

# Regional Transit Providers Celebrate Transit Equity Day by Offering Free Rides on Sunday, Feb. 4

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Tracy Smith February 2, 2024

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), in partnership with Metrolink, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA), today announced they will all offer free rides on buses, trains and other public transportation services on Transit Equity Day, Sunday, Feb. 4. Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) and all other Ventura County transit operators will offer free rides on Monday, Feb. 5, to commemorate the day.

Transit Equity Day is celebrated annually on the birthday of Rosa Parks, who by refusing to give up her seat on a public transit bus in 1955, helped to launch the civil rights movement in the United States. Transit Equity Day is now a day of action highlighting the efforts of transit providers, labor unions and climate justice advocates to promote equity in public transportation.

“Metro continues to expand the system by opening new bus and rail lines throughout the region and improving public transit in neighborhoods as we know that removing barriers to transportation can create new opportunities,” said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair Karen Bass. “We are excited to offer free rides to honor Rosa Parks and Transit Equity Day on Sunday, Feb. 4.”

Metro will provide free rides on its bus, rail, bikeshare and Metro Micro rideshare services on Sunday, Feb. 4. All Metro rail station turnstiles will be unlocked, allowing unrestricted access to the rail system. On Metro Buses, bus riders will not need to TAP their fare cards at fare validators or fare boxes.

Metro Bike Share and Metro Micro will offer free rides that day as well. Users can redeem their Metro Bike Share 30-minute free ride by selecting ‘1-Ride’ at any Metro Bike Share kiosk, online or in the Metro Bike Share app, and use code be 020424. The code may be used multiple times throughout the day.

To redeem a free ride on Metro Micro, the agency’s on-demand rideshare service available in selected L.A. County neighborhoods, riders can simply book their ride and

use code Equity24.

“Transit Equity Day is a reminder that transit agencies like Metro have a duty to embed equity into everything we do,” said Stephanie Wiggins, CEO of Metro. “From offering discounted and free fares for students, seniors, and people with lower incomes, to engaging the public in the design and implementation of our services, Metro strives to ensure that all people, regardless of where they live in LA County or how much money they make, have equitable access to high quality, reliable, and affordable transit services to get to work, school, or wherever they want to go.”

Metrolink passenger rail, serving riders throughout the region, will also honor Rosa Parks and transit equity by providing free fares on Sunday. When riders arrive at a station, they simply board the train to anywhere in Metrolink’s six-county service area. Metrolink’s Arrow service in San Bernardino County will also be free.

“We are proud to join our regional transit partners in offering free rides on Feb. 4, as part of our broader commitment to advancing transit equity in Southern California,” Metrolink CEO Darren Kettle said. “As a public transportation agency, we do more than connect people. We provide access to opportunity. That’s why, in addition to the everyday discounts and special programs we offer, we’re continuing to explore new and creative ways to address transit inequity in the communities we serve. For instance, added midday and late-night service on our Antelope Valley Line is creating new opportunities for riders who work outside of the traditional 8-to-5 window – a model we hope to replicate on additional lines later this year.”

SBCTA is sponsoring free bus and train fares for everyone boarding San Bernardino County transit providers within the county. Omnitrans, Victor Valley Transit Authority and Basin Transit will operate at no cost on Sunday, Feb. 4 and Monday, Feb. 5, while Mountain Transit and Needles Area Transit will be free for riders on the latter day.

Orange County’s OC Bus and Riverside County’s Riverside Transit Agency will offer free rides on Sunday, Feb. 4. Ventura County transportation providers will commemorate Transit Equity Day with complimentary fares on Monday, Feb. 5.

## **Transit Equity is Every Day**

Metro

Metro Street Teams will be in the community Jan. 29 through Feb. 4, at bus and rail stations across LA County to share information and help enroll riders in the agency’s GoPass and Low-Income Fare is Easy (LIFE) programs. These programs bring fare relief and remove barriers for youth and low-income riders, two of the agency’s most economically vulnerable customers.

Metro’s GoPass Pilot Program provides L.A. County students, at participating schools,

with a free transit pass good for unlimited access to Metro and other transit providers for school, extracurricular activities, work, and any other destinations. To date the program has 345,907 registered students from 1,573 participating schools in 115 participating school districts (including public districts, charter networks, community college and private schools). Since the program launched in October 2021, there have been more than 26 million boardings by students using the free fare student GoPass.

