



Board Policy No. 333

Fare Policy Goals and Methodology

ADOPTED: 6/22/2011

RECENT AMENDMENT: 5/24/23

Effective: 5/24/23

SEE ALSO: 333A

SUBJECT CATEGORY: SECTION 300, FINANCE

SUBSECTION: FARES

CONTROL DEPARTMENT: FINANCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the goals and methods on which AC Transit's fares are based as well as payment options and products.

II. PERSONS AFFECTED

Riders using AC Transit services, and the District's personnel involved in making fare-related decisions.

III. DEFINITIONS

"Clipper® Card" or "Clipper" means the Bay Area regional stored-value transit electronic payment "smart card" administered by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). This card can be used to pay AC Transit fares if it is loaded with cash and/or AC Transit passes. MTC (in cooperation with regional transit operators) is developing a next generation system ("Clipper 2"). References to Clipper also apply to Clipper 2.

"Discount Fare" means the reduced fare required of riders eligible for youth, senior, or disabled fares.

"Youth" – means persons age 5 through 18.

"Senior" – means age 65 and over.

"Disabled" – means persons under 65 with qualifying disabilities.

"EasyPass" means annual value pass provided on Clipper to a defined universe of participants at qualified colleges, employers, and residential communities.

"Accumulator" means a function for calculating fares that automatically charges the rider for the best value fare based upon the number of transit trips made, also known as a fare "cap". This ensures the riders do not incur further charges once they reach a certain financial threshold without having to make upfront decisions to purchase multi-trip passes.

IV. POLICY

A. Goals of the Fare Policy

Goal 1 – Simplicity: Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should be easy to use for riders, and easy to operate for the District.

Goal 2 – Appropriateness: Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should provide a good value for riders.

Goal 3 – Equity: Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should be equitable for all riders.

Goal 4 – Fiscal Responsibility: Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should result in predictable costs for riders while providing necessary financial support for service.

Goal 5 – Policy Supportiveness: Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should be supportive of other District goals – service, land use, and social goals – and compliant with other regulatory mandates.

Goal 6 – Affordability: Fare structure and payment methods should be affordable to all riders to ensure their full access to bus service and to prevent adverse impacts on socially vulnerable populations.

Goal 7 – Increase Ridership: Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should help to maintain and increase ridership.

B. Fare Structure

1. Riders may pay their fare using the following payment options:

- a. Cash – Riders may pay the applicable fare in cash either in bills and coins, or a combination thereof. Exact fare is required.
- b. Magnetic Stripe Passes – Riders may pay with a magnetic stripe pass issued from the farebox upon payment of appropriate cash fare; or pay with a magnetic stripe pass distributed by qualified public or social service agency or qualified non-profit organization.
- c. Contactless/Electronic – Riders may pay the applicable fare with e-cash or passes loaded on a Clipper card, mobile payment application, or similar system.

2. Transbay fares shall be priced separately from local fares.

3. Discounted fares shall be priced at 50% of the applicable base fare. The federally mandated discount for senior and disabled fares is 50% in the off-peak period. AC Transit works to maintain discounted cash fares as 50% of the adult fare at all times, which is common among American transit agencies.
4. Single trips and Day Passes may be paid by cash; all other multi-trip passes must be purchased using a Contactless/Electronic method.
5. When possible, the accumulator function shall be made available for purchase of all multi-trip passes to allow riders to benefit from pass pricing discounts without requiring an up-front purchase. Accumulator functionality should be cumulative, allowing a rider to benefit from the Daily price cap each day until they hit the Weekly cap, and the Daily and Weekly price caps until they hit the Monthly cap. The District may further elect to discontinue up-front pass purchases based on rider acceptance of accumulator-based pricing caps.
6. The adult local single-ride fare shall be the base fare upon which other fares and pass prices are calculated. The single-ride discount fare shall be half of the applicable adult single-ride fare.
7. Adult single rides paid using a Contactless/Electronic method shall receive a discount. The local youth/senior/disabled single-ride fare discount shall be one-half of the adult discount.
8. Multi-trip passes purchased using a Contactless/Electronic method shall use the Contactless/Electronic single-ride fare as the base price.
9. Fare changes are based on a five-year schedule of planned fare increases. See Resolution 19-008 for specific local fare levels, and Resolution 18-012 for Transbay fare levels. AC Transit fare details shall be available on AC Transit's website: www.actransit.org.

