



Safety Equity Initiative

Muni Rider Safety Survey Report

December 2025

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Summary of Key Takeaways

Survey

A majority of Muni riders – 75% – who took the 2024/2025 Muni Rider Safety Survey said they feel safe on Muni all or most of the time. While most riders feel safe on Muni, we continue our efforts to do more for those who don't.

Reporting

Incident reporting has increased over the years. In 2024-25, 10% fewer respondents said they didn't report an incident. Additionally, in 2023, 62% of people surveyed said they didn't report because they didn't think it would make a difference, but in 2024-25 only 30% of respondents said this.

Demographics and Engagement

The 2024-25 Safety Survey engaged 20% more respondents than in 2023, mainly by interviewing riders on Muni. Trends were consistent in both, such as nonbinary and transgender respondents feeling less safe than cis gender respondents. Women respondents feel less safe than men. And non-white respondents feel less safe than white respondents.

The second survey effort reached a demographic that better reflects Muni's diverse ridership. Age, disability status and car access demographics did not meaningfully change. However, there were dramatic shifts in race and language spoken at home. In the 2024-25 survey

- 32% fewer respondents were white.
- 44% fewer respondents speak English at home as their primary language.
- 20% more respondents indicated that they used Muni daily than respondents in the 2023 survey.

Locations

When respondents are asked where they feel more unsafe, consistent trends in locations emerged, including on a Muni vehicle or at a Muni stop on the street. The top reported location in 2024-25 was on a Muni vehicle, while in 2023, bus stops were the top identified locations. In both surveys, high ridership lines and subway stations were the top locations where incidents had been witnessed or experienced.

This gives us a clear picture of where we need to focus our efforts and available resources.

Focus Groups

- Participants were concerned about safety related to crowding on Muni vehicles and riding on Muni at night.
- Common concerns across focus groups included larger social issues happening concurrently in San Francisco that may impact the Muni experience, including vagrancy, substance abuse and mental health issues on Muni. Most participants did not know there was a way to report harassment directly to the SFMTA.
- Staff presence and intervention generally made respondents feel safe. Participants expect operators to actively intervene. They also expect operators to take an enforcement role in addressing unsafe behaviors. An intervention is expected to take place when an incident occurs.



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The SFMTA's Safety Equity Initiative

Riding Muni is one of the safest ways for people to get around San Francisco. In the 2024 Rider Satisfaction Survey that SFMTA conducts every two years to gauge riders' views on Muni's overall performance, 72% rated Muni as good or excellent. Additionally, a majority of Muni riders – 75% – who took the 2024/2025 Muni Rider Safety Survey said they feel safe on Muni all or most of the time. SFMTA staff are working hard to improve these ratings.

The SFMTA launched the [Safety Equity Initiative](#) in 2022 as part of efforts to make Muni even safer. We aim to improve safety for riders, bystanders and staff overall. We do this, in part, through our MuniSafe program. This program identifies opportunities to implement policy and security solutions. The Safety Equity Initiative specifically aims to reduce harassment on Muni.

Through the Safety Equity Initiative, we work to:

- Build solutions into our programmatic work across divisions and projects. We center rider safety in the SFMTA's work at all levels
- Improve information about non-criminal incidents
- Constantly improve our enforcement and prevention efforts
- Support a culture of safety among our riders and staff. We recognize that we all play a vital role in supporting each other as allies in safety.

To do this, we:

- Encourage reporting. [Incident reports help us collect information](#) to prevent similar incidents.
- Use reporting information to implement mitigation measures and bolster prevention efforts.
- Provide education about what should be reported and how to make a report.

2024-25 Muni Rider Safety Survey: Building Our Awareness with Data

In 2023, the Safety Equity Initiative launched the SFMTA's first comprehensive, longitudinal survey to specifically measure riders' experiences and perceptions of safety on Muni. To facilitate this, we partnered with UCLA's Institute of Transportation Studies. This survey measured experiences and perceptions of personal security and harassment. It specifically examined these on Muni and at Muni stops. We aim to conduct these surveys every two years as part of our Safety Equity Initiative. This is so we can identify trends and adapt our Safety Equity Action Plan as appropriate. The data collected help the SFMTA identify and prioritize improvements. These improvements aim to further reduce rider harassment. These are outlined in the [Safety Equity Action Plan](#).

The 2024-25 Muni Rider Safety Survey was deployed as part of our ongoing effort to understand rider experiences. This survey also met requirements mandated for large transit agencies by California law. State law requires transit agencies to collect information about how safe riders feel. It also requires asking riders whether they've experienced harassment on transit. This legislation was informed, in part, by the SFMTA's Safety Equity Initiative and our 2023 safety survey.



