



New Jersey Crossing Guard Training Program 2024



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK

**Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy**

Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center



2024 Program Summary

For over a decade, the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center at the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC) at Rutgers University has been conducting research on crossing guard training while developing and implementing a statewide, comprehensive, and standardized Crossing Guard Training Program. Funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, and the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund of New Jersey (NJMEL), VTC continues to provide training and resources to crossing guards and their supervisors across the state.

New Jersey has approximately 6,900 crossing guards. The training program has reached 80 percent of the New Jersey municipalities that employ school crossing guards.

- In 2024, two trainings were held as webinars to accommodate more registrations than are typical for classroom training. The trainings were attended by 101 individuals representing 72 municipalities. Other attendees included a representative of the Essex County Police Office of Corrections and the Montclair State University Police Department.
- Since being available on YouTube in 2015, the training video “Crosswalk Heroes” has had nearly 89,000 views. The Spanish-language version of the training video has had over 3,600 views on YouTube.

- The Challenging Crossings training video has had over 9,700 views since its introduction in 2019.
- The 2021 8 Steps of the Crossing Procedure video has become one of our most viewed videos, with over 31,000 views.

The crossing guard supervisor train-the-trainer program continues to be rated “good” or “excellent” by the participants. Departments that have had supervisors attend the program in previous years send their new crossing guard supervisors to the training. Often, departments send several officers to the training.

Crossing guard supervisors report that they are using the training presentation and video to train their guards. They are using other resources such as the model policy, post-observation report form, and medical examination form.

The following document reviews the results of the crossing guard supervisor’s pre-and post-training questionnaires and the supervisor’s pre-and post-training quizzes. Lessons learned, resources, and next steps are summarized.

2 Supervisor Training Sessions:

	Registered	Attended	Communities Represented
May 30, 2024 Webinar	57	52	40
August 6, 2024 Webinar	58	49	32
TOTAL:	115	101	72

- An officer attended from 2 towns that had not previously sent officers
- Departments that have previously sent supervisors have sent additional attendees or new supervisors
- Other attendees included:
 - A representative of the Essex County Police Office of Corrections
 - A representative of Montclair State University Police Department



Supervisor Training Agenda

I. Crossing Regulations and Procedures

- a. Introduction
- b. Characteristics of Young Children
- c. Traffic Laws and Regulations
- d. Crossing Procedures
- e. Types of Intersections

II. Field Exercise

III. Crossing Guard Policies and Procedures

- a. Crossing Guard Placement
- b. Hiring, Training & Retraining
- c. Hazards and Incidents
- d. Orientation to Agency

IV. Presentation of Training Material



The Training

The following slides present a summary of the responses from the crossing guard training questionnaires completed at the two train-the-trainer classes held in May and August 2024.



Summary Report

Crossing Guard Supervisor Pre-Training Questionnaire



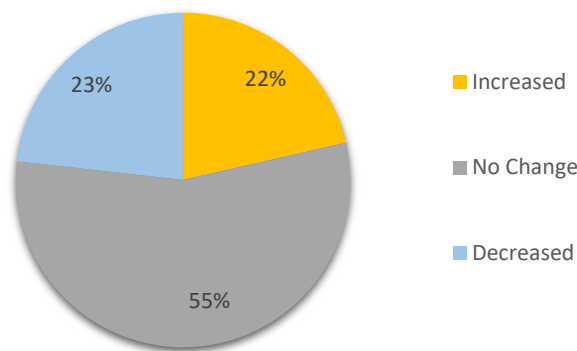


Staffing

Question 1: How many crossing guards does your municipality currently employ? How many crossing guards do you believe are needed?

- Out of 58 participants, 53 participants responded to this question
- 43% report that they have *too few* crossing guards
- 57% report that they have *enough* crossing guards or *more than enough*, which usually refers to the presence of substitute guards

Question 2: Have there been increases or decreases in your municipal crossing guard force in the past 3 years?



- New Jersey has over 6,900 crossing guards.
- 23% of departments saw a decrease in their force.



Policies

Question 3: Do you have official written municipal policy(s) regarding crossing guards about any of the following?

