

## Background

For most Bay Area households, transportation is the third-largest monthly expense—trailing only the cost of housing and food. In 2015, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) launched a study to determine if a transit reduced fare program based on household income would be feasible and effective.

As a result of the study and in consultation with transit agencies, the Commission approved the launch of a regional low-income transit fare pilot in May 2018. The program is called Clipper START.

## About the Pilot

The Clipper START pilot program is designed to make transit more affordable for low-income residents, move toward a more consistent regional standard for fare discounts, and be financially viable and administratively feasible.

MTC and BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit and SFMTA are working with community-based organizations and social service and public health sectors in the design, implementation and evaluation of this pilot.

MTC is making available an estimated \$11 million in funding for administrative costs and to defray some of the operators' revenue losses. MTC's contribution comes from State Transit Assistance funds through Senate Bill 1.

## Key Elements

### ELIGIBILITY

- ▶ Adults age 19-64 who have a household income of up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (approximately \$52,000 per year for a family of four) can qualify for the Clipper START discount.
- ▶ Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility in the form of copies of EBT cards, Medi-Cal cards or tax returns.
- ▶ Participants must also live in the 9-county San Francisco Bay Area.

### AVAILABLE ON CLIPPER

Pilot program participants will be mailed a Clipper card to receive the Clipper START discount.

### SINGLE-RIDE DISCOUNT

Clipper START pilot participants will receive discounts on single rides on participating agencies. Participants riding Muni, Caltrain, and Golden Gate Transit and Ferry will receive a 50% discount. Participants riding BART will receive a 20% discount.

## Timeline of the Pilot

The Clipper START pilot program will launch on July 15, 2020. The pilot program will continue for 12 to 18 months, during which time the results will be evaluated. Once the evaluation is complete, MTC and the participating agencies will make a decision about whether or not to continue the program.

## Participating Agencies



### **What is the discount called?**

The means-based transit fare discount pilot program is called Clipper START.

### **When will the discount be available?**

The discount pilot program will launch on July 15, 2020. Approved applicants will have cards in hand within 30 days.

### **What kind of discount will be offered?**

Muni, Caltrain, and Golden Gate Transit and Ferry will offer a 50% discount to eligible participants. BART will offer a 20% discount. (The Golden Gate Transit and Ferry discount will not be available within Zones 2, 3 & 4; on “Early Bird” East Bay fares; or on Oracle Park & Chase Center special event ferry service).

### **How will participants receive the discount?**

Once their eligibility is verified, participants will be mailed a special Clipper card to use to receive the discount. This Clipper card will show their name and will look like a regular Clipper card.

### **What if I have a pass given to me by a social service program, such as Lifeline?**

The discount will only apply to fares paid on single rides, including transfers, but not with passes. You can still buy and use passes, but they will not be eligible for the discount.

### **Who is eligible to participate?**

Adults who have a household income of up to 200% of the federal poverty level (approximately \$52,000 a year for a family of four) will be eligible.

### **How do I apply for the discount?**

Eligible participants will be able to apply through a website or with a mailed or faxed paper application.

### **In what languages will the application be available?**

The application will be available in English, Spanish, Chinese and Tagalog.

### **How can people find out more about the discount and how to apply?**

The participating agencies will be working with social service and public health agencies as well as community-based organizations to let people know about the program when it becomes available. Information also will be available on a program-specific website. Look for announcements on [clippercard.com](http://clippercard.com).

### **How long will this program be available?**

The discount will be offered for 12 to 18 months beginning in July 2020.

### **Who are the sponsors of Clipper START?**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the participating transit agencies have joined together to offer this discount on a pilot basis.

### **How can I find out more about Clipper START?**

Visit the website at [clipperstartcard.com](http://clipperstartcard.com) starting July 15 or email [clipperstart@bayareametro.gov](mailto:clipperstart@bayareametro.gov).