



# Transit Assistance Program (TAP) Expansion 2020

## Presentation for Transportation Committee

24 August 2020



Andrea Kiepe, TAP Coordinator

# TAP Income Guidelines

Metro Transit uses 185% of Federal Poverty Level or 50% Area Median Income (AMI) to define "lower income"

Household size	185% Federal Poverty Level	50% AMI
1	\$23,606	\$36,200
2	\$31,894	\$41,400
3	\$40,182	\$46,550
4	\$48,470	\$51,700
5	\$56,758	\$55,850

## TAP expansion

TAP staff are constantly looking for ways to improve the program, increase enrollment and ease the burden of applying for people who need the reduced fare. This has increasing urgency because of the pandemic's economic fallout on lower income people and damage to ridership.

### **Two new ways to prove eligibility for:**

- People who are unemployed
- People seeking asylum, refugees

# Primary barrier to growth – proving eligibility



Many lower income people do not have access to the social programs we depend on to certify riders.

Social stigma or other concerns can keep people who are eligible from applying.



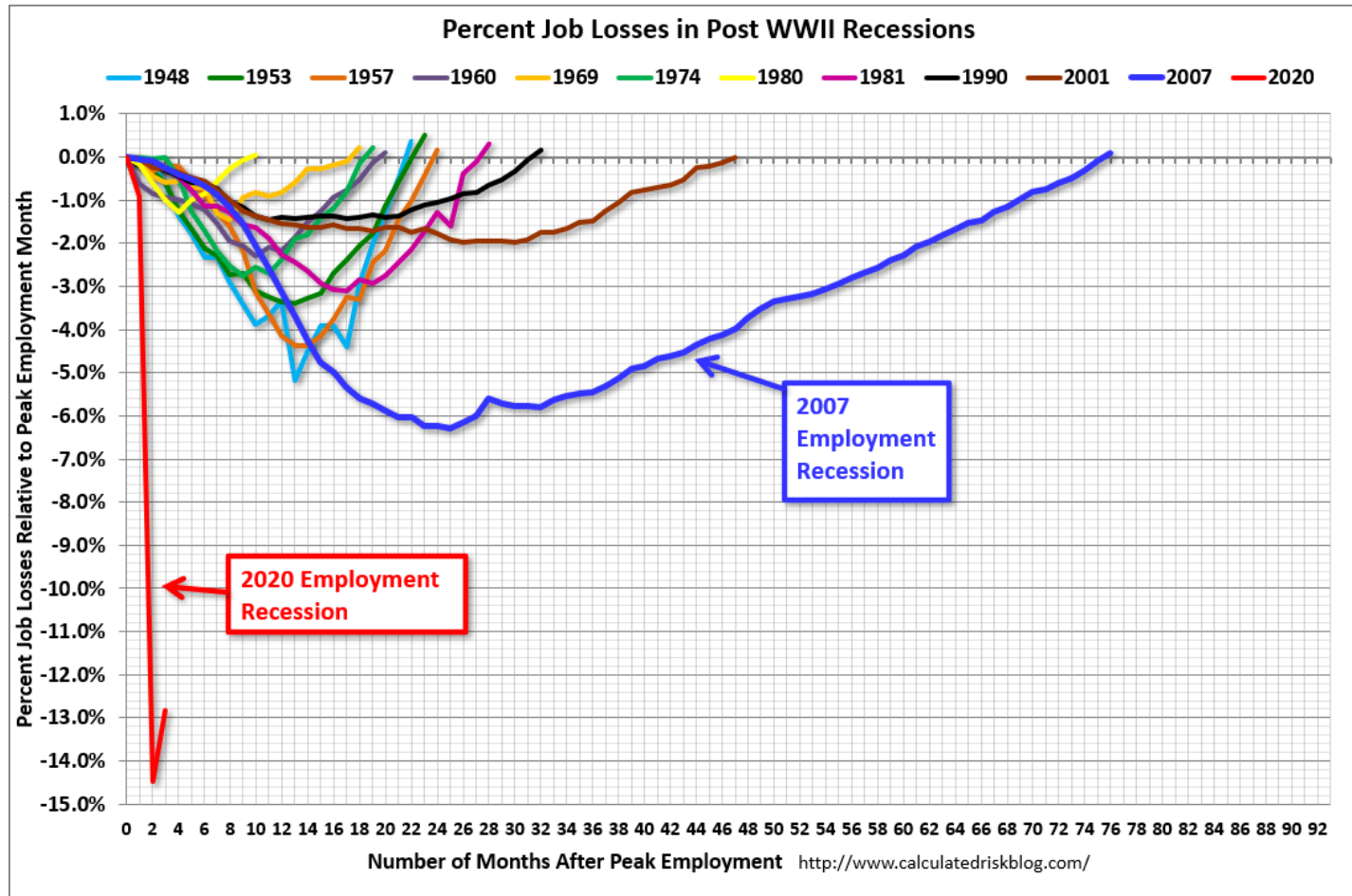
## New eligibility certification categories