Policy Type	Responses (57)	Percentage
Training	46	80%
Duties	44	77%
Hiring	42	74%
Retraining	36	63%
Retraining	36	63%
Placement	34	60%
Discipline	33	58%
None of the above	7	12%

- Departments most often have policies relating to training, duties, and hiring, but fewer have policies related to retraining, medical requirements for the job, placement, and discipline.
- Our model municipal crossing guard policy is available on the NJ Crossing Guard webpage.



Crossing Guard Placement

Question 4: In your municipality, what is the most important factor determining the placement of crossing guards?

Factors	Responses (56)	Percentage
Proximity of school(s)	48	86%
Traffic volume	34	61%
Age of students	26	46%
Pedestrian crashes	21	38%
Traffic study	17	30%
Speed limit	11	20%
Vehicle turning movements	11	20%
Road width	10	18%
Number of lanes	9	16%
Engineer study	7	13%
Other	5	9%

- Main determinants for crossing guard placement are: proximity to school, age of students, and traffic volume
- Responses for other:
 - Limited busing
 - Number of walking students
 - Pedestrian traffic

Crossing Guard Placement

Signalized intersections?

Answer	Response	Percentage
Yes	43	75%
No	14	25%
Total	57	100%

A significant number of crossing guard posts are located at challenging intersections.

Signalized multi-lane intersections?

Answer	Response	Percentage
Yes	33	58%
No	24	42%
Total	57	100%

Unsignalized multi-lane intersections?

Answer	Response	Percentage
Yes	25	45%
No	31	55%
Total	56	100%



Crossing Guard Placement

Question 5: Are crossing guards placed for:

School Type	Responses (58)	Percentage
Public school students	58	100%
Private school students	21	36%
Charter school students	7	12%
Other types of students	2	3%

- All municipalities report placing crossing guards to help public school students.
- 36% percent of municipalities report providing crossing guards for private school students.



Crossing Guard Placement

Question 6: Do you provide crossing guards for:

- Most crossing guards are crossing elementary and middle school students. Over two-thirds are crossing high school students.
- About half are crossing Pre-K students, they are most likely accompanied by a parent.

Event Type	Responses (55)	Percentage
Pre-kindergarten students	27	49%
Elementary school students	53	96%
Middle school students	43	78%
High school students	37	67%
Community events	19	35%
Other types of schools or students	3	5%

Other types of schools or students:

Public recreational facilities

College

Training

- Approximately 62% of new crossing guards receive two or more hours of classroom instruction as required by law.
- In general, returning guards receive less classroom training.

The train-the-trainer class encourages supervisors to bring all the crossing guards together for classroom training. Guards can discuss their experiences at their posts, learn new procedures and be reminded of required procedures.

Question 7: How many hours of classroom training do your **new** crossing guards receive annually?

Hours	Response	Percentage
2 hours or more	34	62%
Up to 2 hours	16	29%
Up to one hour	1	2%
Up to ½ hour	0	0%
Zero	4	7%
Total	55	100%

Question 8: How many hours of classroom training do your **returning** crossing guards receive annually?

Hours	Response	Percentage
2 hours or more	28	50%
Up to 2 hours	14	25%
Up to one hour	3	5%
Up to ½ hour	0	0%
Zero	11	20%
Total	56	100%

Training

Question 9: What classroom training materials do you use?

Respondents selected multiple answers.

85% of the municipalities are using materials from the NJ Crossing Guard Training Program.

Training Materials	Responses (48)	Percentage
NJ Crossing Guard Training Program material	40	85%
NJMEL (Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund)	9	19%
Materials developed in-house	7	15%
AAA	6	13%
Other	3	6%
None of the above	4	8%



Training

Question 10: How many hours of field training do your **new** crossing guards receive?

Hours	Response	Percentage
None	3	6%
Up to one hour	4	7%
Up to 10 hours	11	21%
Up to 20 hours	9	17%
20 hours or more	26	49%
Total	53	100%

Question 11: How many hours of field training do your **returning** crossing guards receive?

Hours	Response	Percentage
None	30	57%
Up to one hour	14	26%
Up to 10 hours	7	13%
Up to 20 hours	1	2%
20 hours or more	1	2%
Total	53	100%

About half of departments provide the required 20 hours of field training for new guards, and 3 respondents noted that their new guards do not receive field training. Training varies widely by department.



Training

Question 12: How do you conduct field training?

