

COTA BECOMES ONE OF THE FIRST TRANSIT AGENCIES IN THE UNITED STATES TO BECOME GBAC STAR™ ACCREDITED

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) has become one of only two transit agencies in the United States to earn the prestigious Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR™ accreditation, continuing COTA's commitment to providing a safe environment for transit customers and employees.

GBAC is the cleaning industry's gold standard of prepared facilities and the only outbreak prevention, response and recovery accreditation for facilities. To obtain the GBAC STAR™ accreditation, organizations must have:

- A cleaning, disinfection, and infectious disease prevention program to minimize risks associated with infectious agents such as COVID-19;
- The proper cleaning protocols, disinfection techniques, and work practices in place to combat biohazards and infectious disease;
- Highly informed cleaning professionals who are trained for an outbreak and infectious disease preparation and response.



COTA was recently evaluated and earned accreditation for all seven COTA facilities and its transit services, including fixed-route buses, paratransit and on-demand services. Since March 2020, COTA has implemented extensive cleaning and sanitization of transit vehicles, shelters and facilities, including treating all surfaces with Aegis Microbe Shield, which serves as a layer of protection from potentially harmful germs.

"We are incredibly proud to be one of the first transit agencies in the country to earn this prestigious certification," said COTA President/CEO Joanna M. Pinkerton. "As Columbus works to safely recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, COTA and other organizations are ensuring that our residents and visitors have confidence in public transportation, hotels, convention, and sporting and

concert venues. Our commitment to providing the best experience for our customers always begins with safety and we are grateful to Experience Columbus for leading this effort.”

In May 2020, Experience Columbus announced a citywide effort to help the organization’s industry sectors — event venues, transportation, lodging, and attractions – achieve GBAC STAR™ accreditation. Through the initiative, COTA became the first public transit system in the nation to apply and the second to be awarded.

“We’re proud to be one of only two destinations in the world that can offer a GBAC accredited public transit system,” said Experience Columbus President/CEO Brian Ross. “COTA is an essential piece of the visitor experience in Columbus, and we’re glad to know travelers can feel an added level of comfort now that the organization has received its GBAC STAR™ Accreditation. COTA has been a leader in the community and the industry in regards to COVID-19 cleaning practices, and this third-party validation of their efforts is further proof of that.”

In addition to COTA, the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Nationwide Arena, the Arena District Hyatt and the Columbus Regional Port Authority have all received GBAC STAR™ accreditation.

For more information on GBAC STAR™, click [here](#).



The Central Ohio Transit Authority is the region’s mobility solutions provider, driven each day to connect people to prosperity through innovation, dedication and teamwork. By utilizing technology and data, establishing community partnerships and applying sustainability principles, COTA provides equitable access to jobs, healthcare and education.



For more information, contact COTA at (614) 222-1776.