



# NEWS

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## **MTA ASKS COURTS' REVIEW OF ORDER TO ROLL BACK FARES; BASE FARE RETURNS TO \$1.10, PASSES BEING DISTRIBUTED FOR SALE**

MTA has asked U.S. District Court Judge Terry Hatter to stay his order forcing the MTA to roll back bus and train fares. At the same time, the Authority has announced that it will submit a writ of mandate requesting the U.S. 9th Circuit Court for a review and stay of Judge Hatter's temporary restraining order that prevents the agency from implementing a change in its fare structure that is crucial to eliminating a budget deficit.

On September 1, the day of Judge Hatter's initial ruling, the MTA announced it would immediately comply with the restraining order. Pending the outcome of the legal issues, the base bus and rail fare will remain \$1.10, with transfers priced at 25 cents. Sale of the regular \$42 monthly pass will resume as quickly as the passes can be distributed to sales outlets and support materials printed and distributed.

At the same time, in announcing their intention to submit the writ of mandate, MTA Board members and staff expressed serious concerns with not being able to implement the new fare structure as scheduled.

"We are disappointed with the delay," said Ed Edelman, MTA's chairman and a Los Angeles County Supervisor. "Our FY 1995 budget is predicated on the new fare structure going into effect on Sept. 1, and providing \$31 million in additional funds needed to help maintain the level of service we currently provide to 1.2 million riders a day."

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Deputy Chief Executive Officer Kim Kimball noted that Judge Hatter's ruling also places an administrative burden on MTA, which is now required to revert to the previous fare system.

"It took many weeks to properly prepare for, and inform the public about, the new fare structure," Kimball said. "We cannot undo overnight what took time to implement without substantial cost to the agency."

A hearing on the temporary injunction has been scheduled for 3 p.m. Monday, September 12.

The MTA had instituted a new fare structure earlier in the day September 1, increasing the base bus and train fare to \$1.35. The new fare structure also eliminated the sale of the regular monthly pass. The Authority's principal discount was provided by the continued sale of tokens at 90 cents each.

The new fare structure also increased the price of the monthly student, senior and handicapped monthly passes. The student (K-12) pass increased from \$18 to \$20, the senior and disabled riders' pass rose from \$10 to \$12 and the college and vocational pass increased from \$25 to \$30.

The MTA is working to devise a system for refunds to riders who purchased monthly passes for September in these categories.

MTA officials have noted in their legal briefs that the fare increase was approved by the Board following a lengthy public review process which included two public hearings. As part of the Authority's efforts to balance its budget, the MTA also reduced its workforce by some 600 positions, cut in half the number of contracts awarded for outside services, endured a nine-day strike to reduce labor costs by \$20 million, reallocated capital funds to make more monies available for operating costs and instituted some service cuts.

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