Answer	Responses (53)	Percentage
New guards are paired with several experienced guards at multiple posts	23	43%
New guards are paired with an experienced guard at one post	27	51%
Crossing guard supervisor is paired with new crossing guard at post	10	19%
Crossing guard supervisor monitors new crossing guards while in cruiser	5	9%
Field training is not conducted	4	8%
Other	6	11%

Some respondents chose multiple answers.

The majority of new crossing guards are paired with an experienced guard or guards for their required field training.

Other options included:

- Police officer
- Crossing guard trainer



Training

Question 13: How often are crossing guards retrained in your municipality?

Answer	Response (53)	Percentage
Several times per year	1	2%
Annually	38	72%
Every other year	0	0%
Retraining is not offered	6	11%
Only when laws or existing conditions change	6	11%
Other	2	4%

Other
Starting this year, I will retrain every year
As needed

- The majority of municipalities are retraining annually.
- Retraining refreshes crossing guards on:
 - Proper crossing procedures
 - Post routines
 - Counters the establishment of bad habits
- Gives guards the opportunity to talk about experiences on the post.

Training

Question 14: Who directs the training of your crossing guards?

Director	Response	Percentage
Municipal Police	50	84%
Senior-level or experienced crossing guard(s)	3	5%
Other municipal employee(s)	2	3%
Private company	2	3%
State Police	0	0%
Other	3	5%
Total	60	100%

The vast majority of crossing guards are trained by municipal police departments.

Question 15: Is your department engaged in any form of countywide or regional crossing guard training?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	48	86%
Yes	8	14%
Total	56	100%

Most of the departments do not engage in countywide/regional training.

Note: Several county police academies provide direct training for crossing guards.

Orientation to Agency

Question 16: Are your crossing guards employed by:

Answer	Response (58)	Percentage
Municipality	54	93%
Private company	2	3%
School District	0	0%
Other	2	3%

- Most crossing guards are hired, trained and supervised by the municipal police. Each year, a few departments inquire about privatizing the crossing guard function.

Question 17: During what hours are your crossing guards stationed?:

Answer	Response (54)	Percentage
Morning hours	54	100%
Afternoon hours	54	100%
Lunch hours	12	22%

- All municipalities station their crossing guards during morning and afternoon hours.
- Nearly one-quarter of municipalities report stationing crossing guards during lunch hours.



Orientation to Agency

Question 18: What is the starting hourly rate for a new crossing guard in your municipality?

Answer	Response	Percentage
More than \$20.00	22	42%
\$18.01 – \$20.00	13	25%
\$14.01 – \$18.00	14	27%
\$12.01 to \$14.00	2	4%
\$10.01 to \$12.00	1	2%
\$7.25 to \$10.00	0	0%
Total	52	100%

Question 19: What is the highest hourly rate paid to crossing guards in your municipality?

Answer	Response	Percentage
More than \$20.00	15	29%
\$18.01 – \$20.00	10	19%
\$14.01 – \$18.00	23	44%
\$12.01 to \$14.00	2	4%
\$10.01 to \$12.00	2	4%
\$7.25 to \$10.00	0	0%
Total	52	100%

- In general, it appears that crossing guard pay has increased over the past several years. This change may reflect the need to attract applicants.

Orientation to Agency

Question 20: Are crossing guards in your municipality members of a union?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	39	67%
Yes	11	19%
Don't Know	8	14%
Total	58	100%

- 19% of municipalities have crossing guards who are members of a union.
- Unions may provide uniforms for their members.





Orientation to Agency

Question 21: Does your municipality provide uniforms, other than the safety vest, for your crossing guards?



Equipment offered varies by municipality.

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	19	35%
Yes, we provide uniforms	27	49%
Yes, we provide a stipend for the purchase of uniforms	3	5%
Other, please explain:	6	11%
Total	55	100%

Other
Vest
Coat
Rain Jacket
All but pants and shoes

Orientation to Agency

Question 22: If your municipality provides uniforms or a stipend, what is required?

Answer	Responses (48)	Percentage
Safety Vest	45	94%
Rain gear	34	71%
Hats	26	54%
Gloves	16	33%
Shirt	15	31%
Pants	14	29%
Visible ID card	16	33%
Badges	13	27%
Shoes	9	19%
Other	6	13%

Other
Jacket
Stop Sign
Winter Coat
Whistle



Uniforms assist in making crossing guards more visible, and more comfortable on the post. The safety vest is required.

