

Van Buren County Road Commission

Job Description

Title:	Apprentice	Effective Date: February 3, 2026
FLSA Classification:	Non-Exempt	
Department:	Operations-Road Maintenance	
Pay Grade:	Union Agreement Pay Scale	

Job Summary

The Van Buren County Road Commission Apprenticeship Program is a one-year, structured training program designed to prepare individuals for a career as a full-time Road Maintenance Employee (RME). The program provides hands-on, progressive training across three levels; from traffic control and general labor, to medium equipment operation, to CDL-required heavy equipment. Upon successful completion, apprentices will be considered for full-time employment with the Road Commission.

Supervisory Structure

Reports to the Right of Way Supervisor and/or Surface Supervisor or their designee.

Essential Duties/Responsibilities

- **Level 1 – Traffic Control & General Labor:**
 - Conduct traffic control for Road Commission operations (e.g., seal coat, de-berming, tree work)
 - Properly set up advanced warning signs and utilize correct flagging techniques
 - Use and maintain personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - Navigate to job sites using a county map without reliance on electronic GPS tools
- **Level 2 – Medium Equipment & General Labor:**
 - Perform all Level 1 duties in addition to operating medium equipment such as forklifts, chainsaws, tractors, mowers, and sweepers
 - Complete training on proper pre- and post-trip DOT vehicle/equipment inspections
 - Obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) permit from the Michigan Secretary of State
- **Level 3 – CDL Driver & General Labor:**
 - Perform all Level 1 and Level 2 duties in addition to operating CDL-required equipment such as single, tandem, and/or tri-axle dump trucks
 - Ride with and learn from experienced RMEs before operating heavy equipment independently
 - Prepare for and pass the CDL road test using Road Commission-provided equipment and training

Qualifications and Experience

- High school diploma, GED, or equivalent.

- Ability to obtain a CDL license through the State of Michigan within the apprenticeship period.
- Ability to communicate courteously and effectively with coworkers and the public.
- Able to work independently and as part of a team.
- Willing and available to be on call and work extended hours as needed.

Physical Requirements

- **Physical Mobility:** Ability to stand and/or sit for extended periods, move over uneven terrain, and navigate tight spaces around equipment. Ability to perform work in extreme or unpleasant environmental conditions.
- **Vision:** Ability to read instructions, directions, and similar written information in letters, memos, forms, and other documents. Ability to visually inspect equipment and vehicles to identify damage or mechanical issues.
- **Hearing/Speaking:** Ability to converse orally via telephone, radio, and personally to receive and communicate information to employees and the public. Ability to hear and interpret warning sounds from equipment and vehicles.
- **Agility/Movement:** Ability to lift, push, pull, and manipulate tools, equipment, supplies, and other objects often weighing upwards to 80 lbs. Ability to bend, kneel, crouch, and reach in order to perform maintenance tasks on various equipment and vehicles.

Compensation & Hours

- Starting Pay:
 - Level 1 – \$17.26 per hour
 - Level 2 – \$19.18 per hour
 - Level 3 – \$21.10 per hour
 - \$700 stipend for each successful level completion
- Schedule: 40 hrs/week + overtime
 - May–Oct: Mon–Thu, 6:00 am–4:30 pm
 - Oct–May: Mon–Fri, 7:00 am–3:30 pm

Benefits & Allowances

- Insurance: Health (HRA/HSA), dental, and vision at hire; employer pays MI Hard Cap at minimum.
- Leave: 5 hrs/month vacation after 1 month; ESTA/sick - Earn 1 hour of sick leave per 30 hours of work, able to be used following 90 days of employment for qualified situations; 12 holidays.
- Wellness: Up to \$60/month incentive.
- Allowances: \$300 boot/clothing; \$75 prescription safety glasses

Disclaimer

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the Road Commission and employee and is subject to change by the Road Commission as its needs and requirements of the position change.