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Survey Purpose and Methodology

Between November 2024 and April 2025, we surveyed 1,935 Muni riders. The primary data collection method was multilingual online surveys. We also provided paper surveys and responses were entered online by staff. The survey was offered in English, Cantonese, Spanish, Filipino and Vietnamese.

[Civic Edge Consulting](#) helped conduct the survey. Ambassadors surveyed riders on 15 Muni lines. [FM3 Research](#) helped analyze the survey data. We reached out to over 100 community-based organizations. Dozens promoted the survey among their members.

The SFMTA collected quantitative and qualitative data in two phases. Data was collected through the survey and focus groups. Phase one ran from November through December 2024. It included online surveys and two focus groups. One was in Cantonese and the other in Spanish. We published preliminary data and a summary of findings through the end of 2024. This complied with state reporting requirements. Phase Two ran from January through April 2025. It included additional online surveys and four focus groups. The complete data was published in June 2025. This report provides a summary of findings.

The 24-25 Muni Rider Safety Survey builds on our 2023 Muni Rider Safety Survey and lays the foundation for future rider safety surveys. We plan to conduct these surveys on a regular cadence to establish and update benchmarks, help us identify trends and inform our efforts.

By initiating regular rider safety surveying as a core of the Safety Equity Initiative, the SFMTA is ahead of other California transit agencies in collecting rider safety information and ahead of state law requiring one-time data collection and reporting. We have aligned our efforts in collaboration with key community partners and state officials to provide data that is comparable and consistent with peer agencies across California, in compliance with new state requirements.

Demographics and Engagement

The 2023 survey drew 1,613 responses and the 2024-25 survey got 1,935. That represents a 20% increase in engagement. Age, disability status, and car access did not meaningfully change between surveys. Gender balance shifted somewhat, with more respondents identifying as Female in the 2024-25 survey. However, there were dramatic shifts in race and language spoken at home. The 2024-25 survey saw 32% fewer white respondents and 44% fewer respondents speaking English at home as their primary language. It appears that the 2024-25 survey reached a demographic that better reflects Muni's diverse ridership. We could not draw conclusions about income or household size as these questions were only asked in the 2024-25 survey.

A majority of respondents ride Muni every day. 53% of respondents reported riding Muni every day. The vast majority of respondents indicated that they ride at least once a week (85%). Frequent ridership was consistent across all major demographics. In the 2024-25 survey 20% more respondents indicated that they used Muni daily than respondents in the 2023 survey.



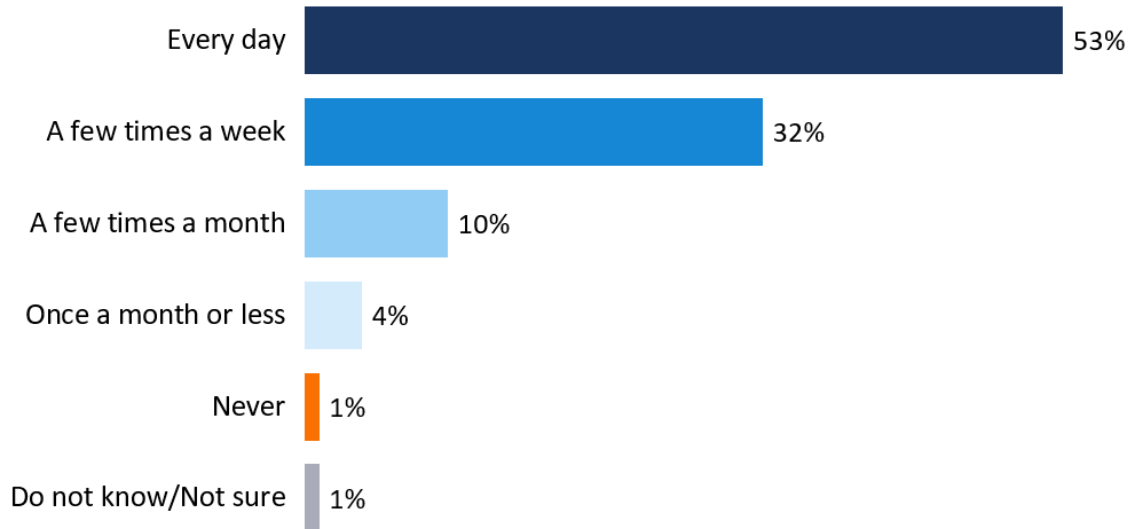
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Figure 1: Muni Ridership Frequency

How often do you typically ride Muni (buses, light rail Metro trains, historic streetcars, and/or cable cars)?
(n=1,925)



Survey Findings and Trends

General Safety

A majority of Muni riders surveyed – 75% – reported feeling safe on Muni all or most of the time.

