

January 2024 Newsletter





It's that time of year to renew your Club Rideshare membership. The OC Rideshare office will be sending out emails by the end of this month to all current Club Rideshare members to renew their participation.

When you renew, you'll get a \$15 bonus in your paycheck—plus you'll continue to qualify for \$25 prize drawings throughout the year.

To be in Club Rideshare, you must have carpooled, vanpooled, rode bus/rail, biked or walked to work 20 or more times over the past 90 days. Driving an electric vehicle and the days you telework also count toward your rideshare totals.

Contact the Rideshare Office if you have any questions. You can now **use this link to complete a renewal application directly online** or **download a PDF** that you can print out, fill in and submit to the Rideshare Office.

How Ridesharing Helps You Keep Your New Year's Resolutions

Even with the best of intentions, it's easy to break your New Year's resolutions. Good news: If you rideshare, it might actually help you stick to them! *(continued)*



Reminder: Lunch and Learn Is Jan. 24

The Rideshare Office is offering a series of virtual "Lunch and Learn" workshops where you can find out ways to improve your commute.

The next Lunch and Learn is Jan. 24, 12 Noon to 1 p.m. Tune in to learn more about the money-saving incentives the County offers to employees—from transit discounts to EV rebates to tax savings and more.

You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just **click on this link** at the start of the workshop to participate.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare



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.

Just arrive at the station and *(continued)*



...New Year's Resolutions (from page 1)

Here, we take a look at some of the top resolutions people make—and ways choosing an alternative to driving alone can keep you on track.

FRE

Lose weight/get in shape.

Of course, walking or biking to work is a way to fit in a workout and burn calories on the commute.

Did you know...? Riding transit can also help with your fitness goals.

Americans spend a median of nearly 20 minutes a day just walking to and from their bus or train.

Save money.

With the price of gas topping \$6 a gallon at the pumps, the money you save by driving less can really add up. You'll also spend less on auto wear and tear.

Carpooling or vanpooling may also qualify you to ride for free in express lanes instead of paying a toll.

Spend more time with family.

Metrolink trains breeze past traffic, saving you time that can be better spent at home. Carpool lanes save users on average a minute per mile.

You might also find you're up for spending more time with family if you're not drained from fighting traffic.



New Website Makes It Easy to Sign Up for 405 Express Lanes

The 405 Express Lanes opened last month, offering motorists a chance to ride faster for a toll. The lanes run in both directions on the 405 Freeway between SR-73 in Costa Mesa and I-605 at border of Los Angeles County.

Vehicles with three or more people can use the lanes for free. Two-person carpools can ride free in off-peak hours.

All vehicles—including carpools—must have a FasTrak transponder with a valid account.

Visit **405**expresslanes.com to register for a transponder and set up an account. You can also call 562.740.4405 or email **CustomerService@405**expresslanes.com.

Club Rideshare

Ride Free... (from page 1)

board the train (no ticket required).
Rides are also free for the day on
OC Bus, Metro Bus and Rail and Bike
Share and all San Bernardino County
transit providers.

"Why I Rideshare"

For nearly 10 years, Carlota Serna has been driving an EV from North Orange County to Santa Ana, where she serves as chief attorney for Child Support Services.

"It cuts time off the commute because I'm able to drive solo in the carpool lane," she says, adding that she also appreciates the environmental benefits of driving an EV. "You're leaving a very small carbon footprint."

Though her car is a plug-in hybrid (PHEV), she's able to make most of her 28-mile round-trip commute driving in fully electric mode.

Because she drives a PHEV, Carlota qualifies for County of Orange Club Rideshare benefits.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the December winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Roque Rios, DA
- Winnie Keung, Auditor Controller
- Carlota Serna, CSS

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/
home phone number or email
has changed, please let the
Rideshare Office know by sending
an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.



Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/ hr-resources/rideshare The Rideshare Office Has Moved!

OC Rideshare Program Office
County of Orange
Human Resource Services
400 W. Civic Center Dr., 3rd Floor
Santa Ana, CA 92701







February 2024 Newsletter

YOUR COMPANY NAME





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

Metrolink will honor Transit Equity Day by offering free rides on trains throughout Southern California. Just arrive at the station and board the train (no ticket is required).

Rides are also free on OC Bus, as well as Metro Bus, Rail and Bike Share, and all San Bernardino County transit providers.

In Ventura County, transit providers will celebrate Transit Equity Day the following day, Feb. 5, with free rides.

Join Metrolink for a Lunar New Year

Celebration

...and Ride Free to the Colden Dragon Parade in Los Angeles

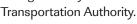
> Metrolink will ring in the Lunar New Year with a celebration at

> > (continued)



Save the Date for the Next Lunch and Learn Workshop

The next Lunch and Learn is March 20, 12
Noon to 1 p.m. Tune in to learn more about how you can save money and make riding OC Bus more convenient by signing up for a Perk Pass from Orange County



Lunch and Learn virtual workshops are offered every other month by the Rideshare Office to help you find out ways to improve your commute.

You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn.

Just click on this link at the start of the workshop to participate.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600.

Get Transit Royale for Free

OC Bus riders can download the premium version of the Transit app, **Transit Royale**, for free. This upgraded app lets you plan and track trips and

view arrival and departure times.

New features include access to any transit line, unlimited transit schedules, and customization themes and icons.







...Lunar New Year... (from page 1)

its Irvine Station on Feb. 17 at 8 a.m. The event will feature free refreshments, a traditional lion dance, prizes and more.

The first 100 people to arrive will get free roundtrip tickets to board a Metrolink train to attend the Colden Dragon Parade in Los Angeles.

