

## **Transportation Program to Help 'Welfare to Work' Families**

(July 13, 2001) The county Board of Supervisors has approved a \$12.2 million program aimed at helping transit-dependent "Welfare to Work" families. The MTA will provide about a third of the funding and will play an important role in coordinating the necessary transit services.

Of the 107,000 Welfare to Work families in the county, 63 percent depend on public transit as a means of getting to jobs, schools, health care and childcare. The MTA will work with the county Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to provide services.

"In many cases, a lack of transportation (has) prevented people from moving ahead with their lives, and now this will be remedied," said Supervisor Yvonne Burke. "Both the MTA and DPSS should be applauded for their efforts."

Elements of the Welfare to Work transportation plan include a 24/7 "safety net" for participants with transportation problems, safety improvements for late evening or nighttime transit riders and improvements in existing shuttle, vanpool and other supplemental transit services.

Eligible Welfare to Work participants also may participate in programs that would provide vehicles for personal transportation to job training or job interviews, for commuting or for medical visits and childcare.

Commenting on the MTA's role in the program, Jim de la Loza, executive officer, Countywide Planning said, "From the MTA's perspective, we're trying to expand our role as a coordinator of services that improve mobility for social service clients. This fits in very well with our countywide planning responsibilities."

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