

ONTHEGO

News for Your Employees

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Ride Free on Transit Equity Day



Feb. 4 is Transit Equity Day. In honor of Rosa Parks' birthday, it's a day that promotes making transit affordable and accessible to people in all communities.

Fares will be free Feb. 4 on Metrolink trains throughout Southern California. All you have to do is simply arrive

at the station and board the train (no ticket required) to ride Metrolink all day, anywhere it goes.

Rides are also free for the day on Metro Bus and Rail and Bike Share, OC Bus and all San Bernardino County and Ventura County buses.

2025 Rideshare Calendar



Mark your calendars, then look for event updates in future issues of *On the Go*.

- **Feb. 4 is Transit Equity Day.** Metrolink, Metro, OC Bus and San Bernardino County and Ventura County transit providers will be celebrating by offering free rides all day.
- **National Transit Operator and Worker Appreciation Day is March 18**—take a minute to thank a transit worker!
- **April is Earthquake Preparedness Month.** Get your employees ready for commuting in crisis conditions; contact California's Office of Emergency Services at caloes.ca.gov or your local Red Cross office.
- **Earth Day is April 22**—a day to celebrate ridesharing's contribution to clean air, earthday.org.

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2025 Rideshare Calendar

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- **May is National Bike Month,**

presented locally by the transportation agencies for Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties and traditionally featuring prizes, rides, rallies and more.

Bike Week is May 12-18 and Bike to Work Day is May 16.



- **May is also Clean Air Month,** and the American Lung Association kicks it off with the release of its *State of the Air Report* (a report grading major cities' air quality), lung.org.



- **Employee Health and Fitness Day is May 21,** a great day to remind employees about the health benefits of alternatives to solo driving like biking and walking.

- **Active Streets: Mission at Twilight open streets event** (formerly 626 Golden Streets) is June 22, 3 to 8 p.m. in Alhambra, San Gabriel and South Pasadena, activestreeets.org.

- **Rural Transit Day** is July 16, recognizing the importance of ensuring that transit is available and accessible in rural areas.

- **Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) International Conference**—where ETCs and other transportation professionals can network and learn the latest in commute management—is Aug. 3-6 in New Orleans, LA, actweb.org.

- **September is Rail Safety Month,** oli.org.

- **National Drive Electric Week,** featuring workshops and events, is typically held in September or October, driveelectricweek.org.

- **California Clean Air Day** is Oct. 1, cleanairday.org.

- **Rideshare Week 2025** is Oct. 6-10, promoting alternatives to driving alone in Southern California.

- **Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) TDM Forum**—exploring the latest in transportation demand management research and initiatives—is Oct. 28-29 in Portland, OR, actweb.org.



Important Tax News:

Transportation Fringe Benefit Gets a Raise



Employees can receive transit and vanpool benefits tax-free up to \$325 a month in 2025, according to a recent announcement by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

That's a \$10 monthly increase over the current transportation fringe benefit.

The IRS allows both employers and employees to receive tax benefits through the pre-tax purchasing of public transit fare media including vanpool fares.

Employers can also choose to provide employees with a direct subsidy up to the monthly limit, perhaps eliminating the cost of commuting altogether.

Parking is also an allowable transportation fringe benefit—and the monthly maximum an employee claims can be a mix of transit and parking.

For more information, consult your tax professional.

A Year in Review — 8 Changes in Transportation You May Have Missed

In case you missed it, here are some happenings in Southern California transportation in the past year that could impact your employees' commutes:

1. Metrolink added more trains and increased service.

Metrolink added 32 weekday trains—a nearly **23% increase in service**. Now 174 trains are running each weekday. With the new schedule, riders enjoy more choices when they travel, as well as faster transfers.

2. Metro Rail riders got one step closer to LAX connections.



Metro opened the **Aviation/ Century Station along its C and K rail lines**. It's the first of two new stations aimed to provide better connections between the lines as well as to LAX.

Next to open will be the much-anticipated

LAX/Metro Transit Center. (An opening date has not yet been announced.)