Orientation to Agency

Question 23: What equipment does your municipality provide to crossing guards?

- The STOP paddle is required equipment for crossing guards.
- Whistle use has continued to increase among municipalities.
- Some departments provide orange cones to improve visibility at the crossings.



Answer	Responses (54)	Percentage
Hand-held STOP paddle	54	100%
Whistle	24	44%
Orange cones	16	30%
Moveable safety signs	5	9%
Pole-mounted STOP paddle	3	6%
Ice melt	1	2%
Chair	0	0%
Shovel	1	2%
Other	6	11%

Other

Rain gear

Winter gear

Safety vest

Hat

Flashlight & Safety light

Orientation to Agency

- Most departments have crossing guards report directly to their supervising officer.
- In some departments, they are reporting to more than one person.
- Crossing guards need clear procedures for reporting incidents, hazards, or maintenance issues at their posts.

- The training emphasizes that maintenance of crosswalks and crossing post areas is a matter of *workplace safety*.
- Coordination with the municipal DPW may allow for the prioritization of crossing guard posts for shoveling, sanding, pothole repair, etc.
- Coordination with the county or the state to address conditions on county or state roads can be challenging.

Question 24: To whom do crossing guards report incidents, hazards, or violations?

Answer	Responses (56)	Percentage
Police supervisor	46	82%
Dispatch	24	43%
School staff	5	9%
Public works	2	4%
Other	10	20%

Other
Crossing Guard Supervisor
Police Officer Liaison
Private Contractor Supervisor
Traffic Bureau

Orientation to Agency

Question 25: To whom do crossing guards convey job-related suggestions, comments, concerns, or complaints?

Answer	Responses (56)	Percentage
Police	49	88%
Municipality	7	13%
Other	5	9%
School district	0	0%
Private company	1	2%

Other
Crossing Guard Supervisor
Traffic Bureau

Question 26: What is the typical tenure of crossing guards in your municipality?

Years	Response	Percentage
Less than 1 year	2	4%
1 to 2 years	3	5%
2 to 5 years	14	25%
5 to 10 years	22	40%
10 to 15 years	11	20%
15 to 20 years	2	4%
20 or more years	1	2%
Total	55	100%

Orientation to Agency

Question 27: Does your department perform initial medical exams?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	16	30%
Yes	37	70%
Total	53	100%

Question 28: Does your department perform regular age-based medical exams?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	27	52%
Yes	25	48%
Total	52	100%

Question 29: Have any of your guards' suffered injuries on the job?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	33	60%
Yes	22	40%
Total	55	100%

Summary Report

Crossing Guard Supervisor Post-Training Questionnaire



Orientation to Agency

- 82 training participants responded to the post training survey.
- Not every person answered every question.

- 74% of training participants considered themselves only *somewhat* or *not at all* familiar with the material presented.
- This reinforces the assumption that development and distribution of this training will benefit crossing guards.

Question 1: How familiar were you with the information presented before this training?

Answer	Response	Percentage
Very much	21	26%
Somewhat	47	57%
Not at all	14	17%
Total	82	100%

Question 2: How would you rate the training overall, i.e. did it accomplish what you expected and needed?

Answer	Response	Percentage
Excellent	55	67%
Good	27	33%
Fair	0	1%
Poor	0	0%
Total	82	100%

Training Materials

Question 3: How well did the training meet the following goals?

(ranked from 1 (low) to 5 (high))

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Total responses
Provided a structure that is easily adopted for training crossing guards.	1	1	5	21	54	82
Provided information relevant to conditions in your community	1	1	6	21	53	82
Provided resources to improve crossing guard performance.	2	0	3	23	54	82



Training Materials

Question 4: Which of the following resources presented today will you use for your own training program?

Resources	Will Use	Will Not Use	Will Discuss with Supervisor	Total Responses
PowerPoint Training Slides for Crossing Guards	69	1	12	82
Field Exercise for Crossing Guards	60	4	17	81
Crossing Guard Tip Sheets	65	1	15	81
Crossing Guard Post Observation Report	53	7	22	82
Municipal Crossing Guard Policies	59	3	20	82
PowerPoint Segments	69	2	10	81
Training Video	72	1	9	82
Training Video - Spanish	39	24	19	82

Most of the participants will either use the training resources or they will discuss using the materials with their supervisor.