Respondents were asked to rate how often they felt safe on Muni on a scale of one to five. One meant they "always" feel safe. Five meant they "never" feel safe. A majority felt safe all or most of the time. The average safety rating for respondents was 2.5. There were some distinctions in experiences by demographic groups:

- Women's average rating was 2.6. Nonbinary respondents' was 2.5. These demographics reported feeling unsafe with greater frequency. Men's average rating was 2.3.
- Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)'s average rating was 2.6. Latino respondents' average rating was 2.6. African Americans' average was 2.4. White respondents' average was 2.2.
- Riders with disabilities were slightly more likely to feel unsafe. Their average was 2.6. This compared to riders without disabilities' average of 2.4.

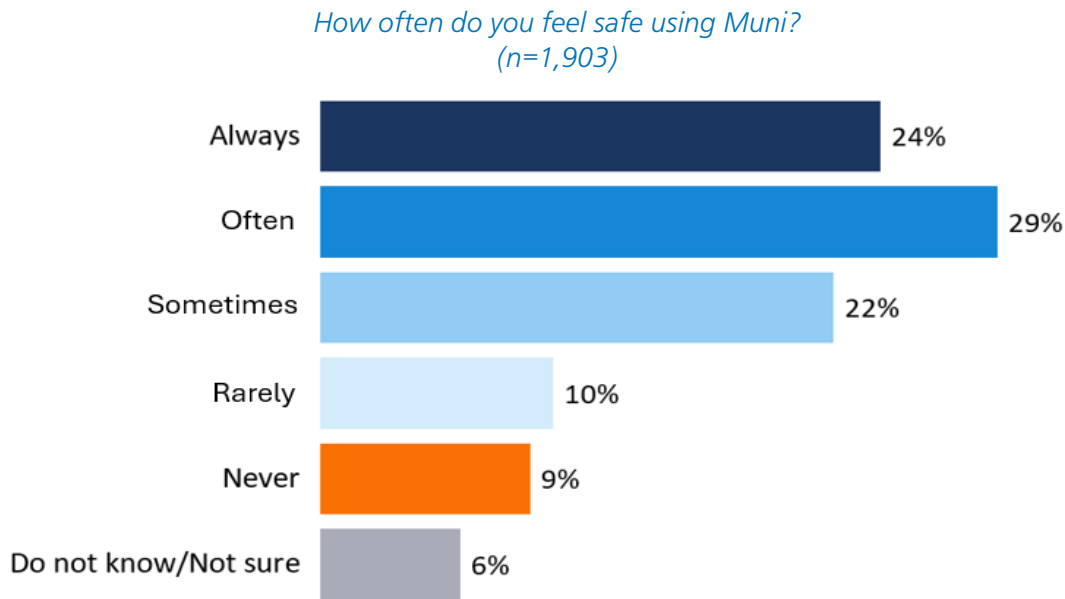


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Figure 2: Feelings of Safety on Muni



The 2023 Muni Rider Safety Survey asked a similar question. Both surveys asked riders how often they felt safe riding Muni.

Respondents felt significantly safer in the 2024-25 survey. However, this may be explained by the 2023 survey specifically asking about safety during nighttime rides, while 2024-25 asked about daytime and nighttime separately, so it is difficult to draw a clear conclusion from this result.

Respondents in the 2023 survey felt much less safe when using Muni during the nighttime. Cis men felt safer than other respondents in both 2023 and 2024-25, with a higher percentage reporting that they always or often felt safe, and a smaller percentage reporting that they never or rarely felt safe. Transgender respondents reported the lowest level of safety, with 34% of respondents saying that they never or rarely felt safe in 2023, and 34% in 2024-25. White respondents reported higher safety than non-white respondents. In 2023, 60% of white respondents reported that they always or often felt safe, compared to 39% of non-white respondents. In 2024-25, 68% of white respondents reported always or often feeling safe, compared to 48% of non-white respondents. Both white and non-white respondents reported feeling safer in the 2024-25 survey than in the 2023 survey.

Locations of Incidents

When respondents felt unsafe it was mostly on public transit vehicles and street-level Muni stops, particularly in certain neighborhoods on Muni routes where crowding is higher.

- 31% said they felt unsafe on the bus, train, or vehicle (Figure 3).
- One-quarter felt unsafe at a Muni stop on the street.