Metrolink trains travel to Union Station, where riders can transfer free to Chinatown on the Metro A Line.

Get details at octa.net.

Reminder: Renew Your Club Rideshare 2023 Membership

Be sure to complete the annual renewal of your Club Rideshare membership soon. When you do, you'll get a \$15 bonus in your paycheck—plus you'll continue to qualify for \$25 prize drawings throughout the year.

To be in Club Rideshare, you must have carpooled, vanpooled, rode bus/rail, biked or walked to work 20 or more times over the past 90 days. Driving an electric vehicle and the days you telework also count toward your rideshare totals.

Contact the Rideshare Office if you have any questions. You can now use this link to complete a renewal application directly online or download a PDF that you can print out, fill in and submit to the Rideshare Office.

Metrolink Shares the Love with Customer Appreciation Day

Metrolink is planning to show its train riders how much they are appreciated by sharing a little Valentine's Day love on its annual Customer Appreciation Day, Feb. 14.

Metrolink representatives will greet riders during the morning hours with candy, giveaways and more during pop-up events at select stations on each of its seven lines.

Find out more at **metrolinktrains.com**.

Discover the Best in Dining Near OC Metrolink Stations

Club Rideshare

Looking for a restaurant within walking distance of a Metrolink station? The Orange County Register recently compiled a list of the best in dining

located near Orange County Metrolink stations—from bakeries to bistros to fine dining and more.

Click here to see the full list with descriptions.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like
to extend a big
"congrats" and thanks
for ridesharing to the
January winners of the Club
Rideshare monthly prize
drawing of \$25:

- Joel Aguirre, JWA
- Mirtha Bejarano, HCA
- Jocelyn Gaspar, HCA

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.





Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/ hr-resources/rideshare The Rideshare Office Has Moved!
OC Rideshare Program Office
County of Orange
Human Resource Services
400 W. Civic Center Dr., 5th Floor
Santa Ana, CA 92701





March 2024 Newsletter



A Disaster Doesn't Have to Leave You Stranded

Last month's record-setting rainfall caused floods, mudslides and made it hard to navigate roads and freeways. It also served as a reminder that it's good to have a plan for when another disaster strikes—whether a rainstorm, an earthquake or even a personal emergency.

Here's what you can do now to be ready:

Make a list of alternate routes to get to work/home on your usual commute.

On it, be sure to include several routes for driving as well as bus and rail. Keep the list handy so you can get where you need to go even if phones and the Internet are down. You can find bus/rail routing at ridematch.info, octa.net and metrolinktrains.com.

Get the app.

OC Bus uses the Transit app to track bus and rail in real time so you can see if your usual bus isn't running as scheduled due to a crisis. You can also use it to find other transit options nearby if you have to evacuate the bus you're on.

Metrolink's Train Tracker is at metrolinktrains.com.

(continued)

"Lunch and Learn" How to Save Money with the Perk Pass

The next Lunch and Learn is March 20, 12 Noon to 1 p.m. Tune in to learn more about how you can save money and make riding OC Bus more convenient by signing up for a Perk

Pass from Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

Lunch and Learn virtual workshops are offered every other month by the Rideshare Office to help you find out ways to improve your commute.



You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just click on this link at the start of the workshop to participate.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600.

OCTA Free Wilderness Hikes

OCTA oversees more than 1,300 acres of protected wilderness. To encourage people to appreciate the environment, they hold a series of guided wilderness hikes through these areas that are otherwise not open to the public.



A Disaster Doesn't... (from page 1)

Program key contacts into your phone.

This may include:

 Your usual transit provider's customer service line

 Customer service for the 91 Express Lanes and 405 Express Lanes

- The freeway service patrol
- AAA
- California Highway Patrol (1.800. TELL.CHP)
- A friend or coworker with a similar commute who might be able to help if a situation arises.



Make sure you have family emergency phone numbers and a designated meeting place. An out-of-town contact (name and phone number) is also good to have—it may be easier to call long distance as local phone lines may become overloaded.



Get familiar with So Cal 511.

Southern California transportation information is available 24/7 at go511.com or by calling 511. The 511 network offers travel alerts, traffic reports, public transit information and routing, motorist aid and more.

In a personal emergency, don't worry—you can get a free ride home. The County of

Orange offers a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program. On a day that you got to work by carpooling, vanpooling, bus, Metrolink, walking or biking, you can be reimbursed for the cost of a ride home in case of personal emergency, illness or unexpected overtime.

Contact the Rideshare Office.

If you're not sure about your options, contact the Rideshare Office for assistance.



Do You Ride the Bus or Train?

National Transit Operator and Worker Appreciation Day is March 18 – thank a transit worker today!

OCTA Free... (continued from page 1)

Upcoming hikes are March 16 at Wren's View Preserve and June 1 at Pacific Horizon Preserve.

See the full schedule at preservingourlegacy.org.



Angels Express Is Back!

Metrolink is bringing back its Angels Express trains.

The Angels Express will be available for select home games with trains operating from L.A. Union Station, Oceanside, and Riverside-Downtown to Anaheim, just steps from the stadium.

Round-trip fares are only \$10, and kids 17 and under ride free.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the February winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Tiffany Duong, OCIT
- Israel De La Cruz, SSA
- Imelda Yu, Superior Court

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.



Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

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Santa Ana, CA 92701







April 2024 Newsletter





5 Great Ways to Celebrate **Earth Day**

Earth Day is April 22, and there's plenty happening to help you celebrate.

. Motor vehicles are behind most of the emissions that cause smog. To encourage people to try transit instead of driving alone, rides will be free all day on Metrolink, OC Bus, Metro Bus/Rail and all San **Bernardino County and Ventura** County transit providers.



