



Legislation Text

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Clerk 09/28/2022

AN ORDINANCE relating to public transportation, revising rates of low-income fare on buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles and streetcars to \$1.00 for twelve months beginning on January 1, 2023; amending Ordinance 13480, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 4A.700.010, establishing an effective date and establishing an expiration date.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. K.C.C. 4A.700.010 provides for fares for regularly scheduled county public transportation service on buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles and streetcars, including fares for adults, children, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities and low-income riders.
2. The King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2021-2031, as adopted by Ordinance 19367, includes a strategy to "Align fares with other service providers, meet revenue targets, and advance equity through Metro's income-based approach to fares."
3. The King County council has worked with the King County executive and the Metro transit department ("Metro") to implement a number of programs to make public transit more affordable and accessible to people in need.
4. The current low-income fare is \$1.50 for buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles and streetcars, \$3.75 for the West Seattle water taxi route and \$4.50 for the Vashon Island water taxi route. The low-income fare is available to persons who apply for and are determined to meet the eligibility threshold of two hundred percent of the federal poverty level.

5. Metro's fund management policies for the public transportation fund, as adopted by Ordinance 18321, provide that Metro will recover at least twenty-five percent and will maintain a target of recovering thirty percent of passenger related operating costs from farebox revenues for bus service.

6. Sound Transit will implement a \$1.00 low-income fare for a six-month period beginning September 1, 2022. More than half of riders enrolled in ORCA LIFT who begin a trip on Sound Transit transfer to Metro services, highlighting the importance of fare alignment for the two agencies. That is particularly important for ORCA LIFT enrollees, who are some of the region's most-vulnerable riders.

7. Metro is engaged in a broad conversation about its fare policy and will use the twelve-month pilot period to engage with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive approach to reduced fare and other fare policy areas.

8. In recognition of the equity and social justice benefits of a lowering the low-income fare, the King County executive and council support authorizing a twelve-month pilot to implement \$1.00 low-income fare on buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles and streetcar.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Ordinance 13480, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 4A.700.010 are hereby amended to read as follows:

Except as may otherwise be provided by ordinance, the following fare categories and rates are established for regularly scheduled county public transportation service on buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles and streetcars:

Regular fare	\$2.75
Child fare	No charge
Youth fare	No charge
Seniors and persons with disabilities fare	\$1.00

Low-income fare	(\$1.50) \$1.00
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The fare categories and rates are subject to, and defined by, the following:

1. The child fare is available to persons up to six years old when accompanied by a responsible person paying the proper fare as set forth in this chapter. Up to four children may ride with each responsible person;
2. The youth fare is available to persons from six through eighteen years old and persons over eighteen years old who receive student passes under K.C.C. 4A.700.450;
3. The senior and persons with disabilities fare is available to persons who apply for and receive a regional reduced fare permit. The permits are available to persons at least sixty-five years old and persons with disabilities as provided in the regional reduced fare permit program authorized under K.C.C. 28.94.255;
4. A person with a disability who has been issued an “attendant ride free” permit by the department may be accompanied by an attendant, who is not required to pay a fare; and
5. The low-income fare is available to persons who apply for and are determined to meet the threshold eligibility requirements for the low-income transit fare program authorized under K.C.C. 4A.700.490 and receive a valid low-income transit fare product.

B. A fare in subsection A. of this section is paid when a person pays the appropriate amount in cash or presents an appropriate pass, transfer or other fare payment media established under and used in accordance with this chapter.

C.1. Regional and institutional passes, in various single-trip value denominations and for various effective periods, may be issued and sold in accordance with the terms of an agreement approved by the council and entered into with other public transportation providers in the region. Institutions include employers, groups of employers, educational institutions, transportation management associations and other organizations. The effective periods, single-trip values and prices for the regional and institutional passes shall be established by the agreement. A valid regional or institutional pass may be presented an unlimited number of times during its

effective period as full or partial payment of the applicable fare. To the extent the single trip value of the regional pass is not sufficient to cover the applicable fare, the rider shall pay the difference in cash or from an electronic stored value product, such as e purse.

2. For institutions entering into an annual institutional pass agreement, the following schedule of calculations shall determine the cost of the annual agreement for the Metro transit department's portion of the agreement:

First twelve months:	$TR \times \text{baseline trips}$
Second twelve months:	$(TR \times \text{baseline trips}) + [(TR \times \text{added trips}) \times 1/3]$
Third twelve months:	$(TR \times \text{baseline trips}) + [(TR \times \text{added trips}) \times 2/3]$
Fourth twelve months (and subsequent twelve-month periods):	$(TR \times \text{baseline trips}) + (TR \times \text{added trips})$

For purposes of this formula, "added trips" means those trips taken during the prior twelve months, determined either from surveys or electronic counting of actual institutional pass use, that exceed the number of baseline trips established at the execution of the institutional pass agreement. Electronic counts of one month or more will be annualized and used in lieu of survey results if available.

For purposes of this formula, "baseline trips" means the estimated number of transit trips taken by the contracting party's covered population of students, employees or others, or any combination thereof, in the twelve months preceding execution of the institutional pass agreement. Baseline trips may be adjusted on an annual basis to account for changes in the number of eligible employees.

For purposes of this formula, in the event a party terminates or does not renew an institutional pass agreement, any subsequent institutional pass agreement entered into with that party shall be priced as if in the "fourth twelve months and thereafter" category.

For purposes of this formula, "trip revenue" or "TR" means the weighted average fare per trip determined by the department.

D. The rate of fare for paratransit service shall be \$1.75 per trip and \$63.00 for a monthly pass, except that a no-charge youth fare shall be available to persons from six through eighteen years old and persons over

eighteen years old who receive student passes under K.C.C. 4A.700.450.

E. The rate of fare for customized bus service to residents of Center Park, a facility of the Seattle Housing Authority located at 2121 - 26th Avenue South, Seattle, is equal to the paratransit fares specified in subsection D. of this section.

SECTION 2. This ordinance takes effect on January 1, 2023.

SECTION 3. Section 1 of this ordinance expires January 1, 2024.