



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Department of Transportation Closes Investigation of Metro Civil Rights Complaint with No Findings

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S.DOT) has officially closed a civil rights complaint with no findings against the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) that was filed by the Labor Community Strategy Center alleging fare compliance discrimination on the Metro transit system.

The U.S. DOT's action followed an exhaustive, nearly year-long investigation of the transit agency's fare collection and compliance practices. Its investigation included review of hundreds of pages of documentation and on-site observation of Metro's fare compliance procedures and checks.

To further strengthen Metro's current fare compliance practices, the U.S. DOT will partner with the transit agency to provide technical assistance on fare collection and enforcement and related public outreach for one year.

"We are pleased the Department of Transportation made no findings, as it validates what we already know about Metro's fare compliance program: it is universally applicable to all transit riders. Absolutely no one is singled out when checking fares," said L.A. Mayor and Metro Board Chair Eric Garcetti. "We look forward to working with the DOT to bolster our current program and increase our public awareness efforts to help ensure that everyone who rides Metro pays their 'fare' share."

The Labor Community Strategy Center initially filed the complaint charging that Metro violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. In its complaint, the strategy center alleged that Metro had a policy of "stop and frisk" designed to harass African American passengers. Metro has never had a policy of "stop and frisk." To ensure a just and equitable legal process for fare violators, Metro created a transit court for adults several years ago. This year Metro expanded the court for youths as well. The Metro Transit Court does not treat fare evasion as a criminal offense. The court has the flexibility to take a range of actions to remedy fare evasion and it does not result in criminalization for violators.

Since the complaint was filed, Metro has also transferred primary fare enforcement duties away from law enforcement to civilian Metro employees. Law enforcement officers may assist when needed, but primary fare inspection duties are now conducted by non-law enforcement personnel.

“We are doing everything possible to ensure our customers enjoy the most equitable transit system possible,” said Metro CEO Phil Washington. “We have zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind on the Metro System. We also have some of the lowest fares in the country. Simply paying your fare every time you ride avoids any potential problems and helps us generate the revenues we need to continue providing world-class transit service for all our customers.”

For additional information about Metro's Code of Conduct which includes fare compliance, visit https://media.metro.net/about_us/ethics/images/codeofconduct_customer.pdf. For more information on Metro's Transit Court visit <https://www.metro.net/about/transit-court/>.

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is unique among the nation's transportation agencies. Created in 1993, Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that transports about 1.3 million passengers daily on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines. The agency also oversees bus, rail, highway and other mobility-related building projects and leads transportation planning and programming for Los Angeles County.

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