- 2. Do you live in the Inland Empire? You'll have a chance to win prizes, including an Apple Watch, gift cards, whale watching tickets and more when you rideshare in April.
 - · Create or log into your account at IECommuter.org.
 - Sign up for the promotion at IECommuter.org/EarthDay.
 - Throughout April, log any day you rideshare or telework. Each day logged is an entry into the prize drawing.

(continued)

"My Commute"

Israel De La Cruz drives an electric vehicle about 36 miles round trip from Anaheim Hills to where he works for the Social Services Administration in Santa Ana.

He made the switch to EV in 2017. "I think it was the lure of not having to pay for gas anymore," he says. "I was paying nearly \$180 a month. Now that I'm charging my car instead, my electric bill has only gone up about \$30-so that's \$150 in savings every month."

He also likes how much less maintenance his EV requires, only having taken it into the dealership twice in seven years.

Israel eventually plans to trade in his EV for a truck. The one he's hoping to buy, however, is the Tesla Cybertruck, adding, "That's how much I'm invested in staying with electric vehicles."



Save the Date: Lunch and Learn

The next Lunch and Learn is April 24, 12 Noon to 1 p.m. Mark your calendars to join in to learn more about Metrolink trains: how to ride, passes, pre-tax benefits and more.

Lunch and Learn virtual workshops are offered by the Rideshare Office to

(continued)



5 Great Ways... (from page 1)

- 3. Calculate your personal carbon footprint and see how changes you make (like ridesharing) can add up.
- 4. Attend an "eco fashion show." Metrolink is hosting a fashion competition on April 22 at L.A. Union Station. The show will feature fashions that recycle or upcycle items otherwise destined for the landfill designed by students in Southern California.





Join in on events

 in Irvine throughout
 the month, an Earth
 Day festival in Rancho
 Mission Viejo on April 13,
 a family festival April 20
 in Corona—or find more Earth Day events near you at earthday.org.

Metrolink Service Expected to Resume

Metrolink rail service through the San Clemente area is expected to soon be fully restored.

Last January, debris from the hillside slope along the Mariposa Trail Bridge in San Clemente fell onto the right of way and railroad

tracks about a half-mile north of Metrolink's San Clemente Pier Station. As a result, all rail movement was suspended through the San Clemente area.

Metrolink service to and from Oceanside through San Clemente is projected to resume in early April (though the timeline may be adjusted if project issues arise).

For service updates, visit **metrolinktrains.com**.



Save the Date... (continued from page 1)

help you find out ways to improve your commute.

You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just **click on this link** at the start of the workshop to participate.

Free Rides for Students Program Cets Extended

Metrolink is extending its **Student Adventure Pass** through the end of the 2023-24 school year (June 30). The pilot program, originally set to sunset last month, allows anyone with a valid student ID to ride Metrolink trains for free.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners &

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the March winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Brent Wangsness, Courts
- Alan Young, Auditor/Controller
- · Erika Killen, SSA

Have You Moved?

If your home
address, work/home
phone number or
email has changed,
please let the
Rideshare Office
know by sending an email to
rideshare@ocgov.com.





Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/ hr-resources/rideshare The Rideshare Office Has Moved!
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Santa Ana, CA 92701





May 2024 Newsletter





Grab Life by the Handlebars

May is National Bike Month, and there's plenty in store to help you discover the joys of commuting by bike, including e-bikes.

Here's what's happening...

Throughout Southern California

You can ride Metrolink for free during Bike to Work Week, May 13-17, when you bring your bike on board. (Bikes are allowed on all trains, and Metrolink also features special Bike Cars designed to accommodate more bikes.)

Look for more Metrolink Bike Month news at **metrolinktrains.com** and on **Facebook** and **X** (formerly Twitter).



In Orange County

Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is urging you to "grab life by the handlebars" and get into cycling for fitness, fun and to get where you need to go.

Win Prizes: OCTA will be giving away two e-bikes with helmet and lock, courtesy of Aventon. For a chance to win one, make the **pledge to commute** by bike at least once during Bike Month.

The other bike will be raffled off at bike rally (see pg. 2). (continued)

BRAVO! Is Now OC Bus Rapid

OC Bus is changing the name of its BRAVO! limited-stop service. It's now OC Bus Rapid, and new buses and signage will roll out one route at a time.

OC Bus Rapid makes a third of the stops of regular bus service, getting riders to their destinations faster.

Routes travel:

- Fullerton to Huntington Beach
- Fullerton Transportation Center to Costa Mesa
- · Anaheim to Costa Mesa
- · Santa Ana to Long Beach

Fares for OC Bus Rapid are the same as other OC Bus routes.



Have Landslides in South County Disrupted Your Commute?

OCTA is overseeing a study that aims to evaluate and put in place strategies to protect the railway in the vulnerable 7-mile stretch between Dana Point and the San Diego County Line.

You can weigh in on helping OCTA identify public concerns and ideas at a listening session on May 30, 5 to 6:30 p.m., at San Clemente City Hall.

For more information and to register, visit **octa.net/CRRS**.



Grab Life... (from page 1)

OCTA Bike Rally and Ride: Meet up with other cyclists on May 15 at 7:30 a.m. at the Orange Metrolink Station for a rally with t-shirts, refreshments, speakers and a chance to win an e-bike. Then enjoy a group ride to OCTA headquarters on Main Street.

Click here to RSVP.

More Events: OCTA is holding **e-bike rodeos** to teach kids and families safety tips and the rules of the road for riding an e-bike. Bike repairs and maintenance will also be available. Upcoming rodeos are May 18 in Laguna Niguel and June 1 in Huntington Beach.