Training Session

Question 5: Are there any barriers to implementing any part of this training?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	78	96%
Yes	3	4%
Total	81	100%

Question 6: Would you have spent more time on any of these modules?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	80	99%
Yes	1	1%
Total	81	100%

Question 7: Would you extend your classroom crossing guard training past the two-hour time requirement?

Answer	Response	Percentage
No	68	83%
Yes	14	17%
Total	82	100%

Would you extend your classroom crossing guard training?
Yes, to make sure the information is being understood.
I think it would be beneficial to do an in-person class as well.
If needed or necessary

Training Session

Question 8: Please share any other thoughts on the Crossing Guard Training Program:

"I think the program is excellent."

"Class provided all the necessary materials."

"I think the program is excellent. Having taken over as the crossing guard supervisor at my department last year, your resources left me with virtually zero questions on how I should handle this responsibility."

"Thank you or having this program be accessible."

"Overall very well presented with knowledgeable staff."

"I found this to be very helpful and interesting. The information distributed makes it so much easier to train my guards in August."

"Class served its purpose."

"Great course."

"You hit every point."

"Excellent Job! Thanks for having me."

"It was a very informative class, love the resources provided on the website."

"It was very helpful."

"Class provided all necessary materials."



Crossing Guard Quiz

Results	Pre-training	Post-training
Average Score	79%	83.0%
Number of “Don’t Know” Responses	21	3

- May 2024 class responded 100% correctly on two questions on the pre-training quiz and six questions on the post-training quiz.
- August 2024 class responded 100% correctly on five questions on the pre-training quiz and five questions on the post-training quiz
- Scores improved on all questions.



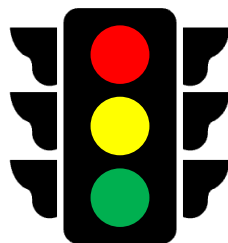
Crossing Guard Quiz

As has been the case in previous years, the percentage of correct answers for the two questions below increased from pre- to post-training but remained the most confusing to participants:

- A crossing guard should use only words and a head nod to communicate with pedestrians. (correct answer: true)
- Crossing guards use only the STOP paddle and an outstretched hand to communicate with drivers. (correct answer: true)



Direct Crossing Guard Training in Underserved Communities



Direct Crossing Guard Training

In-person crossing guard training was conducted in:

- Township of North Bergen – April 1, 2024, 77 guards
- City of Trenton – August 27, 2024, 70 guards
- City of Passaic – August 29, 2024, 60 guards

These cities were chosen from the list of municipalities identified by the following:

- *NJ 2020 Strategic Highway Safety Plan Equity Approach and Parameters*
- Rankings of communities in 2021 NJDHTS Highway Safety Plan for pedestrian and bicycle crashes
- Equity analysis maps and lists to identify underserved communities
 - US EPA Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool
 - NJ Department of Community Affairs Targeted Urban Municipalities designation
 - NJ Department of Environmental Protection Overburdened Communities list

In the City of Passaic, almost all the guards speak Spanish as their first language. The Rutgers-VTC representative presented the material in English, and the crossing guard supervisors translated it as needed. The Spanish voiceover version of the Crosswalk Heroes video was shown in Passaic.

