
**MAJOR FARE AND SERVICE CHANGE POLICY
SAN JOAQUIN REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT**

A. Background

The San Joaquin Regional Transit District (RTD) is required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to establish a policy which defines the process used by RTD to solicit and consider public comment prior to the implementation of fare increases and/or major service changes. The policy is also intended to distinguish between relatively minor changes which do not necessitate a formal public notification process and major changes for which public input will be sought.

B. Major Service Change and Fare Policy

In 1992, the Board of Directors of what was then the Stockton Metropolitan Area Regional Transit District (SMART) adopted a policy that requires that public comments be solicited prior to any major change to service or increases in fares or results in either of the following:

- 1) A 25% or more reduction of the number of daily transit revenue vehicle miles of a route for the day(s) of the week for which the change is made; or
- 2) a 25% or more reduction of the number of transit route miles of a route. Public comments shall be solicited prior to any fare or major service change lasting longer than 180 days. Fare changes expected for fewer than 180 days, as well as standard seasonal variations in service are exempt from the public notification process.

C. Emergency Policy

Major service changes resulting from official federal, state, county, or local emergencies are exempt from the public notification process for the extent of the declared emergency based upon the requirements of the executive order, county order, or local ordinance. It is the policy for emergency service changes to continue throughout the duration of the emergency. Any service changes that continue for more than 180 days after the emergency is declared over, must adhere to the public notification process before the changes become permanent.

D. Impacts of COVID-19

Current changes to RTD's service due to the extraordinary operational challenges presented by the COVID-19 public health emergency which fall under the Emergency Policy as stated above are seriously impacting the ability to meet the public notification process. Ridership and revenues have been significantly impacted and service has been reduced to adhere to federal, state, and local requirements. In response to this emergency, RTD will continuously implement temporary service changes without the public notification process. However, prior to any permanent change to fares or major service, RTD will adhere to the public notification process.

E. Public Notification Process

When required by the major service change and fare policy, RTD will adhere to the following public notification process:

1. Legal Notices

The publishing of a legal notice must be done in the local newspaper of general circulation and other electronic media. The notice will set a specific date and time for one or more public hearings. Written comments will also be accepted on the proposed adjustments for a period of not less than 25 calendar days beyond initial publishing of the legal notice. No public hearings will be held earlier than 15 calendar days following the initial publication of the legal notice. Finally, written comments will be accepted for a minimum of three calendar days following a public hearing. Legal notices will inform the public of proposed actions that initiated the public comment process, how comments will be received and, if applicable, the location, dates and

times of scheduled public hearings. Press releases will be prepared and sent to local media; and notices will be placed on the RTD website and posted on social media. Patrons of routes proposed for adjustment will be further notified of the public comment process by an appropriate combination of on-vehicle fliers and posters.

2. Scheduling Public Hearing Location and Time

Adjustments that have system-wide implications may require multiple public hearing locations in order to maximize access to patrons that are affected. To the extent possible, public hearings will be scheduled at locations 1) in proximity to the area affected by proposed adjustments, and 2) in proximity to regular bus routes. All facilities utilized for public hearings will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Special arrangements will be made for translation into languages other than English and the sight or hearing impaired, if requested. When proposed service adjustments will affect only a limited area of the transit system, efforts will be made to schedule the hearing at a location near the affected area. Hearings will be scheduled to begin at a convenient time to the public, e.g., midday and/or early evenings.

3. Procedure for Conducting Public Hearings

Comment forms will be offered to attendees to register their presence and desire to speak or as an alternate method of providing their written comments. The public hearing will begin with a reading of the public notice. The purpose, proceedings, and proposed actions which necessitated the public hearing will be explained for clarification. Introductory proceedings will encourage the audience to comment on the proposed actions for which the hearing was scheduled. When the explanation of proposed actions is completed, the public will be invited to offer their comments. The public will be requested to limit their individual comments to five minutes until all persons have been given an initial opportunity to speak. After all registered persons have commented, a final opportunity will be offered for any additional public comment. This offering will precede the close of the public hearing.

4. Documentation of Public Hearings

Official records of RTD public hearings on fare or service adjustments will be generated by development of 1) affidavits of newspaper publications of public notices, 2) press releases conveying information on upcoming public hearings, and 3) voice recordings of proceedings. Records of public comment will be maintained on file at RTD.

F. Conclusion

Following the public hearing process, staff will analyze the public comments and, when determined reasonable to meet, incorporate requested service modifications into the service changes proposed for Board adoption. Staff will prepare a final report that summarizes the public comments and provide a recommended action for Board consideration. If approved by the RTD Board of Directors, staff will incorporate the changes and inform the public of the changes.

RESOLUTION NO. _____
DATED: JUNE 19, 2020

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE REVISED FARE AND MAJOR SERVICE CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

WHEREAS, section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states the following:

"No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial"; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that organizations receiving federal assistance are not discriminating against minority individuals or communities, regular Title VI Program updates must be filed with the federal agency providing assistance to the organization; and

WHEREAS, the revised Fare and Major Service Change Policy and Procedure adds a provision that allows for emergency service changes, and changes necessitated by emergency situations to comply with the FTA, State of California and San Joaquin County ordinances, and pandemics are exempt from the public comment process; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Board of Directors of RTD as follows:

- 1) The revised Fare and Major Service Change Policy and Procedure dated June 19, 2020 is approved and adopted;
- 2) The Chief Executive Officer or her designee is hereby authorized and directed to take any and all actions necessary to submit the Fare and Major Service Change Policy and Procedure to FTA and Caltrans, including making any necessary amendments requested by FTA and Caltrans.