

FDOT Newsletter

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Volume 73



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

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- Building Capacity
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Governor Ron DeSantis Appoints Jared W. Perdue as Secretary of the Department of Transportation

Governor Ron DeSantis announced his appointment of Jared W. Perdue, P.E., as Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Perdue has extensive experience with FDOT where he has served for nearly 18 years, and currently serves as District Five Secretary.

"I am pleased to appoint Jared W. Perdue as Secretary of the Department of Transportation," said Governor Ron DeSantis. "Secretary Perdue brings a wealth of knowledge and understands the unique aspects of Florida's transportation industry. I am confident in his ability to lead FDOT and to continue to advance our transportation systems."

"I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as Secretary of FDOT," said FDOT Secretary Jared W. Perdue. "I look forward to building upon Governor DeSantis' mission for the Department." Jared W. Perdue, P.E., Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation

Jared W. Perdue has served at FDOT for 18 years, most recently as District Five Secretary where he was responsible for leading and developing a workforce of nearly 600 employees and managing an annual budget of nearly \$1 billion. As District Five Secretary, Perdue led the completion of the I-4 Ultimate Project, FDOT's largest project to date. He also oversaw the Wekiva Parkway project, a model transportation project for environmental conservation. Prior to his time at District Five, he served in several leadership roles within the Department.

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Use Toolbox Talks to Improve Worker Safety During the Labor Shortage

Since President Joe Biden signed the \$1 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in November 2021, construction demand has increased. The labor force, however, has not: 92% of contractors reported moderate to high levels of difficulty recruiting skilled labor in Q3 2021, up from 88% in Q2.

When paired with high construction demand, the skilled labor shortage has increased workplace pressures on remaining industry veterans. And with fewer skilled workers, construction companies have had to rely on a less-skilled workforce—a fact that should concern safety-minded contractors. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly one-third of nonfatal construction-related injuries occur among workers with under a year's experience.

Given this reality, contractors need to focus on providing robust workplace safety education. One effective method can be regular safety briefs called "toolbox talks."

The Construction Labor Shortage Threatens Workplace Safety

The construction industry's labor shortage has been a persistent problem since the Great Recession. But in Q3 2021, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Commercial Construction Index (CCI) painted a particularly grim picture. Of the contractors struggling to recruit skilled workers:

- Seventy-three percent find it difficult to meet project schedule requirements.
- Seventy-one percent are demanding more of their skilled workers.
- Ninety-three percent expect the labor shortage to persist or worsen over the next six months.

These numbers describe a perfect storm for more frequent on-site injuries. When overworked and understaffed crews feel pressured to stay on schedule, they might cut corners. Those decisions can seriously impact their safety.

Fortunately, contractors recognize this problem, workplace safety is their second-highest concern, according to last quarter's CCI. Even so, concern isn't enough. In order to find an actionable solution, contractors need efficient and effective ways to implement workplace safety training.

About The FDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on FDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.



CEI DBE Supportive Services

(800) 423-7058

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