

MetroTransit Garage Visit Protocol

PURPOSE

Initial garage visit purpose:

1. To meet with the garage manager and/or coordinator and ask questions about physical activity and eating opportunities at their garage.
2. To assess the garage environment (inside and outside areas) for available food and physical activity resources.

Quarterly garage visit purpose:

1. To assess garage environments (inside and outside areas) for any changes that have occurred since last assessment – both control and intervention garages.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Environmental Assessment Survey
Questions for Garage Manager/Coordinator – initial garage visit only
Directions to the Garage
Pen/pencil
MetroTransit ID badge
Digital Camera

PREPARATION before CONDUCTING VISIT

1. Contact the Garage Manager and Coordinator to set-up a convenient time to visit the garage to survey the garage and talk with the manager and coordinator.
2. Call the day before your scheduled visit as a reminder to the manager and to make sure it's still a good time/day to meet.
3. Familiarize yourself with the data collection forms and questions to ask before your visit.

ENVIRONMENTAL GARAGE ASSESSMENT

1. Record the garage location, date of visit, time of day and who is assessing/observing the garage environment.

2. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENT

a) **INSIDE GARAGE**

Stairs: note if stairs are locked or open access to employees

Exercise room: note if present, and if so, what is the condition, location, size, staff access policy, etc.

Exercise equipment: list any equipment, how many of each and condition

Scale: note condition and location of scale if present

Lockers: note condition, location, number, if locked/not locked, if present

Shower Facility: note condition, location, number of showers and cleanliness

Walking Area: This refers to an indoor area in which employees may walk around for exercise or could potentially be set up for a walking path. Note location within the garage and condition (i.e., is it near the bus fumes or mechanics area)

Basketball hoop/court: note condition, location, usable nets, etc.

Other indoor physical activity facilities: note any other types of physical activity available to employees within the garage and their conditions.

Television: note number of tvs and location.

b) **OUTSIDE GARAGE** – to determine how to define “area to assess” w/initial visits.

Bike Racks: note if any bike racks for employees to use for bike storage

Walking area-garage perimeter: refers to the immediate perimeter around the garage. Note if there is a walking area for exercise.

Walking area-neighborhood: refers to if there are sidewalks in the neighborhood immediately around the garage (within 2 blocks) that employees could use for exercise.

Parks: are there any parks immediately around the garage that employees could use for exercise (within 2 blocks)

Walking trails: are there any walking trails immediately around the garage the employees could use (within 2 blocks)

Biking trails: are there any biking trails immediately around the garage the employees could use (within 2 blocks)

Basketball/tennis courts: note if present for employees to use, the number and condition of each (usable, missing nets, etc.)

Skyways: note if any skyways immediately around the garage (within 2 blocks)

Health club: note if any health clubs immediately around the garage and if so, which ones (within 2 blocks)

3. FOOD ENVIRONMENT

a) **INSIDE GARAGE-GENERAL/DRIVER AREA**

Cafeteria: note if an eating area is present for employees. Describe the type and condition (e.g., clean, kitchenette, open room with chairs, etc.)

Vending machines:

FOOD- refrigerated vending machines stocked with sandwiches, salads, frozen entrees, yogurts, etc.

SNACKS – typically not refrigerated stocked with candy, chips, crackers, trail mix, cookies, etc.

BEVERAGE – includes all types of beverages (water, juice, sports drinks, soda)

Water Cooler: condition and who services if this is present

Microwave: note how many and condition of microwave

Refrigerator/Freezer: note location, condition and size

Kitchen (Stove/sink): note size, location, condition

Tables & chairs: note location, number, condition

Sitting room: note use of room (waiting for work, eating, talking with staff)

Food brought in from outside: – ask the garage manager and/or coordinator.

Note who brings in food (mgt vs. drivers vs. maintenance staff) and types of food brought in if possible

b) **INSIDE GARAGE-MAINTENANCE AREA**

Cafeteria: note if an eating area is present for maintenance staff. Describe the type and condition (e.g., clean, kitchenette, open room with chairs, etc.)

Vending machines: note if any vending machines in maintenance area

- FOOD- refrigerated vending machines stocked with sandwiches, salads, frozen entrees, yogurts, etc.
- SNACKS – typically not refrigerated stocked with candy, chips, crackers, trail mix, cookies, etc.
- BEVERAGE – includes all types of beverages (water, juice, sports drinks, soda)

Water Cooler: condition and who services if this is present

Microwave: note how many and condition of microwave

Refrigerator/Freezer: note location, condition and size

Kitchen (Stove/sink): note size, location, condition

Tables & chairs: note location, number, condition

Sitting room: note use of room (waiting for work, eating, talking with staff)

Food brought in from outside: – ask garage manager and/or coordinator about this. Note who brings in food to maintenance area (mgt vs. drivers vs. maintenance staff) and types of food brought in if possible

c) **OUTSIDE GARAGE**

Fast Food Restaurants: within 2 blocks. Includes fast food, sub/deli shops, pizza places.