Once open, the LAX/Metro Transit Center will serve the C Line, K Line, and local buses run by Metro and other agencies. It will also eventually connect to airport terminals via the LAX people mover.

3. Carpoolers get there faster on SB Express Lanes.

Express toll lanes opened on the I-10 Freeway, between the Los Angeles County Line and I-15 in San Bernardino County.

Carpools with three or more occupants can travel in the lanes toll free when using a FasTrak Flex (switchable transponder).

Drivers with a clean air vehicle with a valid decal are eligible for a 10% discount off the posted toll rate.

For more information, visit sbexpresslanes.com.



4. OCTA increased vanpool subsidies to up to \$800 per month.

Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) upped its vanpool subsidies from \$400 to \$600 a month per vanpool. Additional \$100 monthly subsidies are available for zero-emission vanpools and those that seat eight or more people with an 85% occupancy rate.

The vanpool must be leased through a vanpool provider contracted with OCTA and maintain at least 50% ridership.

For more information, visit octa.net/vanpool.

5. A switch to fare capping is saving riders money on Metro.

Metro last year adopted a policy of fare capping—a more equitable way for riders to pay fares. Under fare capping, people who pay per ride can enjoy the same savings as those who buy passes. Riders never pay more than \$5 a day or \$18 within seven days.



To learn more, go to metro.net/farecapping.

6. OC Bus launched a rewards program.

OC Bus riders can **earn points toward free 1-Day and 30-Day passes** with a new rewards program. They can earn points every time they ride as well as when they purchase or activate a pass.

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The Year in Review

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7. Vine Street Mobility Hub is making transfers easier.

Riverside commuters now have a new transit hub to make transfers easier: the **Vine Street Mobility Hub**. Near the Riverside-Downtown Metrolink Station, it is served by Riverside Transit Agency and Omnitrans buses with connections to Metrolink trains.

8. Transit agencies throughout the Southland extend free or discounted rides for kids and students.

Metrolink extended its Student Adventure Pass, which allows college students to ride free.

Transit agencies including Metro, OC Bus, Riverside Transit Agency buses and buses in San Bernardino and Ventura counties also continued free or discounted ride programs for youth.



What's Needed to Keep Traffic Moving During the 2028 Olympics?

Your input is needed!

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and LA28 are seeking feedback and information from area employers to prepare for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

What resources are already in place to support the transportation needs for residents, athletes, workers and spectators? What do you offer as transportation demand management strategies? What is needed to keep the region moving during the games?

Weigh in by filling out a **brief survey**. For more information, visit SCAG at scag.ca.gov.



Rideshare Resources

- [SoCal511.org](https://www.socal511.org) or dial 511 for traffic updates, road closure information, trip planning and more
- [Ridematch.info](https://ridematch.info)—ridematching, transit routing and RideGuides for Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties
- [IECommuter.org](https://iecommuter.org)—ridematching, transit routing and RideGuides for Riverside and San Bernardino counties

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Get Free Metro Transit Passes for New Hires

Did you know...? You can get newly hired employees off to a ridesharing start with a free Metro 7-Day Pass.

Simply provide an application to the Go Metro to Work Free program with your new hire packet or as part of your orientation.

Interested employees will be sent a free Metro 7-day pass, along with a personalized RideGuide that includes their commute options.

Employer must have an up-to-date client profile on file with Metro to be eligible for the program.

To get forms for your employees, contact your TDM specialist at Metro or email CommuterOptions@metro.net.



Bus Lane Enforcement Now Underway

Cars parked in bus lanes and at bus stops can slow transit service. To help detect these parking violations, Metro recently installed forward-facing cameras on 50 of its buses.

The cameras supply a photo and license plate information to Los Angeles Department of Transportation traffic officers, who review it to determine if a citation should be issued.

As of Jan. 1, citations will be issued for parking violations on Metro Lines 212 and 720. In early 2025, Metro plans to expand the program to include Lines 70, 910 and 950.

Find out more at [Metro's The Source](#).

ORANGE COUNTY

Costa Mesa Introduces Free Shuttle

Costa Mesa recently launched [Let's Go Costa Mesa](#), an on-demand rideshare service. ADA-accessible 10-passenger vans transport riders within an area around the East 17th Street shopping district.

