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Transportation Operations Supervisor Michael Walton (far right), of Arthur Winston Division 5, with Department of Corrections social workers during the Parole Outpatient Clinic. Photos by Rich Morallo.



Metro's Michael Walton Briefs Social Workers on Transit

- Their customers depend on transit

By RICH MORALLO

(July 26, 2005) Applause and wide smiles welcomed Transportation Operations Supervisor Michael Walton as he was introduced at the Parole Outpatient Clinic this week.

"We're so glad you're here," said Brenda Armour, one of several social workers meeting at the Department of Corrections facility located just west of downtown Los Angeles.

Charged with the care of 5,500 parolees from throughout the county, the social workers have to make sure their customers get to where they need to go.

"Our parolees' priorities are transit, food and shelter, and without the first - transit - they don't achieve the other two," said Armour.

Invited to provide an orientation of Metro's transportation services, Walton talked about fares and passes, bus schedules, transit operations and how to ride safely on the bus and train.

'Metro is the way to go'

"We understand your customers have to meet appointments - get medication, counseling and attend programs for housing and benefits, and Metro is the way to go," said Walton.

Social workers described how their customers rely on public transit to report to their parole officers, get to different programs for drug treatment, housing and medical care, and keep close with friends and family.



TOS Michael Walton answers a social workers' question during the Parole Outpatient Clinic.

"Public transit is important to them as they have to be at different places and appointments, and meet the conditions of their parole," Armour said.

Walton, who typically works customer complaints, Worker's Compensation issues, and accident investigations at Arthur Winston Division 5, was glad he met with the social workers.

"They appreciated Metro and what the agency does for their clients - helping them travel throughout the city and keep on track with their lives," he said.

"Everyone should be able to easily use public transit as I do," said Dr. Darry Lee, another social worker, who travels every day on Metrolink, the Metro Red Line and Metro Bus Line 18 to come to work.