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[Viewpoint](#)
[Classified Ads](#)
[Archives](#)
[Metro.net \(web\)](#)

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[Safety](#)
[Pressroom \(web\)](#)
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[Archives](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Research Center/Library](#)
[Metro Cafe \(pdf\)](#)
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[Strategic Plan \(pdf\)](#)
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## Metro Tailors Transit Pass Programs for Businesses

- Program offers incentives for companies that give passes to employees

By DAVE SOTERO

(Feb. 9, 2005) New Metro pass programs are making it easier than ever for Los Angeles County businesses, both large and small, to offer employees a better, more cost-effective way to get to work by Metro.

Metro's Commuter Services Department offers employers two types of pass programs – the Business Transit Access Pass (B-TAP) and the Annual Transit Pass (A-TAP).

The B-TAP program, designed exclusively for businesses, gives companies options for introducing annual transit passes to their employees as a valuable addition to their benefits package.

The TAP program provides a strong incentive for company employees who would not otherwise use public transit, and holds great promise in helping to reduce single passenger commuting on LA County's clogged streets and freeways. But employers also benefit.

### 'Improves the bottom line'

"Metro's TAP Program is simply good for business," says CEO Roger Snoble. "It raises productivity by enabling workers to arrive on time, refreshed and ready to work. It also improves the company's bottom line because the programs can be partially paid for with pre-tax dollars. TAP is a win-win program that every company should seriously consider 'tapping' into."

As an additional company benefit, employers with 250 or more employees may meet their South Coast AQMD trip reduction requirements with Metro's TAP Programs.

The A-TAP, or Annual Transit Pass program, allows businesses to provide annual transit passes for only those employees who currently take transit to work. The price of the pass is not discounted under this program, and may be attractive for larger companies with a smaller employee base using public transit.

Businesses have the flexibility to choose how the passes are paid for as part of the employee's benefit plan.

The employer may choose to pay the entire cost of the passes and take full advantage of the pre-tax benefit. The company may also elect to subsidize part of the cost, or allow employees to pay the cost as a benefit through payroll deduction.

Metro will issue photo-ID "smart cards" for employees to use when

boarding the Metro Bus or Metro Rail system and will manage employee card changes for the company.

To encourage new employees to explore alternatives to driving alone to work, Metro will give them a pass allowing unlimited access to the Metro system for a full week.

Other incentives are available for company employees who use transit, carpool or vanpool to work rather than drive alone. An employee at any size company who rideshares at least eight times a month will receive \$15 gift certificates good at major retail stores.

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