Vans run 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Download the Ride Circuit app through Apple Store or Google Play, or call 949.828.2065, to schedule a pickup.



Celebrate Lunar New Year with Metrolink

Ring in the Lunar New Year with a celebration at the Irvine Metrolink station on Feb. 8. The event will feature entertainment, food, giveaways and more.

Then you can ride Metrolink to the Golden Dragon Parade in Los Angeles. Chinatown is within easy walking distance of LA Union Station.

Details will be posted at metrolinktrains.com.



RIVERSIDE/ SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

VENTURA COUNTY

Share Your Story, Win Prizes



San Bernardino County Transportation Authority is urging riders to “ride happy” in a new campaign.

On-bus and at-station displays outline the dos and don'ts of riding transit, encouraging everyone to be safe, respectful and kind. Posters, social media and other communications

will reinforce the idea of making the transit experience positive for everyone.

Transit riders can become part of the solution by sharing their own stories for a chance to win prizes.

To contribute a story and be entered to win, visit goSBCTA.com/transit.

IE Commuter Continues Its Spotlight Promotion

Your employees who rideshare could win monthly prizes valued at \$100. To qualify, they simply need to log their rideshare activity at IECommuter.org to be automatically entered.

A winner in both Riverside and San Bernardino counties is randomly selected each month.



What's Needed to Keep Ventura County Moving?

Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) is seeking public input on what transit services are needed in the county. As part of its Unmet Transit Needs survey, it assesses areas where transit is not serving the community, such as:

- Public transit services not currently available to reach employment, medical assistance, food, clothing, education programs, and social services such as health care or county welfare
- Service expansions needed including new routes, significant modifications to existing routes and major increases in service hours and frequency

Community meetings where you can learn more about the unmet needs process and share your feedback will be held Jan. 9, Jan. 16, Jan. 28 and Feb. 7.

[Click here](#) to weigh in online with your unmet needs suggestions.

Find out more at goventura.org/unmet-transit-needs.



CALENDAR

Transit Equity Day is Feb. 4. Metrolink, Metro, OC Bus and San Bernardino County and Ventura County transit providers will be celebrating by offering free rides all day.

Network Opportunities

Burbank TMO serves businesses in Downtown and Media District areas; call 818.953.7788, director@btmo.org.

Go Glendale meets regularly; call 213.425.0955; email director@goglendale.org.

IE Commuter offers bi-annual marketing workshops for ETCs in the Inland Empire; call 1.866.RIDESHARE (866.743.3742).

Irvine Spectrum TMA meets regularly; call 949.727.4273 or email kelly@spectrumotion.com.

The LAX TMO hosts quarterly virtual meetings with employers who operate at LAX. Email commuteLAX@lawa.org to be invited to the next meeting.

Orange County Network meets regularly; email sharetheride@octa.net.

Pasadena TMA meets regularly; contact Talin Shahbazian at tshahbazian@cityofpasadena.net.

Playa Vista's TMA, Compass, meets regularly. Employees who commute to Playa Vista are eligible for incentives for all modes of sustainable transportation. For more information, email Noe Solano at noe@playavistacompass.com.

Santa Monica TMO meets regularly; contact info@GoSaMoTMO.org, or call 213.425.0955.

Training

Metro Commuter Options & Regulatory Compliance Support offers free ETC Briefings where Los Angeles area employers can learn about the transportation survey process. Until further notice, briefings are being offered online only. **To register for a briefing, click here.** If you can't make that meeting, email Metro to set up a one-on-one virtual meeting. Upcoming ETC Briefings are Jan. 22, Feb. 19 and March 19, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) offers two-day ETC training via Zoom for \$230.88. The next scheduled sessions are Jan. 14 and 16, Jan. 28 and 30, Feb. 11 and 13 and Feb. 25 and 27. For more information, contact the South Coast AQMD's training program at etctraining@aqmd.gov or visit aqmd.gov.





ON THE GO

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Riverside/San Bernardino Rideshare Program

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