Contact: Get details at octa.net/bikemonth.

More Bike News...

If you bike to work, there is now a safe, convenient place to stow your bike. The County recently installed bike storage facilities that feature secure bike racks. There are also air compressors available for flat or deflated tires.

The facilities are located in front of the Central Administration Building North (CAN) and the Central Administration Building South (CAS) near the multi-purpose rooms.

If you have trouble locating them, call the Rideshare Office or ask the lobby personnel for assistance.

Metrolink Brings Back the \$15 Summer Day Pass

Metrolink will again offer its special Summer Day Pass—just \$15 for unlimited systemwide travel any day Monday – Friday.

The Summer Day Pass will be available May 28 through Aug. 30 via the **Metrolink mobile app** and at ticket machines. Passes are good for travel on Metrolink and Arrow trains.

Metrolink will continue to offer its weekend \$10 Day Pass.

You can also purchase a \$10 Holiday Pass for unlimited rides on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27.

Please note: The Summer Day Pass is not eligible to be purchased by payroll deduction.

Look for details at metrolinktrains.com.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the April winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Joe Leon, SSA
- · Kevin Clark, OCSD
- · Alexa Guzman, SSA



Save the Date: Lunch and Learn

The next Lunch and Learn is June 19, 12 Noon to 1 p.m. Save the date, and then tune in to find out if vanpooling might be a less stressful, more affordable way to get to work.

Lunch and Learn virtual workshops are offered every other month by the Rideshare Office.

You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just **click on this link** at the start of the workshop to participate.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600.

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/ home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.





Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600 Web: http://hrs.ocgov.com/ rideshare







June 2024 Newsletter



Answers to Your Biggest Questions About Payroll Deduction

Did you know...? The County allows you to pay for vanpool fares and purchase transit passes through the convenience of a oncea-month payroll deduction. It's not only more convenient, but it can also save you money.

Here, we answer some of the most often asked questions about the commuter payroll deduction program:

Payroll deduction allows you to pay for vanpool and transit costs using pre-tax dollars—up to the IRS limit of \$315 per month.



Quite simply, payroll deduction allows you to pay for vanpool and transit costs using pre-tax dollars—up to the IRS limit of \$315 per month. This lowers your overall taxable income, potentially reducing what you pay at tax time.

You may also qualify for fare discounts when you ride OC Bus.

Q: "How does it work?"

Sign up for the program through the Rideshare Office by downloading and completing the **Payroll Deduction Form**. Then turn it in to by the first of the month prior to the month you'd like to start receiving pre-tax benefits.

- If you vanpool: The cost of your monthly vanpool voucher will be deducted and paid automatically.
- If you ride Metrolink: The type of pass(es) you request will be mailed to your home or delivered to your mobile device via the Metrolink mobile app. The pass can be customized to a senior or



student rate with proof of date of birth or student ID.

• If you ride OC Bus standard service: You'll be mailed an annual Perk Pass, a swipe card that you'll use to pay your fare upon





Hop Aboard Free Trolleys

Summer means the return of free trolleys that shuttle riders to beaches, restaurants, local attractions and businesses.

Free trolleys are available in in the Balboa Peninsula, Dana Point, Laguna Beach, Laguna Niguel, San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano.



Cool Rides Bring Rewarding Summer Vibes

If you live in Riverside or San Bernardino counties, you could win great prizes—including a set of Apple AirPods and a \$250 Amazon gift card—with IE Commuter's Cool Rides, Summer Vibes promotion.

To participate, create or log into your **IECommuter account**. Then log the days you telework or rideshare to work throughout June, July and August for a chance to win prizes each month.

You must log at least eight round-trip commutes and/or telework days to qualify.

For details, visit **IECommuter.org/ SummerVibes**.





...Payroll Deduction (from page 1)

boarding. With a Perk Pass, you pay only \$1.25 per boarding (vs. \$2 cash fare)—and no more than \$69 a month, no matter how often you ride.

• If you ride OC Bus and qualify for special fares such as a senior, disabled or student discount: Fill in the type of pass needed when you sign up for the program. Your pass will be mailed each month to your home address.



^{If you} Vanpool:

The cost of your voucher will be deducted and paid automatically.

With a Perk Pass,

you pay only \$1.25

\$2 cash fare)—and

no more than \$69

a month, no matter

how often you ride.

per boarding (vs.

deduction?"



If you ride **Metrolink:**

The pass(es) you request will be mailed to your home or delivered to your mobile device via mobile app.



If you ride OC Bus standard service:

You'll be mailed an annual Perk Pass, you'll use to pay your fare upon boarding.



If you ride OC Bus and qualify for special fares:

to vour home



Find Out if Vanpooling Could Be Right for You

The next Lunch and Learn is June 19, 12 to 1 p.m. Save the date, and then tune in to find out if vanpooling might be a less stressful, more affordable way to get to work.

A vanpool is a group of people who commute together regularly in a leased van. It is ideal for people who commute 15 miles or more each way and work fairly regular hours. You'll learn how to join or start a vanpool, as well as how to pay fares and sign up for money-saving incentives.

You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just click on this link at the start of the workshop to participate.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600.

ideal if you work a hybrid schedule or prefer to drive in on some days. Q: "Do I have to get a Perk Pass?"

It's only required if you ride OC Bus standard service

Q: "I don't rideshare every day-can I still use payroll

and want to receive pre-tax benefits and discount fares. The good news is, the card is free, and you'll board at a discount rate no matter how frequently (or infrequently) you ride.

Yes-just sign up for the type of pass that best suits your commute. For

example, on Metrolink you can choose a 5- or 10-Day Flex Pass, which is



Q: "Can I use payroll deduction to pay for non-commute travel?"