- Unemployment Insurance Payments
- Certification for all new Americans with refugee status (collaborating with Equity Team)

### Other Potential Certifications under discussion:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE)
  - Certify all students in 50 metro area ABE schools that receive DHS funding
- Certification for people leaving incarceration from state and county facilities

# Response to pandemic crisis: add UI



# Unemployment

- The Twin Cities metro area now has 211,000 people unemployed, a 10.4% unemployment rate (May 2020).
- 26 weeks of benefits, with checks equal to 50% of normal paycheck up to \$740 per week = total maximum benefit of \$19,240.
- If we capture a percentage of unemployed people in line with mode share (9%) = 18,990 people, effectively doubling the size of TAP.
- Assuming those people make 10 rides per month, that's an additional 2.2M rides annually.
- Potentially a source of first-time transit riders



# Unemployment has equity implications

"While the pandemic has led to widespread job losses at levels not seen since the Great Depression, in Minnesota, it has hit Black workers the hardest.

**Nearly 1 in 2 Black workers** in Minnesota have applied for unemployment benefits since mid-March. **For white workers, it is about 1 in 4**, according to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)."

ALL SECTIONS | 🔍

★ StarTribune

CORONAVIRUS

## Half of Black workers in Minnesota have lost work during pandemic

More than one-quarter of Black workers were still making weekly unemployment claims last month, compared with 9% of white workers.

By Kavita Kumar Star Tribune | JULY 18, 2020 — 9:01PM





## Asylees and Refugees

- Highly variable: from a low of 663 to a high of 5,010 sought refuge in Minnesota between 2005-2019.
- In 2019, 891 refugees arrived in Minnesota.
- Over thirty countries of origin such as: Afghanistan, Burma, Cameroon, El Salvador, Iraq, the Philippines, Rwanda, Syria, and Ukraine.
- Social benefits and help to re-establish life in the US
- Hardship and equity concerns are paramount
- We estimate that this could add 500-2,000 to TAP.

# Questions?

# Thank you! Contact us to learn more about the Transit Assistance Program.



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## **Post Billing for Go-To Rides Solution for Fares Funded by Organizations**

August 2020

Nick Gorell, Revenue Operations Program Specialist

# Conversion From Magnetic Fares to GoTo Cards

- Access Pass
  - Allow Organizations to distribute GoTo Cards without funds on
  - Metro Transit tabulates the rides taken at the end of the month and issues them a bill based on rides taken
- Develop electronic process enabling Organizations that sponsor client transit fares to:
  - Distribute/track Go-To Cards to clients/participants valid for unlimited regional transit fares up to \$3.25
  - Receive reports and invoice at month end only for rides taken with the active Go-To Cards assigned to the Organization.

