

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SunLine Transit Agency
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SunLine Transit Agency to Resume Fare Collection May 2, 2021

The Agency Suspended Fare Collection in Response to the Pandemic in March 2020

(Thousand Palms) – SunLine Transit Agency will resume fare collection starting Sunday, May 2, 2021, following an emergency suspension of collecting fares that started March 17, 2020 in response to the pandemic.

Fare collection was temporarily halted due to the onset of COVID-19. By suspending fares, riders were able to enter at the rear of the bus as opposed to the front of the bus, eliminating contact with the driver at the farebox. This allowed SunLine to continue transporting essential workers and to keep Coachella Valley moving forward. SunLine was one of the first agencies in the nation to suspend fare collection and implement rear-door boarding.

SunLine is taking many steps to protect the health and safety of our riders, employees and community. While fare collection will resume, contactless fare payment is available through the Token Transit app. This easy-to-use app allows riders to purchase passes ahead of time and have them on their phone. More information is available at www.SunLine.org/Mobile.

In addition to contactless fare payment, SunLine has installed transparent safety partitions on all buses and paratransit vehicles. This provides a critical defense barrier between operators and passengers using large, heavy-duty safety glass.

Other features that allow SunLine to safely and confidently collect fares again include strict enforcement of the federal mask mandate for riders, regular cleaning and disinfecting of all transit vehicles, and SunLine's myStop® Mobile app, which shows the number of riders on any given bus in real time to allow for social distancing.

"Our team has implemented several measures to keep riders and operators safe as we gear up to resume fare collections on May 2nd," said Lauren Skiver, CEO/General Manager of SunLine Transit Agency. "In addition to daily disinfecting procedures and safety partitions, we are asking riders to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by staying home when feeling unwell and taking advantage of our hand sanitizers on every bus, and using TokenTransit and the MyStop® Mobile app."

Any groups or individuals who need assistance re-learning how to use bus fares are invited to participate in our virtual travel training. Training can be scheduled by emailing marketing@sunline.org or calling customer service at 760-343-3456.

For more information or to learn about other service changes scheduled for May 2, 2021, please visit SunLine.org.

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About SunLine Transit Agency

SunLine provides public transit services in California's Coachella Valley spanning 1,120 mile-service area and carrying approximately 4.2 million riders. It has pioneered zero-emission bus deployments, particularly for hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEB). In 1993, SunLine's Board adopted a voluntary policy of pursuing alternative fuel solutions that provide the lowest possible emissions, which led to SunLine becoming the first transit agency in the state to convert its entire fleet to compressed natural gas (CNG). SunLine is committed to transitioning its entire bus fleet to zero-emission by 2035. SunLine Refueled is a multi-tiered initiative that brings exciting new transportation alternatives to the Coachella Valley. To learn more about SunLine Transit Agency's services and policies, go to SunLine.org.