



Club Rideshare

June Newsletter



5 Metrolink Money-Saving Tips



Metrolink is already a money-saving option over driving alone when you consider the cost of gas, wear and tear on your car and any tolls you might otherwise pay.

Here are five other ways to save when you ride Metrolink...

1. If you ride occasionally, save 10% on fares with a **5-Day Flex Pass**. You get five 1-Day Passes that are good for 30 days from purchase date.

2. Pay for fares using pre-tax dollars. The County of Orange allows employees to **pay for their transit costs using pre-tax dollars** through our Commuter Choice program. This reduces your overall taxable income, potentially saving you money.

3. Ride on a Saturday or Sunday. Any time that your schedule is flexible and you can ride on a Saturday or Sunday instead of a weekday, it's only \$10 a day to ride Metrolink anywhere you need to go, all day long.

4. Get free tickets. Metrolink's **So Cal Explorer** program lets you earn points for every time you ride. These points can be redeemed for free rides.

5. Bike to the station. Metrolink allows you to bring your bike on board and even has special **bike train cars**. If cycling is an option, you can burn calories instead of burning gasoline—and that can save you money at the pump.



"Why I Rideshare"

Launi Nolan carpools regularly with a coworker from the South County area to where she works at the Superior Court in Newport Beach.

"We both like it," Launi says. "We enjoy the conversation to and from work. It lets you decompress before you get home."

These friends have been carpooling together for about 15 years. "We were carpooling before it was really advertised or people were encouraged to do it," she adds, and they share the ride every day their schedules allow.

Another benefit: They're able to hop on carpool lanes on the 5 and 405 freeways, bringing their drive time down to just about a half hour.



A Million Masks & More

To protect riders and drivers during the Coronavirus pandemic, OC Bus has distributed more than one million free masks to customers who need them.

In addition to providing the free face coverings, OCTA has numerous health and safety measures in place, including enhanced bus cleanings, passenger hand sanitizer stations, Plexiglass driver shields, and employee COVID-19 screenings with temperature checks.

Rising Gas Prices Got You Down?

The low prices at the gas pumps during the pandemic appear to be a thing of the past. Last month, gas topped \$4.10 a gallon in Orange County—significantly more than the pandemic low

[\(more\)](#)



Rising Gas Prices Got You Down? (continued from front)

point of \$2.77 per gallon recorded on May 7 of last year, according to AAA figures.

If you rideshare, you're most likely already saving money on gas. A few tips to save even more:

- **Combine trips.** Warm engines run more fuel efficiently than cold ones.
- **Perform routine maintenance.** This helps your vehicle run at its best, and that uses less gas.
- **Don't drive aggressively.** Fast driving, rapid acceleration and braking quickly are habits that guzzle gas.
- **If you drive to a transit stop,** can you on occasion walk, bike or catch a ride with someone instead?
- **Pay less.** Apps like **GasBuddy** can show you prices at gas stations near you or on your route.

Thank You, Ridesharers

Now that more people are returning to work and school, traffic is on the rise as well.

Southern Californians on average drove at 95% of pre-pandemic levels as of April, according to an analysis by INRIX, a transportation data firm.

In 2020, when California's shut-down first took effect, the rate of driving plummeted to a low of 42% of usual levels.

We want to say thank you to County of Orange employees who choose an alternative to driving, whether carpooling, biking, walking or riding bus/rail. Without ridesharing, Orange County roads and freeways would be at a standstill.

Congratulations Club Rideshare Winners

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

- Laura Trottier, Superior Court
- Kalpana Chakrabarti, OCDA
- Connie Schonert, Probation

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.

Bus Service Changes Coming This Month

Heads up if you ride the bus: **OC Bus will make minor changes on some of its routes on June 13.**

OC Bus is currently operating at about 70% of what it was prior to the Coronavirus pandemic. To help determine what changes still need to be made, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) recently surveyed customers. This input helped shape June service changes, as well as those being planned for the rest of the year.

Overall, 63% of survey responses were positive regarding OC Bus service provided during the pandemic.

The majority of customers said that they are satisfied with current OC Bus routes. Suggestions for improvement included increasing service frequency and reducing travel time.



Does OC Air Make the Grade?

Unfortunately...no. Orange County has the 25th worst air quality in the nation, earning a failing grade from the American Lung Association (ALA).

The ALA annually ranks counties across the U.S. in its

State of the Air report.

In the county-by-county breakdown, San Bernardino, Riverside and Los Angeles counties ranked first, second and third as the nation's smoggiest counties. In fact, for 21 out of the past 22 years, the Southern California region has held the #1 spot in air pollution.

Ongoing efforts to promote alternatives to driving alone help reduce the number of cars on the road, the top cause of the emissions that cause smog.



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