While transit is a great way to see Southern California's many attractions with friends and family, the pre-tax benefits are only available for commute or work-related travel. You must pay for any leisure travel separately.

Q: "How much will I save on my taxes?"

The amount will vary depending on your monthly transportation costs as well as your overall income. Consult your tax advisor or the IRS at irs.gov.

For more information on payroll deduction for commute expenses, contact the Rideshare Office.

Congrats Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the May winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Vince Loung, Auditor Controller
- Tina Chen, OCHCA
- Angel Torres, OCHCA

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com



Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com **Phone:** 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/

rideshare





July 2024 Newsletter





Getting Help If Your Commute Changes

If you move, your work schedule changes, or your usual rideshare arrangement isn't available, you don't have to revert to the expense and stress of driving alone to work.

The Rideshare Office can provide you with an updated list of options, including potential carpool partners, transit routing and more.

You can also find commute help 24/7 by logging in at ridematch.info.

Show Your Metrolink Pass, Get Discounts

Metrolink can get you to work and home faster and without the stress of dealing with traffic. You can also get discounts at area restaurants, merchants, special events and more

when you show your Metrolink pass.

For a list of participating merchants,

visit octa.net.

And the Name Is...

Orange County
Transportation
Authority (OCTA) is
developing a new
transit pass that
uses contactless
technology, similar
to credit cards, for
use on OC Bus,
OC Flex and the
upcoming OC Streetcar.



Next up in the process is to give the pass a name!

OCTA narrowed the choices down to three top contenders: Wave, Orange and Viva. Last month, the public had a chance cast an online vote for their favorite—and even write in their own ideas.

This month, OCTA will reveal the name of this new pass. Be the first to know by joining OCTA on **Facebook** and **X** or signing up for the **NextStop rider newsletter**.

Ride RTA for 25-Cents—Plus Youth Ride Free

Now through Aug. 31, you can ride Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) buses for only 25-cents. The discount rate applies on all fixed-route buses and GoMicro shuttles every day, including weekends.



Also, starting July 1, youth 18 and under can ride RTA buses for free.

Find out more at riversidetransit.com.







School's Out, but Free Rides for Youth Are Still In

Youth aged 6 to 18 can ride OC Bus free with a Youth Ride Free Pass. The passes are available from participating Orange County schools. (A parent signature is required.)

Although schools help distribute the passes, it's not strictly for riding to and from school—and therefore, the pass is valid even when school is not in session.

Parents of students at schools not distributing the pass can request passes directly from OCTA.

New Fiscal Year, New GRH Rides

County of Orange and Superior Court employees can be reimbursed for a ride if they need to get home due to an emergency on a day they got to work by ridesharing—up to two rides per fiscal year.

Since a new fiscal begins on July 1, if you've claimed the maximum number of rides home this fiscal year, your total number of rides will then reset to zero.

Emergency ride options include rental car, taxi, Uber/Lyft, transit or approved carsharing companies.

To find out more about the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program or to claim a reimbursement, **click here**.

iShuttle Is Up and Running Again in Irvine

Good news: Service has resumed on OC Bus iShuttles serving the Irvine area.

These bright green and blue shuttles help commuters complete that critical first and last mile to and from work, home and Metrolink stations in both Irvine and Tustin.

Irvine service had been suspended due to a brief strike of OCTA maintenance employees.

Route 400A and 401B is for travel from Tustin Station to Irvine Business Complex routes.

Routes 402C and 403D services Irvine Station to Spectrum area routes.

For more information, visit octa.net/iShuttle.

Club Rideshare



Save the Date: Lunch and Learn

The next Lunch and Learn virtual workshop is Aug. 21, 12 to 1 p.m. Save the date, and then tune in to find out more about the annual transportation survey and how it benefits you to participate.

You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just **click on this link** to join in.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the June winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Patrick Nguyen, SSA
- Sarah Lopez, OCHCA
- · Maria Felix, OCSD

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.





Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/

rideshare







August 2024 Newsletter



"Thanks to the County's guaranteed ride home

(GRH) program, you'll

never be stuck at work

without a ride on a day

that you rideshare."



Need to Get Home Fast in an Emergency?

Good news: You can get a free ride if you need to get home due to illness, emergency or if you have to work unexpected overtime.

Thanks to the County's guaranteed ride home (CRH) program, you'll never be stuck at work without a ride on a day that you rideshare.

Here, we answer employees' most often-asked questions about claiming a CRH ride:

Q: "Can anyone claim an emergency ride home?"

A: GRH reimbursements are provided to employees if you commuted that day using an alternative to driving alone—whether carpooling, vanpooling, riding transit, biking or walking.

Q: "What type of ride can I use?"

A: GRH options include taxi, rental car, transportation network company (i.e., Uber/Lyft), carsharing company or transit.

Q: "How is it paid for?"

A: You simply arrange and pay for your GRH ride. Then submit a reimbursement form and trip receipt within 60 days.

(continued)

Buy or Lease an EV, Get \$100



If you buy or lease an EV, you may be eligible for a \$100 incentive through the County's EV rebate program.

This incentive applies to zero emission, electric or plug-in vehicles.

To qualify, you must submit a **rebate form** to the Rideshare Office within 90 days of purchase or lease date.



Metrolink Renews Its Free Student Adventure Pass

Metrolink is extending its Student Adventure Pass program through June 30, 2025.

The pass allows anyone with a valid student ID—including K-12, trade school, college students and student interns—to travel anywhere on the Metrolink system free of charge.

(continued)



Need to Get Home... (from page 1)

Q: "Is there a limit to the number of rides?"