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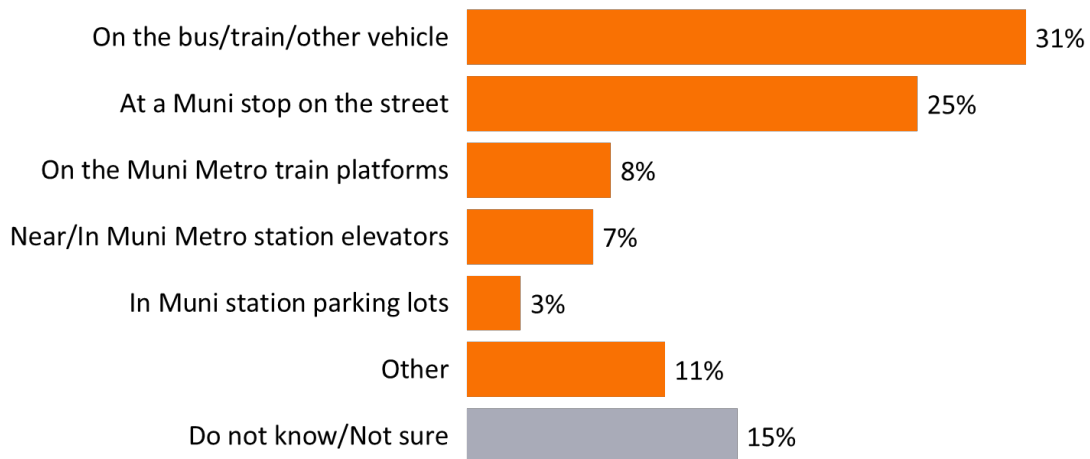
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- Fewer than one in ten said they felt unsafe at a Muni train platform. Same with Muni Metro elevators.
- Only 3% felt unsafe in Muni station parking lots.
- Those who identified as nonbinary were more likely to say they felt unsafe at Muni stops on the street (43%). Otherwise, respondents of most other demographic groups ranked these locations similarly.

Figure 3: Muni Properties Where Respondents Feel Unsafe

Where do you feel most unsafe using Muni?
(n=1,877)



Respondents reported witnessing or experiencing most harassment incidents on Muni vehicles. Muni stops on the street were the second most common place.

Demographic distinctions included:

- White respondents reported higher rates of encountering harassment.
- Women and nonbinary respondents reported higher rates of encountering harassment at street stops and on a Muni train platform.
- AAPI and Latino respondents were slightly more likely to say they encountered harassment on Muni stops at the street level.
- Those under age 54 were more likely to witness harassment at Muni street stops than those 55 and over.

In 2023, respondents were asked a similar question but the answer choices were different from the 2024-25 survey, and in 2023 respondents could select multiple answers while the 2024-25 survey did not. As a result of these key differences between the surveys, we cannot provide a direct comparison, but there are noticeable trends.

The top two answers for where riders felt unsafe in both surveys were at a bus/Muni stop on the street and on a bus/train/Muni vehicle. We found demographic differences in the answers to these questions: Transit vehicles were the top reported location for negative experiences across all racial groups in 2024-25, compared to 2023 where bus stops were the most identified.

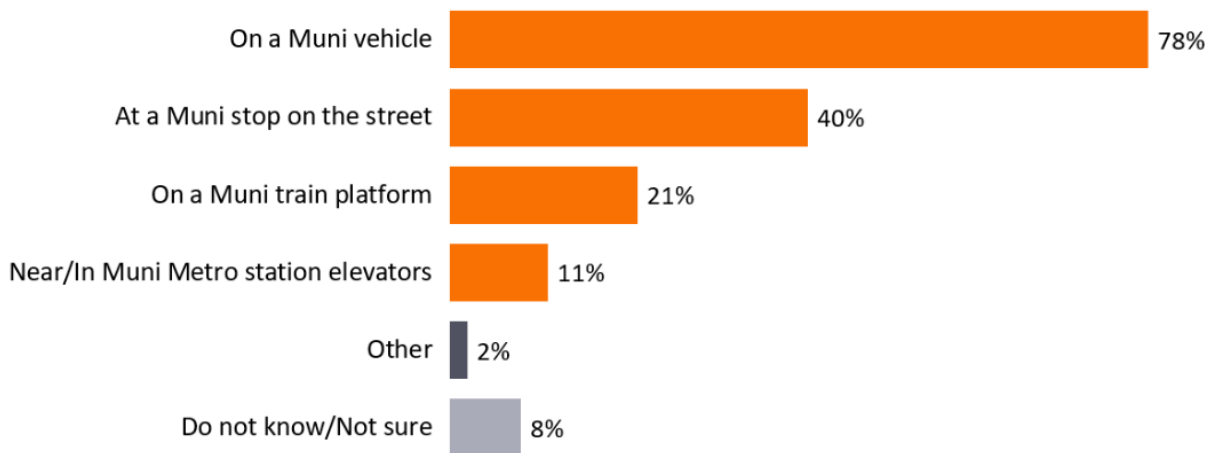
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Figure 8: Where Harassment Occurred

Where did these incidents happen?
(Multiple Responses Accepted; n=1,559)



Harassment

Across both surveys, most respondents have both personally experienced and witnessed harassment. However, the share of those who have personally experienced harassment on Muni has fallen, and the share of those who have witnessed harassment has increased.