Other restaurants: within 2 blocks. Includes sit-down restaurants, coffee shops, etc.

Convenience stores: within 2 blocks. Includes quick-mart type stores (e.g., Tom Thumbs, SuperAmerica, Quik Mart)

Grocery stores: within 2 blocks. Includes full-service grocery stores (e.g., CUB, Rainbow, Byerly's, Festival Foods, Lund's, Wedge/Co-op/Whole Foods Stores)

4. **MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

a) **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MEDIA**

Record the number of posters, brochures, bulletin boards or other media advertising physical activity (benefits, types, or general health messages). Describe what you find and where they are posted or available to employees at the garage.

b) **FOOD MEDIA**

Record the number of posters, brochures, bulletin boards or other media advertising food (restaurants, food-types, or general health messages). Describe what you find and where they are posted or available to employees at the garage.

c) **HEALTHY EATING MEDIA**

Record the number of posters, brochures, bulletin boards or other media advertising healthy eating (benefits, 5-a-day, food guide pyramid, or health eating messages). Describe what you find and where they are posted or available to employees at garage.

d) **WEIGHT MANAGEMENT MEDIA**

Record the number of posters, brochures, bulletin boards or other media advertising weight-management (benefits, types, or general health messages). Describe what you find and where they are posted or available to employees at the garage.

5. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Obtain this information from the garage manager/coordinators.

- a) **Physical Activity:** Are there any clubs or competitions focusing on physical activity? (e.g., walking club, softball team, etc.) Describe any that exist.
- b) **Food/Nutrition:** Are there any clubs or competitions focusing on food/nutrition issues? (e.g., healthy eating group, baking groups, etc.) Describe any that exist.
- c) **Weight:** Are there any clubs or competitions focusing on weight management/loss? (e.g., Weight Watchers or other diet/weight loss support group, etc) Describe any that exist.
- d) **Other:** Are there any other types of clubs or competitions? (e.g., knitting club, poker group, etc.) Describe any that exist.

6. POLICIES

Ask the garage manager/coordinator for written copies of policies – central as well as garage-specific policies - handbooks, manuals, training materials, etc.

Physical Activity

Physical Activity Policies (inside garage): note if any policies for using exercise equipment or participating in physical activity within the building. If policies in place, obtain a written copy of the policy.

Physical Activity Policies (outside of garage): note if any policies for participating in physical activity around the building. If policies, obtain a written copy of the policy.

Food Environment

Vending Machine Policies-general/driver area: note if any policies regarding vending machine placement, food selection, pricing, etc.. If policies in place, obtain a written copy of the policy.

Food policies-general/driver area: note if any policies regarding what foods can be brought in, eaten at garage. Obtain written copies of policies for your files.

Vending Machine Policies-maintenance staff: note if any policies regarding vending machine placement, food selections, pricing, etc. If policies in place, obtain a written copy.

Food policies-maintenance area: note if any policies regarding what foods can be brought in, eaten in maintenance area of garage. Obtain written copies of policies for your files.

Food/Eating Out during work Policy: Obtain a written copy of the policy if any in place.

Social Clubs, Competition

Fundraiser Policy: Ask the manager if there are any policies regarding fundraisers held at the garage or employees participating in them. Obtain a copy of any policies for your files.

7. ADDITIONAL NOTES

Use this space to record any notes, comments or questions you may have as well as any observations that you are not sure about where to record.

GARAGE MANAGER/COORDINATOR MEETING

1. Introduce yourself and briefly explain the study to the garage manager or coordinator.
2. Tell him/her we are going out to each garage and meeting with each manager and coordinator to find out about each garage. The information we gather will help us to design appropriate study activities for the MT staff at each garage.
3. Refer to the list of questions for the manager/coordinator. Take brief notes now.
4. Ask about the social clubs, competition clubs and policies pertaining to food and physical activity at this garage.
5. If you have additional questions from conducting the garage assessment, ask the manager/coordinator at this time. If you need copies of policies, ask for them at this time.
6. Ask the manager/coordinator for permission to take photos of certain areas (e.g., kitchen area, exercise equipment, shower facilities, etc.)
7. At the end of your meeting, thank the manager/coordinator.
8. Mention that you will be in touch to schedule another meeting with him/her to discuss the study in more detail and what kind of role s/he would like to have in the study activities implemented at this garage. (One-to-one meeting)

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ASSESSMENT/MEETING

1. Expand on your notes from meeting with the garage manager/coordinator.
2. Fill in any missing detail on the Garage Environment Assessment Survey.
3. Send a thank you note to the garage manager and coordinator.