Lessons Learned



Lessons Learned

Crossing Guard Tenure

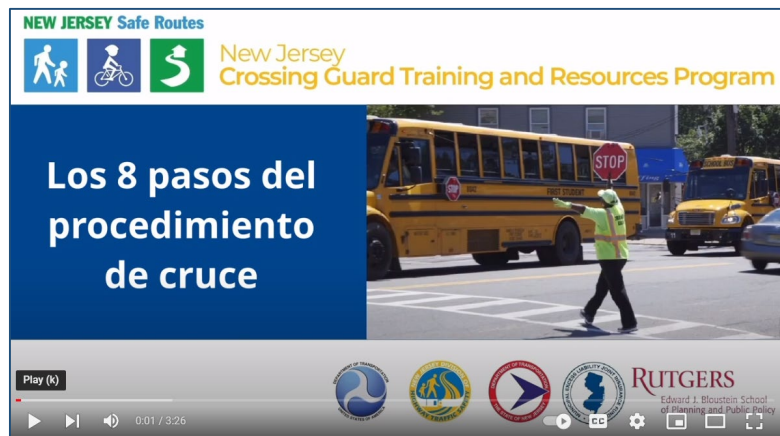
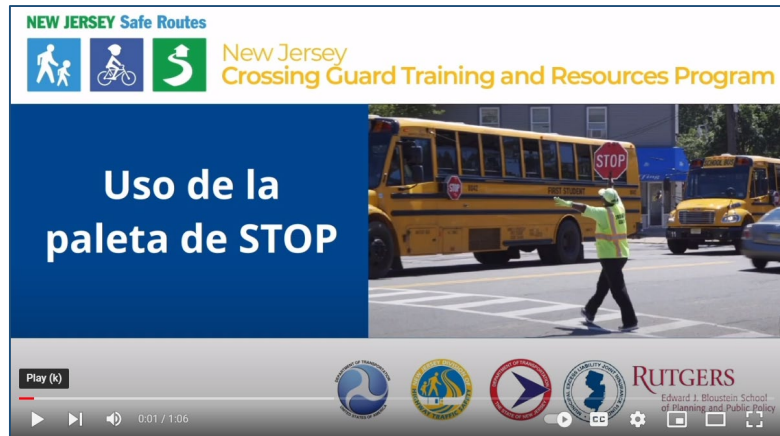
- There was a decline in reported long-term crossing guards. Communities continue to report having trouble finding people who want to be crossing guards or qualify to be crossing guards. The majority of crossing guards in New Jersey continue to be newer to the position.
- Police Departments continue exploring privatizing the hiring/ training/ supervision of crossing guards.
- There was an increase in calls about training for staff from private groups (churches, clubs, etc.) to serve as crossing guards.
- Police Departments continue to request information on crossing guard post placement and decommissioning posts.

Training Year	2-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years
2014	43 %	20%	32%
2015	49%	28%	19%
2016	68%	19%	10%
2017	71%	6%	20%
2018	73%	11%	13%
2019	64%	15%	18%
2020	72%	17%	11%
2021	64%	21%	6%
2022	63%	21%	6%
2023	60%	21%	10%
2024	65%	20%	4%

Lessons Learned

Spanish-language Resources

- Forty-eight percent of police departments noted that they will use the Spanish voice-over version of the crossing guard training video, and twenty-three percent will talk to their supervisor about using this resource.
- Rutgers-VTC has just completed a Spanish-language direct crossing guard training video.
- More Spanish-language resources continue to be needed.



Lessons Learned

Focus Groups

In 2024, Rutgers–VTC held focus groups with Crossing Guards in urban communities to explore the conditions “on the street” and help determine what information, visuals, or other adjustments to the standard training materials would be helpful for this population.

Initial comments from crossing guards in the first focus group included:

- Drivers, including parents and teachers, ignore crossing guards.
- Parking or dropping children on or near crosswalks or too close to corners.
- Delivery trucks (UPS, Amazon, etc.) block ramps and crosswalks.
- Heavy traffic with few breaks makes gap assessment difficult.
- Speeding, distracted driving, and near misses.
- Signal timing issues result in long crossings with insufficient time to cross.