	2024 Count	2024 Percent	2023 Count	2023 Percent	Change (Percentage Point)
Have not personally experienced harassment	824	43%	537	33%	9%
Have personally experienced harassment	1111	57%	1076	67%	-9%
Have not witnessed harassment	435	22%	522	32%	-10%
Have witnessed harassment	1500	78%	1091	68%	10%

Because the categories of harassment were different in the 2024-25 and 2023 survey, for analysis we have grouped incidents into those personally experienced by the respondent, and those witnessed by the respondent.

The most common form of harassment respondents said they experienced or witnessed is hostile comments. While riding Muni, 59% said they personally received hostile comments, sounds, gestures or actions (Figure 6). 74% said



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they have seen it happen to others. These results are consistent with findings from the 2023 survey. In that survey we found verbal harassment was the most common form of harassment respondents reported. 61% of respondents experienced verbal harassment. 68% of respondents witnessed it.

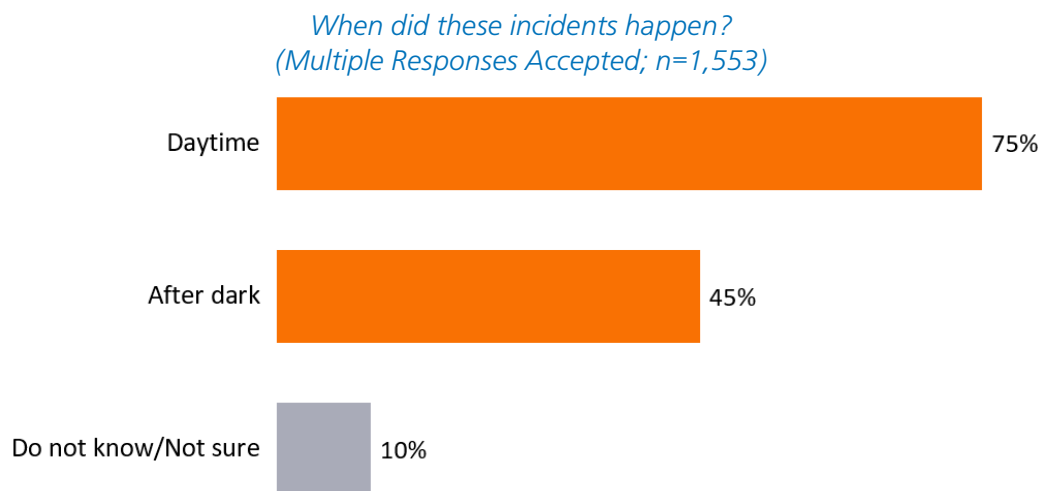
Demographics help the SFMTA focus our efforts. We found key demographic distinctions:

- Latine/x respondents said they experienced hostile comments.
- Women and nonbinary respondents said they experienced hostile comments more than men.
- A greater number of non-white respondents said they experienced physical assault.
- People with disabilities experienced higher rates of harassment than people without.

Questions about harassment were categorized differently between the two surveys so for this analysis we grouped incidents into those personally experienced by a respondent and those witnessed by a respondent. We found that the share of those who have personally experienced harassment on Muni has fallen but the share of those who have witnessed harassment has increased.

Of those who said they encountered harassment, 75% said it happened in the daytime. Only 45% said they encountered harassment after dark. 40% of respondents said they do not ride at night as a safety precaution (Figure 5). This likely contributes to lower nighttime numbers.

Figure 9: Time of Day Harassment Occurred



Reporting

More people are reporting harassment incidents and significantly fewer people don't think reporting will make a difference, but a majority still do not report. 65% said they did not report any harassment incidents. 23% turned to family and friends. 10% reported incidents directly to Muni staff. Only 2% said they posted incidents on social media. Additionally, **most people who reported incidents to officials did not request a response (45%).** Only 12% of respondents requested a response.