C. Fare Products

1. Riders may purchase these products in addition to a single-ride fare:
 - a. Day Pass – The rider may purchase the Day Pass with cash or with Contactless/Electronic accumulator.
 - b. Multi-Day Passes – The rider may purchase a 31-Day or Monthly Pass via the Contactless/Electronic method or through the Mobile App accumulator function. The rider may purchase a 7-Day Pass through the Mobile App accumulator function, and in the future, through other electronic means. Paper passes will be available only to social service agencies or qualified non-profit organizations.

D. Local Fare Pricing

1. Contactless/Electronic Discount – The adult single-ride on Contactless/Electronic methods shall be discounted by \$0.25. The youth/senior/disabled single-ride Contactless/Electronic fare discount shall be one-half of the adult Contactless/Electronic discount.
2. Day Pass:
 - a. Cash Day Pass will cost two (2) times the single cash fare, plus \$0.50, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$0.50.
 - b. Contactless/Electronic Day Pass will cost two (2) times single Clipper/Mobile App fare, plus \$0.50, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$0.50.
 - c. Day Passes shall be valid until 3:00 AM of the next day of first use.
3. 31-Day Adult Pass Prices – The price of a 31-day pass shall be thirty-six (36) times the adult single-ride Contactless/Electronic fare.
4. Youth 31-Day Pass and Senior/Disabled Monthly Pass Prices – These discount passes shall be priced at thirty (30) times the discount single-ride Contactless/Electronic fare.
5. 7-Day Pass – The price of a 7-day pass shall be ten (10) times the single-ride Contactless/Electronic fare.
6. Discount transfer from BART – A \$0.50 discount will be applied automatically to the Clipper fare on a first bus ride away from a BART station when transferring from BART to AC Transit.
7. All-Nighter Transfer – Riders transferring between All-Nighter routes, including Tempo, between the hours of 12:00 AM (midnight) and 6:00 AM shall receive a free transfer.
8. Other Fares – The provisions of the regional fare coordination agreements shall govern the various Inter-Agency Transfer fares.

E. Transbay Fare Structure

1. The Adult Transbay Single-Ride Fare as Base Transbay Fare – The adult Transbay Fare shall be the base fare, upon which other fares and pass prices are calculated.
2. Single-Ride Discount Fare – the discount fare shall be half of the applicable adult fare.
3. No Contactless/Electronic discount – Transbay Fare shall be the same price for cash or Contactless/Electronic.

4. 31-Day Adult Pass Price – The target price of a 31-day pass shall be thirty-six (36) times the applicable adult single ride fare.
5. Other Agency Fares – The provisions of regional fare coordination agreements concerning Free Rides, Regional Transfers, Capitol Corridor, and Ferry Transfers shall govern these fares.
6. Dumbarton Express Fare – As long as the District manages the Dumbarton Express service under the oversight of the Dumbarton Regional Operations Consortium, the Dumbarton Express Fare shall equal the Transbay Fare. This also applies to the Discount Fare.
7. Upgrade Fare – Riders transferring from Local to Transbay service shall pay the difference between the Local and Transbay Fare based on the Fare Media and Fare Category (Adult or Discount) used on the originating trip.
8. Riders who have paid a Transbay fare using a Contactless/Electronic method receive a free transfer to a local bus if boarding within two hours.

F. EasyPass Fare Structure

1. EasyPass Fare Structure and Prices are set forth in Board Policy 334.

V. AUTHORITY

A. Board Authority

1. Sole authority to adjust fares rests with the Board of Directors. All fare adjustments must be made by resolution of the Board.

B. General Manager Authority

1. The General Manager may approve a free or discount fare for New Year's Eve.