# Building the program

- Develop electronic system to inventory and issue special Go-To Cards with new fare product for Organization sponsored rides
- Organizations issue Go-To Cards with usage instruction to users
- Go-To Cards valid up to \$3.25 per ride on Fixed Route and Dial a Ride Services
- Fare product valid until disabled by the Organization
- Report developed to translate rides taken during monthly billing cycle into fare due.
- Fare calculated by Full Adult Fare in effect at time of use
- Max charge per month/card limited by the monthly cap of a 31-day pass for Fixed Route, Dial a Ride has no monthly cap
- MT issues bill to Organization for fares due
- Organization pays bill for transit fares used



# Go-To Card Replacement Process Simplified

- Go-To Card replacements handled by the Organization
- Organization is responsible for
  - Instruction Go-To Cards users how to replace if missing
  - Disable lost Go-To Card and issue replacement to user
  - Ordering more special Go-To Cards when needed for replacements and new issuances
- Organizations see a major reduction in administration efforts
- Organizations are issued enough Go-To Cards to pull replacements off shelf and issue replacement for immediate use





# New Cards

**ACCESS  
PASS**



Use is subject to Metropolitan Council fare policies and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. **Non-transferable.**



 [metrotransit.org](http://metrotransit.org)

06-22-59655-19

Call 612-373-3333 (TTY 612-341-0140) to get route information. For NexTrip, call 612-341-4287.

Any problems with this card should be reported to the issuing organization.

**This card is the property of the issuing organization and can be used on any bus or light rail. Not valid on Northstar. The organization can deactivate the pass for not following their rules and conditions.**

**accesspass** 

Remember to touch your pass to the reader as you board every bus or before you get on every light-rail train – even when transferring from a bus to a train.

If your pass no longer works, is lost or is stolen, please pay your fare in cash and contact your provider's program administrator for a replacement.

# Specialized User Guides

	<p><b>QUICK TIPS</b></p> <p><b>If your pass is lost or stolen</b></p> <p>Contact your provider's program administrator as soon as the loss/theft is noticed so a replacement pass can be issued.</p>	<p><b>If your pass doesn't work</b></p> <p>Pay your fare in cash and contact your provider's program administrator to request a replacement pass.</p>	<p><b>accesspass</b> </p> <p><b>User's Guide</b></p>
<p><b>FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS</b></p> <p><b>Do I still need to ask for a transfer?</b></p> <p>No. Whether you ride a bus or light rail, transfers are automatically embedded in your pass. Just remember to touch your pass to a reader before you board your next bus/train!</p>	<p><b>Can I pay for someone else with my Access Pass?</b></p> <p>Sorry, no. Your Access Pass is for your use only and is non-transferable. Travel companions will have to pay their fares using cash or their own Go-To Cards.</p>	<p><b>How do I take care of my pass?</b></p> <p>Access Passes are sturdy but sensitive. Keep your pass in a protective wallet or plastic pocket and DO NOT scratch, bend or punch a hole in your pass.</p>	<p><b>Route and schedule information &amp; Customer Relations:</b> 612-373-3333 metrotransit.org</p> <p><b>Lost &amp; Found:</b> 570 Sixth Avenue North Minneapolis, MN 55411-4398</p> <p> <b>Metro Transit</b></p> <p>06.22.66 006-18</p>

# Who are our customers?      What the customer sees

- Medical Assistance Providers
  - 1.2 Million MN Medicaid recipients per month
  - Work directly with the insurance providers
- Future customers
  - County Social Service agencies
- New portal for clients
  - Register cards
  - Deactivate cards
  - Reporting

## Transaction History

Serial #: 0160-0067-4716-9186

Current Pass:

- Access Pass

Current Stored Value: \$0.00

Last Used On: Jul 12 2020

[Add Value](#)

[Register My Card](#)

[Add to My Fare Card List](#)

[Deactivate](#)