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Figure 12: Reporting Harassment

*When these incidents happened, did you report any of them?
(Multiple Responses Accepted; n=1,549)*

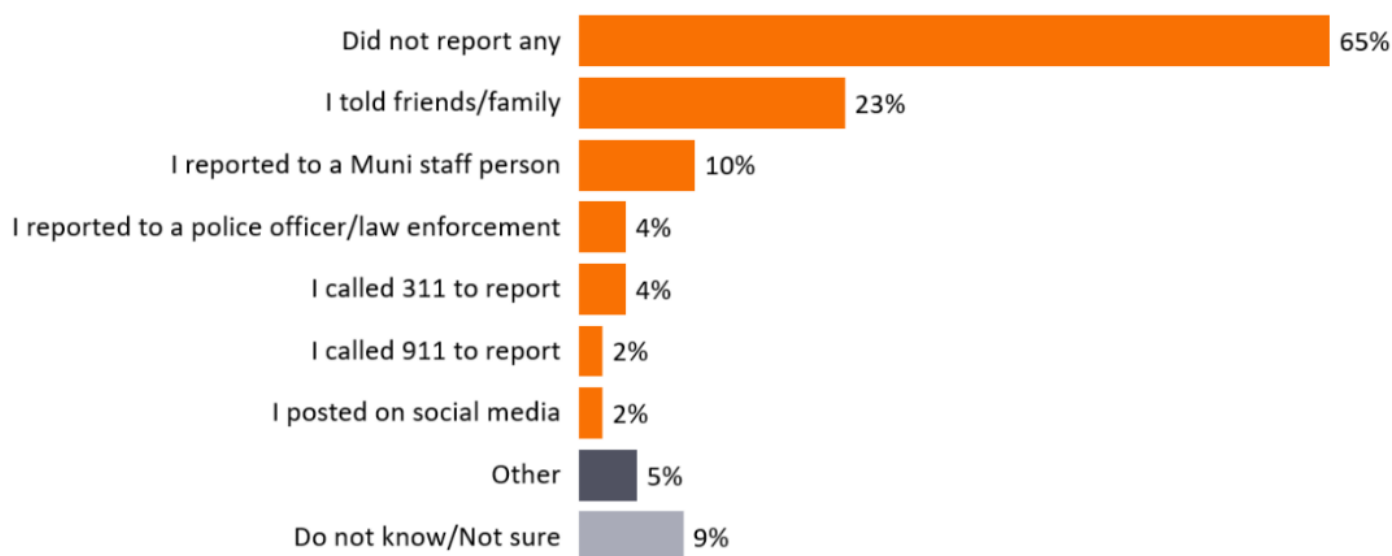
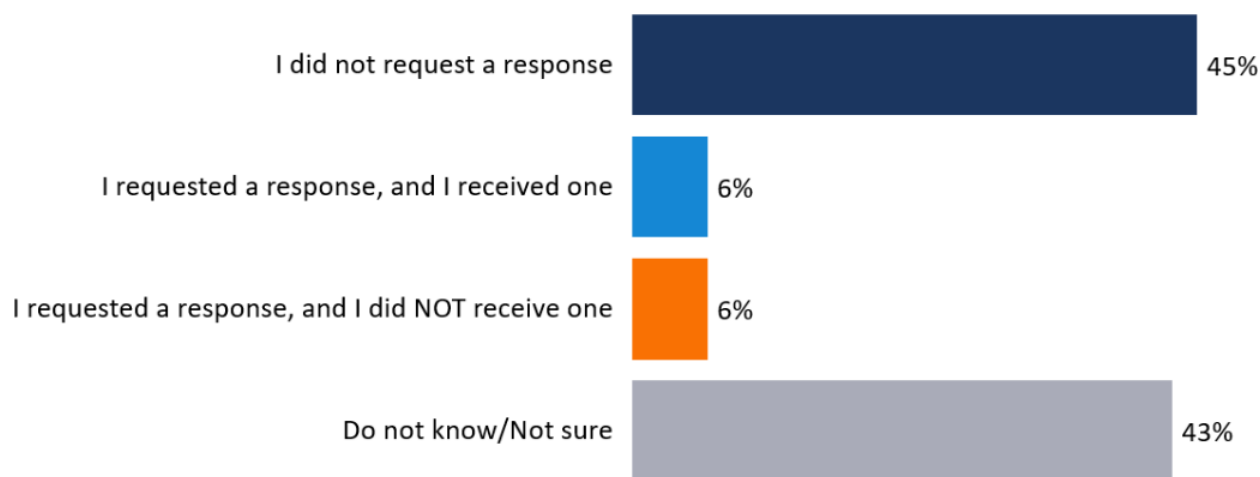


Figure 13: Requesting a Response After Reporting

If you reported the incident to Muni staff or called 311, did you receive a response? (n=1,261)



Incident reporting increased between years and confidence in reporting seems to be increasing as well. 10% fewer respondents in 2024-25 said they didn't report an incident. The reasons for not reporting were difficult



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to compare between years because the options in some cases differed but we drew one significant finding from this question: In 2024-25 only 22% of respondents said they didn't report because they thought it wouldn't make a difference, while in 2023 62% of respondents said this. At the same time, feeling that reporting won't make a difference is still a top reason for not reporting (Figure 14).