A: You can be reimbursed for two emergency rides per fiscal year (July 1- June 30).

Q: "What qualifies as an emergency?"

A: You can claim a CRH ride due to illness or emergency for yourself, an immediate family member, or if you had to work unexpected overtime. GRH also applies if you'd be otherwise stranded because your carpool/vanpool driver left due to an emergency.

Q: "What does not qualify as an emergency?"

A: CRH cannot be used for non-emergency appointments, voluntary overtime, vehicle troubles, or in the event of public transit delays or natural disasters. Contact the Rideshare Office if you're not sure if your emergency qualifies.

Q: "Does GRH only cover a ride home?"

A: No, you can arrange a ride to a medical facility, daycare/school, or to where a personal vehicle is parked (such as a Park & Ride lot or transit station).

Interim stops are also accepted if they're needed to reach your final emergency destination.

Q: "Do I need to get approval before taking my ride?"

A: You aren't required to get pre-approval, though you might want to contact the Rideshare Office if you're unsure whether your emergency qualifies for reimbursement.

For more information, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600, rideshare@ocgov.com, or refer to the GRH reimbursement form.

New Bridge Opening Marks I-5 Project Milestone

Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) recently re-opened the new and improved Los Aliso's Boulevard bridge.

It's the latest milestone in the South County I-5 Improvements Project, a 6.5-mile widening project on the I-5 Freeway between SR-73 and El Toro Road.

OCTA expanded sidewalks and bike lanes on the bridge, making it more accessible for people to walk or bike.

Construction on the I-5 project began in mid-2019 and is expected to be completed in early 2025.

Improvements also include:

- · Widening the freeway in both northbound and southbound lanes
- · Extending the second carpool lane from Alicia Parkway to El Toro Road in both directions
- · Converting the carpool lanes to continuous access

Get construction updates at octa.net.



Metrolink Renews... (from page 1)

The pass program was set to expire June 30, following a successful ninemonth pilot period.

For details on how to download the pass via Metrolink mobile app and register for an account, visit metrolinktrains.com.

Congrats Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the July winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

Andrea Portenier, HCA Michele Gorey, DA Noelle Cordova, OCSD

E-Bike Safety Goes to the Movies



Local movie theaters are featuring a series of humorous e-bike safety videos created by OCTA. Geared toward parents and kids, they're also a good reminder for commuters to following safety rules on the road.

If you don't catch them at the movies, you can see them here.

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/ home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com





Email: rideshare@ocgov.com

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/ rideshare









September 2024 Newsletter





Don't forget to complete your annual transportation survey by the Friday, Sept. 13 deadline.

When you do, you'll be entered into a drawing to win a \$100 Amazon gift cards as a thank-you for your participating.

The annual transportation survey collects information on how you commuted the week of Aug. 12-16. Completing the survey is mandatory for all County of Orange and Superior Court employees—whether you rideshare, drive to the office, telework, or work a hybrid schedule.

You should have received the survey via email, or you can **download it here**. The Rideshare Office also offers a **helpful video on how to fill out the survey**.

Why You Should Say "Yes" to a RideGuide

When you fill out the survey, you have the option to receive a free RideGuide commute planner—which you can get by checking "yes" to the last question in the survey.

(continued)

September Is Rail Safety Month

On Sept. 27, Metrolink will "go red" to support Red Out for Safety Day and Rail Safety Month. Riders are encouraged to wear something red to work and post a selfie with the hashtag #RedOutforRailSafety.



Did You Know...?

- Riding the train is a safe way to travel, but it's important for people to be careful around the tracks. A whopping 95% of all rail-related deaths are due to people walking on the tracks or vehicles at train crossings.
- Every three hours in the U.S., a person or vehicle is hit by a train.
- It takes the average train traveling at 55 mph more than a mile to stop. By the time a locomotive engineer sees a person or vehicle on the tracks, it is too late.

Get more safety tips at **Operation Lifesaver**, a rail safety education organization.



Why You Should Say "Yes"... (from page 1)

A RideGuide gives you your commute options based on where you live and work and your work schedule. Even if you currently have a rideshare arrangement, it's still a good idea to check yes. Here's why:

- You'll get a list of potential carpool partners in case your current carpool situation falls through. You'll also get a list of vanpools that may have a seat available.
- Transit options change all the time. The RideGuide will give you the most up-to-date schedules. There might be a better option than the one you're currently using.
- If you telework or work a hybrid schedule, a RideGuide could be handy for finding a rideshare option for the days you commute to the office.
 - You don't have to use it, but it'll be there if you need it.

Are You Aged 60 or Older?

You may qualify for discounted transit fares for seniors.

On OC Bus:

OC Bus riders aged 60 and older pay just \$22.25 for a 30-Day Pass (vs. the standard rate of \$69). Contact the Rideshare Office to order your passes via payroll deduction, which will



save you even more by reducing your overall taxable income.

If you ride occasionally and pay cash fares, the senior fare upon boarding is 75 cents (vs. \$2 for standard fare) or \$1.50 for a 1-Day Pass (vs. \$5).

You must show a valid ID as proof of age when purchasing and using reduced fares.

Metrolink riders aged 65 and older qualify for senior rates when purchasing fares.

- 25% off Monthly Pass and 7-Day Pass
- 50% off 1-Way, Round-Trip tickets,

5-day Flex Pass and 10-day Flex Pass

To be eligible for discounts, riders must present a photo ID with date of birth or proof of eligibility to the fare inspector upon request.



Rideshare Week is Oct. 7-11-save the date!

Club Rideshare

Rideshare at least one day during Rideshare Week to be entered into a drawing for a "commuter necessities package" that includes a set of AirPods Pro, battery charger, water bottle, Kindle, and a computer backpack.

