

## Zero Fare for Youth: Key Messages

### About Zero Fare for Youth

#### What is Zero Fare for Youth?

RTD's Zero Fare for Youth program has been extended beyond the one-year pilot, presenting an exciting opportunity to welcome a future generation of customers to public transit and affect a positive shift in riding habits in both the short and long term. RTD will continue to offer rides at no cost on all services to those 19 years old and younger as part of the now-permanent program.

RTD is excited to welcome a future generation of transit users to experience the benefits of public transit without a fare. Zero Fare for Youth encourages lifelong transit use through early exposure to, and use of, public transportation among a new generation of customers.

One of several proposals to come from the RTD Fare Study and Equity Analysis, RTD desires to promote equity by ensuring transportation is not a barrier to accessing education or employment. The program will also promote equity and affordability by reducing costs and increasing the cost competitiveness of public transit for families.

#### When does Zero Fare for Youth begin?

The Zero Fare for Youth program is a permanent program. Youth 19 and under can ride at no cost on all RTD services.

#### Are all RTD services available as part of the Zero Fare for Youth program?

Yes, youth can ride all RTD services at no cost as part of the Zero Fare for Youth program.

#### What about special services like Access-a-Ride?

For Access-a-Ride, Youth must be medically certified to use this service. Access-a-Ride customers can book in advance as they normally do. For more about Access-a-Ride certification, please see [rtd-denver.com/routes-services/other-services/access-a-ride](https://rtd-denver.com/routes-services/other-services/access-a-ride).

#### How are youth defined for this program?

Youth are defined as anyone 19 years of age or younger.

#### What type of proof do youth need to show to be eligible?

Eligible customers 19 and younger only need to show proof of eligibility to the bus operator and fare inspectors to ride RTD buses and trains. Acceptable proof of eligibility includes the following:

- Current school identification card
- Valid government-issued identification card
- Alien registration/permanent resident card
- Military identification/dependent card with date of birth
- RTD-issued Youth Special Discount Card

## Who else can use RTD services at zero fare?

- Up to three children ages 5 and younger can use RTD services at no cost with a fare-paying adult.
- All active duty military personnel who are wearing the appropriate Class A or Class B uniforms or who present an active duty military ID card can use RTD services at no cost at any time.

## Promotion of the program

### How will RTD promote Zero Fare for Youth?

RTD will promote this initiative through a comprehensive communications effort, which will include:

- Internal channels (to RTD employees)
- Paid media campaign (display/online, streaming digital, paid social media)
- RTD digital communications (webpage, social media, service alerts)
- RTD assets (transfluges, interior cards, vehicle exteriors)
- Public relations (news releases, media pitches, newsletters, emails, News Stop)
- Community engagement (collaborations with fantastic community partners and agencies)
- And more!

## Benefits of using RTD's services

### What are the benefits of Zero Fare for Youth for RTD customers?

Youth can experience all the financial, lifestyle, environmental, and community benefits of transit.

- **Save money** – Taking the bus and train saves on car expenses including maintenance, parking, and tolls, which add up quickly. A household can save nearly \$10,000 by taking public transportation and living with one less car.
- **Save gas** – Taking public transit frees up additional funds in customers' everyday budgets. Public transportation saves the United States an estimated 6 billion gallons of gas each year!
- **Gain independence** – Reduce your dependence on others for transportation, and increase your independence. Public transportation levels the playing field and allows you to continue your studies, visit family and friends, and connect to destinations you want to go!
- **Relax** – While taking public transit, you can listen to music (with earphones), scroll social media, and just sit back and enjoy!
- **Increase Flexibility** – Parents and children alike will enjoy the flexibility of our wide network of buses, trains, and special services.
- **New Opportunities** – Creating an opportunity to ride at no cost eliminates barriers to education and employment.
- **Reduce Traffic** – More cars mean more roads need to be built, which causes water run-off that contributes to ground and water pollution as well as increased pollution. Fewer cars mean more bike paths and lanes which are more sustainable.
- **Less Pollution, Clearer Skies** – Compared with driving alone, taking public transportation reduces CO2 emissions by 45%, decreasing pollutants in the atmosphere and improving air quality. Plus, lessening anti-freeze and other pollutants also reduces pollution.
- **Healthier Communities** – Improved air quality in a community means greater benefits for the people who live there.

## **Digital tools to help along the way**

- RTD provides the tools to make riding easy.
- Use RTD's Next Ride web app to view schedules, plan trips, see vehicle locations in real time, and view Service Alerts.
- Download the Transit Watch app for iOS or Android to speak with Transit Police in real time through text messages.

## **Safety and security measures**

- The safety and security of RTD's customers, employees, and all who use the agency's services and facilities are of the utmost importance to RTD.
- Please be courteous to fellow customers and RTD employees.
- RTD takes every precaution with Security to create a welcoming transit environment. If customers see something suspicious, or witness a crime in progress, advise them to call RTD Transit Police at 303.299.2911 or download the Transit Watch app for iOS or Android to speak with Transit Police in real time through text messages. In an emergency, please dial 911.

## **Learn more about Zero Fare for Youth**

Visit [rtd-denver.com/youth](https://rtd-denver.com/youth)