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Aug. 22, 2022



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**New Pilot Program Lets Youths Ride Public Transit in Ventura County for Free**

*Region's transit operators collaborate to implement the Youth Ride Free program*

CAMARILLO, Calif. – Youths will soon be able to ride any public transit bus in Ventura County for free as part of a new pilot program offered by the county's transit operators.

Through the Youth Ride Free program, anyone age 18 or younger is eligible to use fixed-route and general purpose dial-a-ride services for free. Students older than 18 who are enrolled in high school are also eligible. Riders can travel to any destination at any time, not just to get to and from school.

The program begins Sept. 1. To ride, youths simply need to board the bus. High school-age youths should be prepared to show an ID to the driver. Children 10 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

Participating operators are Camarillo Area Transit, Gold Coast Transit District, Kanan Shuttle, Moorpark City Transit, Ojai Trolley, Simi Valley Transit, Thousand Oaks Transit, Valley Express, and VCTC Intercity Service.

“The Youth Ride Free program is a way to introduce public transit to the younger people in our community and encourage them to become lifelong public transit users,” said VCTC Executive Director Martin Erickson. “Increased transit ridership means less congestion on streets and highways and will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By offering free fares for youths, transit operators in Ventura County also can provide some economic relief to families who are struggling with high gas prices and other rising costs due to inflation.”

The pilot Youth Ride Free program is funded by a grant obtained and administered by VCTC from California's Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), a part of the state's cap-and-trade program. LCTOP provides funds to public transportation agencies for investments in capital projects and services that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improve mobility. Other local programs supported by LCTOP funds are [College Ride](#), which allows students enrolled at Ventura County colleges to ride the bus for free; and [Metrolink Saturday Service](#).

The Youth Ride Free program will run through 2022-23 and 2023-24. For more information about the Youth Ride Free program, including a list of frequently asked questions, visit <https://www.goventura.org/vctc-transit/youth-ride-free-promotion/>.

### **About the Ventura County Transportation Commission**

The Ventura County Transportation Commission is the regional transportation planning agency committed to keeping Ventura County moving. Program information is available at [goventura.org](http://goventura.org).

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