For details and to make the pledge to participate, visit octa.net/ rideshareweek.

Metrolink will also be celebrating Rideshare Week with special promotions. Details are still in the works, so check back at metrolinktrains.com, or join them on Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter).

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the August winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Jazmin De La Cruz, SSA
- Maria Lemus, SSA
- Carolina Covarrubias, OCCR

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/ home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.







Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/ rideshare







October 2024 Newsletter





California Clean Air Day is Oct. 2. The event encourages people to make little changes to help reduce air pollution—including choosing an alternative to driving alone.

To celebrate, OC Bus and Metrolink will be offering free rides all day long. Rides will also be free on Metro Bus and Rail and all San Bernardino County and Ventura County transit agencies for the day.

Visit cleanairday.org to find out more and take the Clean Air Pledge.



Commute Happy, Win Prizes

Rideshare or telework at least one day during Rideshare Week,
Oct. 7-11, and you could win great prizes. Here's what's happening:

(continued)

Reminder: Turn in the Mandatory Transportation Survey

If you haven't yet done so, be sure to turn in the annual transportation survey as soon as possible. The County is required to conduct this survey annually to meet Southern California clean air regulations.

It is mandatory for all employees to submit the survey.

The survey collects information on how you commuted the week of Aug. 12-16. You need to submit a survey whether you commute daily, work a hybrid schedule or telework.

It was sent to you via email or you can download it here.

Improved Metrolink Service Starts Oct. 21

Metrolink will launch major service changes on Oct. 21.

They'll be adding 32 weekday trains—a nearly 23% increase in service.

The new schedule will also streamline connections between lines, making it easier for riders to navigate Metrolink's six-county service area.

(continued)





Commute Happy... (from page 1)

In Orange County...

Commute by carpooling, vanpooling, riding transit, biking, walking or telecommuting at least one day during the week for a chance to win a Happy Commuter Kit from Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

Valued at more than \$350, it includes a set of AirPods Pro, battery charger, water bottle, Kindle and a backpack.

To enter to win, visit octa.net/rideshareweek.



BUS · VANPOOL · METROLINK · BIKE · CARPOOL

Live in Riverside/San Bernardino Counties...?

Log your rideshare trips and telework activity throughout the month of October on IECommuter.org to earn chances to win any of dozens of prizes, including an iPad mini, Apple Watch or a stay at the Soboba Casino Resort.

The more you rideshare, the more chances you have to win.

Your RideGuide Is **Coming Soon!**

If you checked "yes" to receive a RideGuide when you filled out the annual transportation survey, you should be receiving it soon via

The RideGuide gives

you potential carpool/vanpool partners, transit routes, Park & Ride lots and more based on where you live and work and your work schedule.

If you didn't ask for a RideCuide but would like one, contact the Rideshare Office.

Improved Metrolink...

(continued from page 1)

With a more than 300% increase in the number of connections planned, most customers will experience wait periods of just 10 to 20 minutes when transferring.

Find out more at metrolinktrains.com.

"Lunch and Learn" How to Save on OC Bus Fares

The next Lunch and Learn is Oct. 23, 12 to 1 p.m. Tune in to learn how signing up for the Perk Pass can make riding OC Bus easier and more affordable.



Lunch and Learn virtual workshops are offered every other month by the Rideshare Office. You don't need to pre-register to attend the Lunch and Learn. Just click on this link at the start of the workshop to participate.

If you have questions, or to sign up for an email reminder, contact the Rideshare Office at 714.834.7600.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the September winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- · David Harris, OCSD
- · Martha Arteaga, Clerk-Recorder
- Amanda Cuervo, OCCR

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.





Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/

rideshare





November 2024 Newsletter



All Aboard the Holiday Express!

Metrolink's Holiday Express train will roll into the Anaheim Station on Nov. 30. The festively decorated train will bring holiday cheer—including carolers, treats, children's activities and more.

Holiday Express trains visit stations throughout Southern California until Dec. 21.

They will also collect donations of new, unwrapped toys and socks for those in need.

For schedules and details about how to donate, visit metrolinktrains.com.



6 Simple Ways to Save More When You Rideshare

Ridesharing is already a bargain way to commute—but did you know there are ways to save even more? Here are a few...

Sign up for the Annual Perk Pass. If you ride OC

Bus, using a Perk Pass gets you the lowest available fare per ride. A Perk Pass is a swipe card that you pre-load with fares (ordered through the Rideshare Office) which are deducted as you ride.

(continued)

Get a Vanpool Subsidy of Up to \$800 a Month

Exciting news if you are thinking about joining or starting a vanpool: Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) now offers vanpools subsidies of up to \$800 monthly toward vanpool lease costs (up from \$400 a month).

The standard subsidy is \$600 a month. Two additional \$100 subsidies are available:

- Vanpools that seat eight or more people with an 85% occupancy rate
- Vanpools that are zeroemissions vehicles

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. To see if there's a vanpool that's right for you, register or log in at ridematch.info.

Want to vanpool but there's not one currently available? Start one of your own! The Rideshare Office can help you find other people who live near you and work a similar schedule.





6 Simple Ways to Save More... (from page 1)



2

Add a third person to your carpool.

Yes, two already ride cheaper than one.
Three people in a carpool, however, will also allow you travel toll-free in the **91 Express Lanes** at all times and the **405 Express Lanes** during off-peak hours.

A switchable transponder set to the number of people in the vehicle is required.

Try transit and get as much as 75% off fares. The County offers an incentive for new transit riders. You can be reimbursed 75% of fare costs the first month, 50% the second and 25% the third.