Likewise, while awareness about how to report incidents is increasing – evidenced by the increase in reporting – not knowing how to report ranks as the second primary reasons respondents said they didn't file a report (21%). 17% said they did not want to take the time to do so. 16% said they did not think the incident was serious enough to report.

Figure 14: Reason For Not Reporting Incident

If you have not reported any incidents, why not?
(n=1,465)





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Focus Group Purpose and Methodology

In addition to conducting surveys, the SFMTA hosted focus groups. We partnered with six community groups to help, listed below.

We held a focus group in Chinese and a focus group in Spanish. We also held focus groups in English. These included youth, people who identified as LGBTQ+, people who identified as transgender and people with disabilities. We chose these communities based on data of Muni riders most impacted by harassment. The focus groups provide additional understanding of safety-related experiences. It also helps us understand the perceptions of specific communities.

- [Coalition for Community Safety and Justice](#) (*Chinese language*)
- [Good Samaritan Family Resource Center](#) (*Spanish language*)
- [Boys and Girls Club of San Francisco - Tenderloin Clubhouse](#)
- [Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club](#)
- [The Transgender District](#)
- [Lighthouse for the Blind](#)

Community-based organizations recruited a diversity of demographics. These included gender, age, ability, income and education level. Focus group volunteers were selected from a pool of interested community members. This may not have been a representative sample of the population.

These focus groups may suggest the attitudes of Muni users in these populations. However, they provide helpful insights into language, core values, perceptions and beliefs.

Conversation topics covered perceptions of safety on Muni. Experiences with harassment on Muni were also discussed (as were other SFMTA property such as parking lots, transit stops and stations).

Next Steps

Improving Reporting

Improvements to our Muni Feedback reporting form are underway. The SFMTA's Digital Communications team partnered with Berkeley Innovation, a U.C. Berkeley human-centered design consultancy. The design consultancy provided recommendations to improve the user experience with the form. They also shared ideas on how to remove barriers to reporting.

The SFMTA is also exploring text-to-report technology. These services are used by many other public transit systems nationwide. We are working to identify funding that could help us implement this.

Improving Lighting at Muni Stops

SFMTA staff are also working through our Muni Forward program to improve Muni stop lighting.



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The project is prioritizing new lighting at locations identified through our data collection.

Lighting improvements help increase safety for customers waiting at Muni stops at night. Lighting allows riders to see their surroundings better and be seen. It can also deter incidents. Improved lighting may also allow a customer to see suspicious activity. Lighting helps riders to take precautions before an incident occurs.

Integrating Safety into Service Planning

The SFMTA's service planning team uses rider safety data to inform service changes.

Improvements may include cost-neutral changes that address crowding. This can be done on lines with higher reported harassment. Changes to the Muni Owl (late night) network may reduce wait times and improve connections.

As we continue to gather data, staff can make adjustments to help reduce harassment. This improves Muni rider safety.

Staffing

Survey respondents favored increasing staff on Muni lines and at stops. Staff should be where customers have reported more harassment or perceived safety concerns. This recommendation is echoed in harassment reports.

The data we've collected allows us to be more effective with our staffing. Our customer-facing staff communicate with riders and share information. They receive safety and de-escalation training regularly. They help diffuse situations and encourage reporting.

We also partner with community groups to improve how SFMTA staff interactions with the public. Staff presence can be a strong deterrent to harassment. But some respondents reported that uniformed staff can also be an intimidating presence for the same people we aim to help.

We work to build deeper relationships among our customer-facing staff and the public.

Communications and Community Engagement

Recommendations included improving public education about our efforts. This makes Muni even safer. Public communications campaigns and community collaboration aim to create more community-centered Public Service Announcements (PSA), safety and anti-harassment materials.

We work with community members to co-create messages and resources. These help our community feel safe. We also design targeted campaigns that help educate and empower.

Crucially, the Safety Equity Initiative emphasizes working with community partners to develop culturally appropriate messages that resonate with our diverse communities and messages that reflect lived experiences.



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Got feedback or want to partner with us? Subscribe for updates at [SFMTA.com/SafetyEquity](https://sfmta.com/safetyequity) or email us at TellMuni@SFMTA.com. **DO NOT submit harassment reports to this email address.*

Future survey deployments

The Safety Equity Initiative aims to deploy the survey every two years. Our Transit Performance, Analysis and Technology team will help facilitate its next deployment, largely using the same questions as the 2024-25 survey for trend analysis. We also hope to continue and expand our community partnerships.