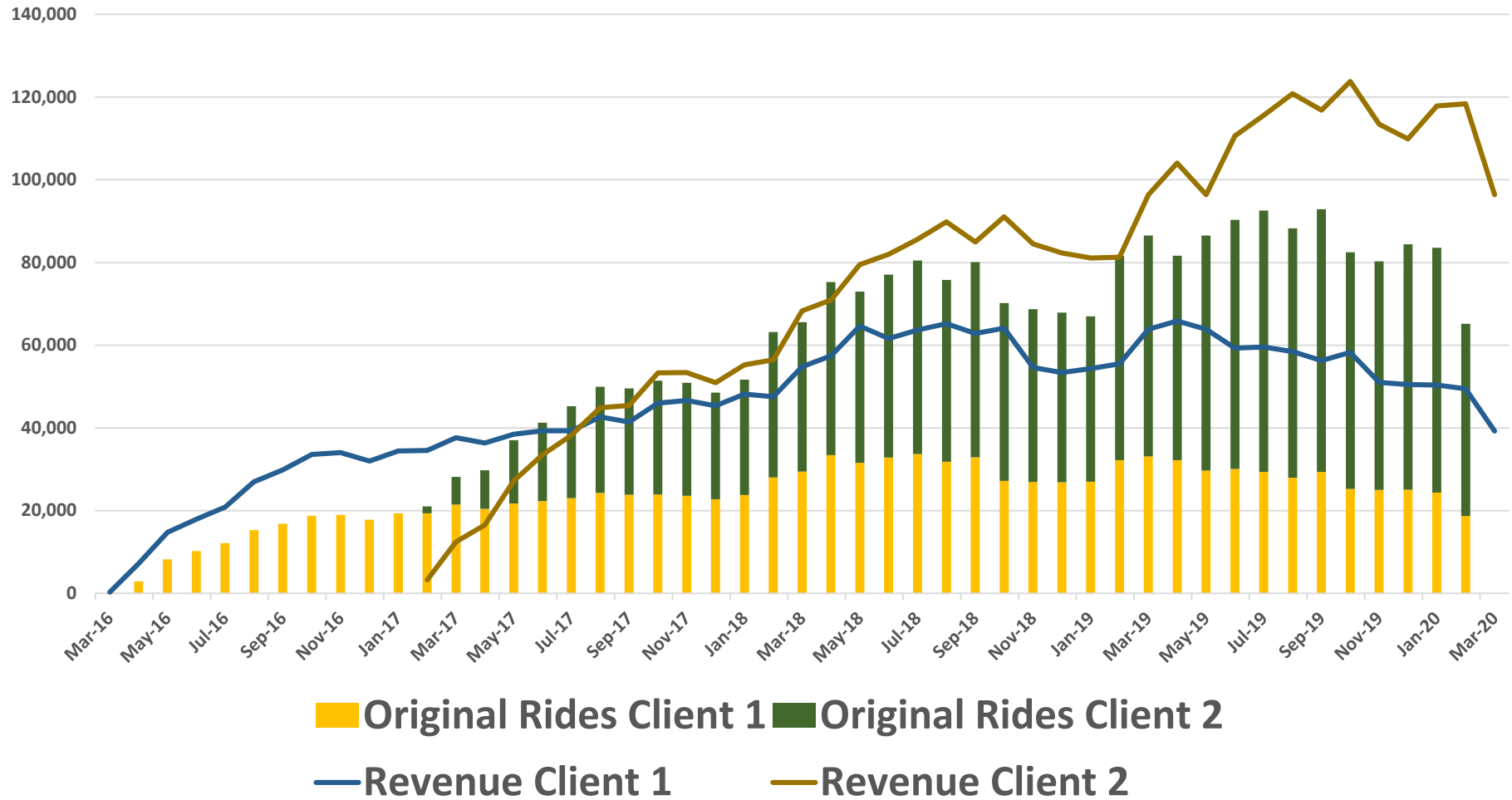
Card Expires: Apr 4 2029 [What does this mean?](#)

### Use in the Past 60 Days

Date	Action	Stored Value Change
Jul 12 9:07 pm	Ride	\$0.00
Jun 24 6:55 pm	Transfer	\$0.00
Jun 24 6:46 pm	Ride	\$0.00



# Access Pass Pilot Data



# One Month Broken Down January 2020 – Client 2

- Reporting and billing is based on original boardings
- 117.5k total rides
- \$1.003 revenue per ride
- 98% of rides on local service
- 88% Bus
- 12% LRT

## Total Rides by Fare Set

Fare Set	Rides by FS	Percentage
Off Peak Local	79,811	67.9%
Rush Local	35,190	29.9%
Off Peak Express	1,203	1%
Peak Express	1,217	1%
Downtown Zone	121	0.1%
Total Rides	117,542	

## Next Steps

- Convert qualified Access Pass Organization
- Automate Reporting
- Add Hennepin County Human Services