Don't pay for a ride if you need to get home in an emergency. Thanks to the Cuaranteed Ride Home program offered through the Rideshare Office, you can be reimbursed for the cost of a ride if you need to take a taxi or Uber/Lyft home due to illness or



emergency on a day you got to work by carpooling, vanpooling, riding transit, biking or walking.

Pay for transit costs using pre-tax dollars. When you have fares automatically deducted from your paycheck, you'll pay using pre-tax dollars. This can lower your overall taxable income, saving you money at tax time.



Sign up for special fares if you qualify. OC Bus offers discounts for riders 60 and older, and Metrolink discount fares are available to riders 65 and older.

OC Bus Can Be Your Route to Well-Being

Club Rideshare

OC Bus wants you to know that it isn't just a ride – it's "your ticket to a healthier you." By choosing public transit, you get more exercise, reduce stress and connect with your community.

They recently launched an online site that features ways you can combine wellness with the commute. It includes information such as routes to wellness destinations, free meditations, mental health resources and tips for making the most of your time on the bus.

Check out at octa.net/wellness.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the October winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Timothy Collins, HCA
- · Nancy Ehlers, Probation
- · Julian Saenz, OCSD

Have You Moved?

If your home address, work/home phone number or email has changed, please let the Rideshare Office know by sending an email to rideshare@ocgov.com.



Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/

rideshare







December 2024 Newsletter

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YOUR COMPANY NAME





Even the best of commutes, such as a carpool with a friend or a relaxing train ride, can have their occasional hiccups. Here, we outline some commute problems that can crop up—along with ways to deal with them if they do.

Your carpool partner quits.

Finding a new carpool partner may be easier than you think. Log into the regional ridematching site at **ridematch.info** to get a list of potential carpool partners—people who live and work near you and work similar hours.

The Rideshare Office may also be able to connect you with coworkers who may want to share the ride.

Your bus rarely shows up at its scheduled time.

Rather than relying solely on schedules, get an app. Along with many Southern California transit providers, OC Bus uses the Transit App. It shows you in real time when your bus will arrive, so you can spend less time waiting and wondering. Download it free at **transitapp.com**.



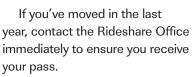
You're worried about getting stuck at work without a car if you're sick or there's a family emergency.

On a day you rideshare to work, you can grab a taxi, Uber/Lyft or transit ride home if you need to due to illness or emergency. The County's

(continued)

Keep an Eye Out for Your 2025 Perk Pass

Important news for
County and Superior
Court employees who
ride transit: Your 2025
Perk Pass will be mailed
to your home address
during the first two
weeks of December.
Please keep an eye out
for it to arrive after that time.



The new annual Perk Pass is valid from Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2025.

OC Metrolink Holiday Campaign Sweepstakes

Enter the Orange County/Metrolink Holiday Sweepstakes by Dec. 22 for a chance to win four round-trip Metrolink tickets and a \$100 gift card.

Find out more about the sweepstakes at **octa.net**.

While you're there, you can find great ideas for nearby holiday events and destinations accessible by Metrolink.







Solutions to Some of the Most... (from page 1)

guaranteed ride home program will reimburse you for the cost up to two times per fiscal year.

Even though you carpool with a friend, you can only use carpool lanes for free—but not the express toll lanes on the 91 and 405 freeways.

If you're a two-person carpool, can you add a third person? Carpools with three or more people travel free or at a discount in Orange County express toll lanes. (A transponder set to the number of people in the vehicle is required.)

As much as you'd like to take the train to work, it isn't feasible. Although you can drive to a Metrolink train station, the nearest stop to your office is too far to walk.

There may be a connection that can get you the final leg of your journey. **Metrolink offers a list of city bus, shuttles and micro transit options** available at each station. Transfers from Metrolink are free.

Biking may also be an option. Metrolink allows you to bring your bike on board, and the County has recently installed secure bike parking facilities.

You've been working a hybrid schedule, so a monthly transit pass no longer makes financial sense.

If you ride OC Bus, you can still get a bargain rate even without a monthly pass when you use a Perk Pass. You can preload the Perk Pass through the Rideshare Office. Then tap when you board to get a \$1.25 fare (vs. \$2 cash). The maximum cost per month

is \$69, no matter how many trips you take.

If you ride Metrolink, there are reduced-rate passes other than a monthly pass available through the Rideshare Office, including 5- and 10-Day Flex passes.

Your usual bus gets rerouted and no longer works for you.

You can find updated transit routing not only at Google Maps but also **ridematch.info** and **go511.com**. If there's no longer a bus option near where you live, consider driving to Park & Ride lot and catching a bus or train from there.





OC Bus Service Changes Include Better Metrolink Connections

OC Bus last month made schedule adjustments on dozens of bus routes to improve service and better meet riders' needs.

This includes changes in some bus routes and schedules to coordinate with Metrolink train arrival and departure times. Metrolink in October increased train service by nearly 23%. OC Bus instituted temporary changes to meet up with the new trains, which are now part of the current, updated schedule.

For the most current OC Bus routing information, call 714.636.RIDE or visit **octa.net**.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

We'd like to extend a big "congrats" and thanks for ridesharing to the November winners of the Club Rideshare monthly prize drawing of \$25:

- Melanie Ramos, HRS
- David Eiler, SSA
- Imelda Yu,
 Superior Court

Have You Moved?

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home phone number or email has
changed, please let the Rideshare
Office know by sending an email to
rideshare@ocgov.com.



Club Rideshare

Email: rideshare@ocgov.com Phone: 714.834.7600

Web: https://hrs.ocgov.com/

rideshare