Acknowledgements

The SFMTA would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to, and ongoing support for, the Safety Equity Initiative:

UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies

- Greer Cowan
- Pearl Liu
- Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris

SFMTA

- Maia Moran (*former staff lead for the partnership with the UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies*)
- The Security and Investigations Division
- The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging
- The Communications Division
- The Transit Service Planning Division
- Muni Customer Service
- Muni Operators
- Transit Fare Inspectors
- Metro Station Agents
- Muni Transit Assistance Program (MTAP) staff
- The Safety Equity Staff Working Group

Community-Based Organizations

- Chinese for Affirmative Action
- Good Samaritan Family Resource Center
- Girls and Boys Club of San Francisco, Tenderloin Clubhouse
- Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club
- Transgender District of San Francisco
- Lighthouse for the Blind
- Coalition for Community Safety and Justice



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- Samoan Community Development Center
- B'MAGIC
- Stop AAPI Hate

Consultants

- Civic Edge Consulting
- FM3 Research

How to Report

Reporting an incident on Muni? Call 311 or use [SFMTA.com/Harassment](https://www.sfmta.com/Harassment).

Reporting is the cornerstone of the Safety Equity Initiative. It provides information and insight we do not otherwise have and increases the information and data we can use to direct resources like staffing or prioritize projects like lighting improvements.

Prior to launching the Initiative, the SFMTA was unable to capture specific reports of rider harassment. Not surprisingly, our data set was extremely limited.

To help address this, we took several measures. We added a harassment category to the Muni Feedback form and worked with 311 to support reporting. External communications efforts focused on encouraging riders to report incidents they see or experience while using the Muni system.

Any behavior that makes a Muni rider feel unsafe when using Muni is worth reporting to the SFMTA.

Reporting incidents of harassment or assault on Muni via 311 is NOT an alternative to 911. For emergency response, always call 911, or ask someone to call for you.

However, incidents that make riders feel unsafe often do not rise to the level of an emergency or a crime that would involve law enforcement. These are the kinds of situations the SFMTA wants to hear about.

Even things that feel “small” or “inconsequential” can be worth reporting, such as unwanted looks or aggressive, insulting speech. According to our research, these incidents tend to go unreported because:

- Riders believe there’s no way to report them
- Riders brush off the experience
- Riders perceive incidents as a “victimless crime”
- Riders assume nothing can be done

But, with the information in a report, we can work to reduce and prevent unwanted behaviors from happening in the future.



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Process to Submit a Harassment Report to the SFMTA

Muni riders can submit reports about anything that makes them feel unsafe while using Muni via 311 or the Muni Feedback form at [SFMTA.com/Harassment](https://sfmta.com/Harassment).

- Calling 311 is the best option for non-English speakers or anyone who may need free language assistance.
- Customers can also fill out the Muni Feedback form.
- All harassment reports to the SFMTA can be made anonymously, but if you do provide contact information, we keep it private and do not use it except to follow up with you directly.

Know Your Rights

San Francisco is a sanctuary city. City employees cannot use city resources to assist or cooperate with any ICE investigation, detention or arrest, or ask about immigration status.

Reporting an incident to the SFMTA does not implicate you legally.

We can only contact you if you provide contact information and request follow-up. But we will not share your contact information.

We cannot file a police report on your behalf.

If we can confirm that a criminal act took place on Muni we may take legal action separately as an agency, but we will protect your right to privacy.

Next Steps When the SFMTA Receives a Harassment Report

When a harassment report is submitted to the SFMTA it is first received by our Muni Customer Service team. They assess the information, review any available video of the incident from the 11+ cameras on every Muni vehicle, provide an initial response to the customer if requested, and refer the case to the Security and Investigations Division as needed. They also collect the data from every report and add it to our internal safety database so we can track information over time.

If necessary, our Security and Investigations team investigates the incident further and develops a mitigation or prevention response as appropriate. They verify the incident if needed, identify the circumstances of the incident and any contributing factors and trends. Then they determine a response.

If the incident is actionable, Security and Investigations staff will prepare a bulletin with information about the incident and further instructions and share information with operators and customer-facing staff. These bulletins help operators and other customer-facing staff stay alert to potential problems and ready to take appropriate steps including calling for assistance.

If the incident is criminal, the SFMTA will work with the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD). In more serious cases, based on our bulletins, we've been able to assist SFPD in catching individuals committing criminal acts and succeeded in getting a restraining order on an individual.



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Reporting has also helped us identify Muni lines and areas to focus security efforts.

Different types of incidents may receive different types of response based on multiple factors including if video is available, the apparent severity of the incident and whether it is actionable.

If the incident is not actionable – meaning no specific action can be taken to resolve it – the information is still deeply valuable to help the SFMTA achieve a clear picture of where harassment is taking place, what forms of harassment are taking place, and who is impacted. With this information we can make important decisions to direct staffing, adjust service, and design projects to include features that can help reduce harassment.

We also hope to build a greater culture of safety by encouraging riders not to stay silent. Every report makes it possible for the SFMTA to know more and do more.