire Incentive Programs in March 2020 to address recruitment and retention challenges. At the time, transit agencies nationwide were experiencing workforce shortages due to the COVID pandemic.

The programs were designed to strengthen recruitment efforts by encouraging employee referrals and qualified candidates and incentivizing newly hired staff to successfully complete their initial employment period. The goal was to improve applicant flow, increase retention during the probationary period, and stabilize staffing levels.

**DISCUSSION**

El Dorado Transit has successfully achieved full staffing levels due to recruitment efforts, combined with targeted hiring strategies. The efforts have resulted in a stable and sufficient operator workforce to meet current service demands.

With staffing needs currently satisfied, continuation of the Employee Referral and New Hire Incentive Programs is no longer necessary. Maintaining the programs while fully staffed could result in unnecessary expenditures.

Staff will continue to monitor workforce trends and recruitment conditions. Should future staffing shortages arise, staff may return to the Board with recommendations for reinstating incentive-based recruitment strategies or implementing alternative workforce initiatives.

Based on current staffing levels and operational needs, staff recommends concluding the Employee Referral and New Hire Incentive Programs effective immediately. Any outstanding incentives earned under existing program guidelines will be honored.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Termination of programs will eliminate ongoing incentive expenditures in the current and future fiscal years.

Savings will be realized in the Operating Budget through the discontinuation of referral and new hire bonus payments. There is no additional fiscal impact associated with terminating the programs beyond payment of any previously earned and approved incentives.