Lessons Learned

Focus Groups

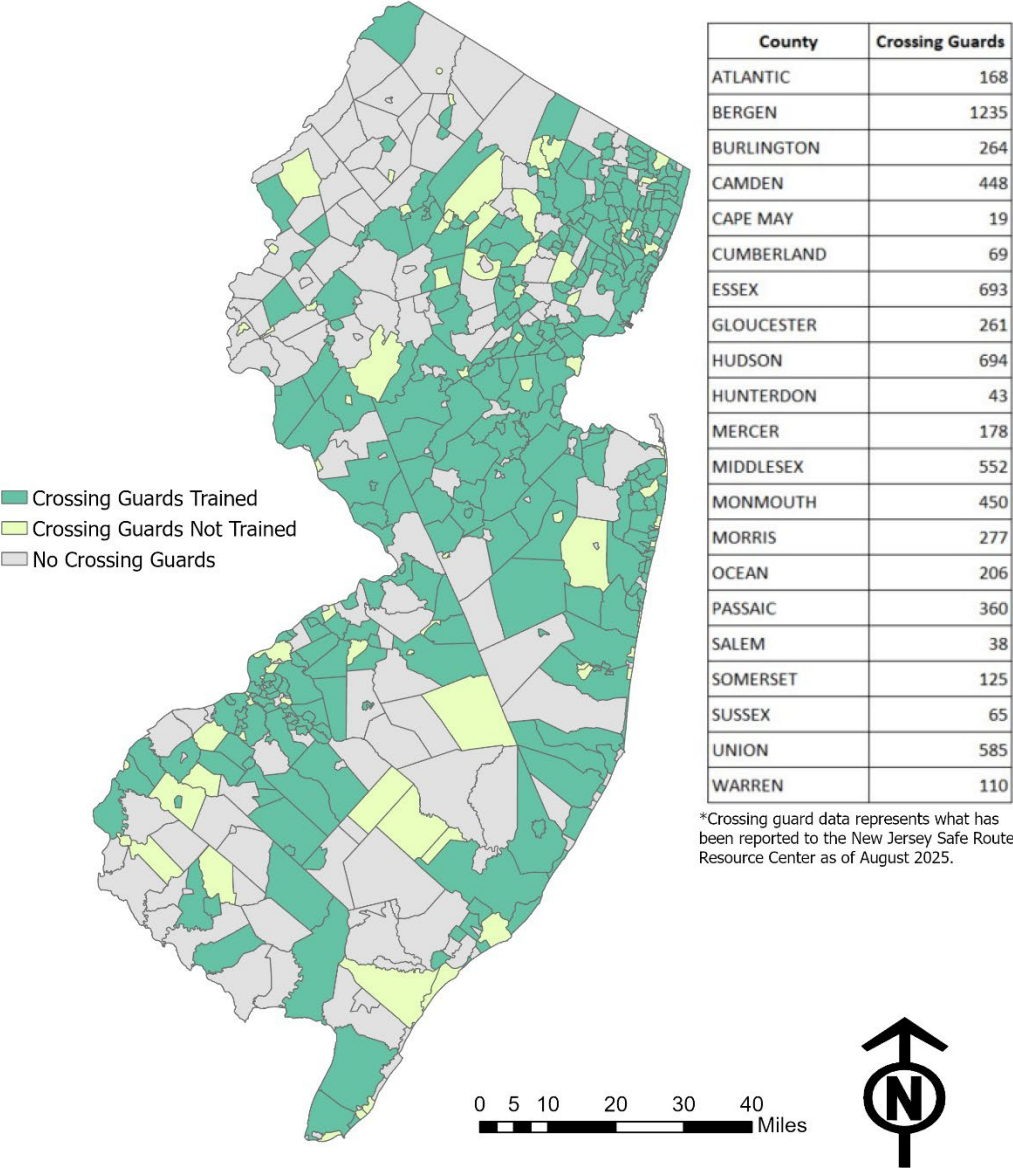
Following the initial focus group, Rutgers-VTC coordinated with Civic Eye Collaborative to develop visual resources based on the initial feedback to be integrated into a presentation for additional focus group attendees to respond to. Using video clips and photographs, the concerns raised by the crossing guards in North Bergen were visualized to start a discussion among crossing guards in Trenton and Passaic.

Additional comments from crossing guards in Trenton and Passaic included:

- Older students don't listen to crossing guards.
- Children on bicycles don't listen to crossing guards.
- Cars and trucks are getting larger, and trying to get drivers of these large vehicles to stop has become increasingly intimidating.
- Red light running has increased.
- Verbal abuse has become more common.



Crossing Guard Supervisors Trained in New Jersey (2013-August 2024)



*Crossing guard data represents what has been reported to the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center as of August 2025.

Since the start of the NJ Crossing Guard Train-the-Trainer course, supervisors from 340 municipalities have been trained. The training has reached nearly 80% of the municipalities that have crossing guards.

Over the years, municipalities have sent multiple officers to the training, as well as new supervisors as they take on the supervisory role.

Thank you!

Our Partners

- NJ Department of Transportation
- NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety
- Federal Highway Administration
- NJ MEL
- AAA
- NJ Department of Health, Division of Occupational Safety & Health (OSHA)
- HTSPAC
- NJPTOA
- County and regional police academies

