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Santa Cruz METRO Announces Free Fares County-Wide for COVID-19 Vaccination Appointments

Santa Cruz, CA (Thursday, February 25, 2021) - The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) announces that METRO will be providing free local transit rides to and from COVID-19 vaccination appointments in Santa Cruz County starting Friday, February 26, 2021.

Riders who are interested in using METRO to transport them to and from their COVID-19 vaccination appointments must let the operator know when boarding the vehicle and show proof of the vaccination appointment. Proof of vaccination appointment includes a photo, printout, or email of the confirmed appointment slot or vaccination card. Free fares for vaccination appointments will be available to all fixed-route and ParaCruz riders. Customers who are eligible and enrolled in METRO's ParaCruz service will need to specify ahead of time that they are going to and from a vaccination appointment at the time of making the reservation for the free fare to apply.

"The health and safety of our community has been a priority for METRO since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and providing essential travel is one of the ways METRO makes good on this commitment. So offering free fares to COVID-19 vaccination appointments is another way METRO can give back to our county. By offering these free fares we hope to open up transportation options to our entire community in getting to these essential vaccination appointments." Alex Clifford, METRO CEO/General Manager.

METRO continues to follow public health guidelines from official sources such as CDC, State, and local guidance whenever possible to support safe travel. Including cleaning and disinfecting transit vehicles frequently, requiring face coverings, and installing additional safety measures. In addition, METRO puts health first by requiring riders and employees to avoid public transit if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or feel ill.

This promotion, offering riders free transportation to and from vaccination appointments is just another way METRO is committing to the health and safety of our customers and operators. This free fare program will provide a touchless boarding process without the need to navigate fare payment, minimize interaction between riders and operators, and reduce boarding times at bus stops while giving back to our community.

METRO will continue to enforce physical distancing guidance onboard vehicles, and limit the number of passengers onboard at any given time.

If you haven't used METRO services in the past we encourage you try us out free on your way to and from vaccination appointments.

For information on METRO, visit scmtd.com. For future fare purchases, check out our touchless and contactless mobile ticketing app, METRO's Splash Pass, at scmtd.com/apps.

For information on METRO routes and schedules visit scmtd.com/en/routes or to stay connected to bus arrival information visit scmtd.com/en/riders-guide/stay-connected.

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About Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District:

Established in 1968, Santa Cruz METRO provides fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service throughout Santa Cruz County, with limited service connecting to Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center and Santa Clara County, transporting more than 5 million passenger trips a year. METRO also operates ParaCruz paratransit service to Santa Cruz County, providing about 73,500 trips per year. METRO's operating budget in FY21 is almost $55 million and is funded through a combination of farebox revenue, sales tax, and state and federal sources. Today it operates a fleet of 94 buses on at least 24 fixed-routes. For more information, visit www.scmtd.com. Like METRO on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SantaCruzMETRO or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/SantaCruzMETRO.