The LIFE program offers new enrollees a free 90-day pass and after the first 90 days, riders can either load 20 free rides or purchase a discounted pass from any of the LIFE participating transit agencies. In 2023, Metro's LIFE Program saw 14,557,528 boardings. Riders can apply by self-certifying that they meet the LIFE Program income levels and enroll online at [metro.net/life](https://metro.net/life).

Metro's reduced fare programs for seniors and persons with disabilities make sure customers never pay more than \$2.50 a day or \$5.00 within a seven-day period. After reaching the maximum fare, all rides are free within the seven-day timeframe.

And Metro's Mobility Wallet Pilot Program gives in need Angelenos the freedom to choose the mode that best suits their needs best by providing a debit card with \$150 per month to spend on transportation. The card can be used to take the bus, ride the train, use bike share, take Metro-Micro and more.

## Metrolink

Metrolink has discounted fares every day for children, riders with disabilities, seniors and active military. Passengers with a valid student ID are now able to ride for free thanks to Metrolink's Student Adventure Pass pilot program, which launched last October. Additionally, the agency's Mobility-4-All low-income fare discount program offers riders with a valid California Electronic Benefit Transfer card a 50 percent discount on any Metrolink ticket or pass.

Metrolink's Corporate Partners Program (CPP) enables employers to offer pre-tax transit benefits to their employees using transit for work. If a rider's company is not part of Metrolink's CPP, it's an easy registration process, and new accounts receive an additional 25 percent discount on tickets and passes for the first six months. Information is available on the Metrolink website at [metrolinktrains.com/cpp](https://metrolinktrains.com/cpp).

Other Agency Quotes:

### **Laura Rubio-Cornejo, LADOT General Manager**

"Transit Equity Day reminds us that transportation is about more than getting from point A to point B. Transportation is fundamentally about providing people with options, access, and opportunity, and it shapes the social fabric of our cities," said LADOT General Manager Laura Rubio-Cornejo. "It is no coincidence that the modern

civil rights movement began when Rosa Parks claimed her seat on a bus, and it is with this same conviction that LADOT remains committed to creating a safe, reliable, dignified transportation system that supports the needs and ambitions of all Angelenos.”

**Dawn Rowe, Board President SBCTA:**

“Access to transit is an important component to a healthier community. Transit Equity Day shines a focus on the opportunities to success that public transit can provide.”

**Claire Grasty, Public Transit Director VCTC:**

“Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) is offering free rides on our buses on Monday, February 5, in observance of Transit Equity Day and the birthday of civil rights leader Rosa Parks. Transit Equity Day is an opportunity for VCTC to put our values into action by honoring those who have worked to ensure equity in transportation. On this day, we are reminded that VCTC must continue to fulfill our core mission, which is to create a more connected, resilient, equitable and user-friendly transportation system for Ventura County. Our Free Fare Days Program is just one of our many projects that focuses on ensuring fair and equitable access to high-quality transit service for all residents and visitors who travel within Ventura County and beyond.”

**Erin Rogers, CEO/General Manager Omnitrans:**

“We want to amplify the importance of transit equity for all,” said Erin Rogers, CEO/General Manager of Omnitrans. “As we honor civil rights champion, Rosa Parks, we underscore Omnitrans’ mission to provide access and connection for our communities.”

For additional information on Transit Equity Day free rides, please visit [metro.net](http://metro.net), [metrolinktrains.com](http://metrolinktrains.com), [LADOT.com](http://LADOT.com), [OCTA.net](http://OCTA.net), [RCTC.org](http://RCTC.org), [GoSBCTA.com](http://GoSBCTA.com), and [GoVentura.org](http://GoVentura.org).

**About Metro**

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is building the most ambitious transportation infrastructure program in the United States and is working to greatly improve mobility through its Vision 2028 Plan. Metro is the lead transportation planning and funding agency for L.A. County and carries more than 900,000 boardings daily on a fleet of 2,200 low-emission buses and six rail lines.

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## **About Metrolink**

Metrolink regional passenger rail service offers reliable, safe, affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation throughout Southern California. Metrolink has 545.6 total service line miles and 67 stations across Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura and San Diego counties connecting people, communities, and businesses and is an essential link in the region's mobility network. Metrolink's Arrow service, which launched in October 2022 with nine miles of track and four new stations between San Bernardino and Redlands, provides greater local and regional rail connectivity.