

PUBLIC

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

August 2024 Change Day Public Comment Period

WHY ARE CHANGES MADE TO THE UTA SYSTEM?

The Utah Transit Authority (UTA) continuously reviews service to assess needed updates and adjustments based on ridership trends, community needs, budgets, and more. Service changes occur three times a year, in April, August, and December, and UTA tries to reserve the larger changes for August. In addition to service, UTA is adding fare changes to this process to streamline changes that impact the public and make them more adaptable. Fare changes are made periodically to ensure fare products and rates are appropriate and relevant to riders and make sense operationally.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO FARES?

FAREPAY — 20% Discount Elimination

Proposed change: Eliminate 20% FAREPAY discount

- Currently, FAREPAY card users receive a 20% discount on each ride. With this proposed change, riders will no longer receive this 20% discount per ride.
- This change helps simplify the fare structure by removing a discount that's not based on eligibility. It also makes way for UTA to implement fare capping, which provides a benefit to frequent riders.
- FAREPAY cards will automatically be enrolled in fare capping.

FAREPAY — New Fare Capping Program

Proposed change: Implement fare capping on FAREPAY Cards

- Fare capping is a strategy used in other transit agencies that supports frequent riders. Fare capping caps your fare at a daily and weekly rate. All FAREPAY Cards would be automatically enrolled in fare capping if this proposed change is approved.
- Capped Rates:
 - The new fare capping program sets a daily limit for FAREPAY Card users of \$5 per day and \$20 per week on regular service
 - With fare capping program, a premium day rate will be implemented for FAREPAY only, which will be \$10 per day for full fare and \$4 per day for reduced fare.
- The week will be Sunday through Saturday. Each Sunday, your week will begin again.
- Rate table below:
 - Ride regular service as often as you like during the day for a maximum of \$5/day (\$1 Reduced Fare) and \$20/week (\$8/week Reduced Fare)
 - Ride premium service as often as you like during the day for a maximum of \$10/day (\$4 Reduced Fare) and \$40/week (\$16/week Reduced Fare)

	Full Fare				Reduced Fare		
	One-Way	Day	Week		One-Way	Day	Week
Regular	\$2.50	\$5	\$20		\$1	\$2	\$8
Premium	X	\$10	\$40		X	\$4	\$16

REDUCED FARE FAREPAY: Fare Capping Rate

Proposed change: Set a reduced fare rate for fare capping on FAREPAY

- **Background:** UTA has had an established reduced fare program for several years. In 2021, UTA added eligibility for individuals who qualify based on income. Youth (under 18), seniors (65+), people with disabilities, and those with qualifying incomes may qualify for a 50% reduced fare. Learn more about UTA's reduced fare program here: rideuta.com/Fares-And-Passes/Reduced-Fare.
- The price for a one-way trip for Reduced Fare FAREPAY Card will remain consistent to current pricing (20% + 50%) as to not cause an increase in fare. UTA hopes this will create continued fare affordability for Reduced Fare FAREPAY Card users, in addition to the added benefits of fare capping.
- As shown in the table, the Reduced Fare FAREPAY rate with fare capping will be set at \$1 per trip, \$2 per day, and \$8 per week on regular service and at \$4 per day and \$16 per week on premium service.

	Reduced Fare		
	One-Way	Day	Week
Regular	\$1	\$2	\$8
Premium	X	\$4	\$16

REDUCED FARE PROGRAM — Expand Income Eligibility

Proposed change: The income guidelines to qualify for UTA's reduced fare discount will be expanded from 150% to 200% of the federal poverty line (FPL).

- **Background:** UTA has had an established reduced fare program for several years. In 2021, UTA added eligibility for individuals who qualify based on income. Learn more about UTA's reduced fare program and apply here: rideuta.com/Fares-And-Passes/Reduced-Fare.
- UTA would like to support community members by expanding eligibility for reduced fare. Getting more people access to the public transit system at a more affordable rate is mutually beneficial.
- All eligible individuals up to 200% FPL would be able to apply through the application process.

Current eligibility, 150% federal poverty:

Number in Household	Max Gross Annual Income
1	\$22,590.00
2	\$30,660.00
3	\$38,730.00
4	\$46,800.00

5	\$54,870.00
6	\$62,940.00
7	\$71,010.00
8	\$79,080.00

Proposed eligibility, 200% federal poverty:

Number in Household	Max Gross Annual Income
1	\$30,120
2	\$40,880
3	\$51,640
4	\$62,400
5	\$73,160
6	\$83,920
7	\$94,680
8	\$105,440

UVX — Proposed Fare

Proposed change: The Utah Valley Express (UVX) Zero Fare period will end in August 2024. The proposed change is to begin charging regular fare (\$2.50 one-way) for UVX service.

- UVX began operations in 2018 and has had 6 years of Zero Fare. This change aligns with UTA policy to charge fare for service. Fares support UTA's ability to maintain transit systems in a financially sustainable manner. Fares support UTA's ability to maintain transit systems in a financially sustainable manner.
- Customers will be required to have proof of fare, such as FAREPAY Card, employer transit pass (Eco Pass), ID from a participating Ed Pass college or university, etc.
- Those with Eco and Ed Passes will need to tap on and off when riding UVX.
- Cash will not be accepted on UVX. Cash-paying riders will need to acquire an alternative method of paying fare, including the FAREPAY Card or mobile ticketing on Transit app.

WHAT SERVICE CHANGES ARE BEING PROPOSED?

- Route 606 — proposed to be eliminated
 - Route 606 in Ogden is currently suspended. This route served a very small group of riders and the main target destinations for the route have relocated.
- The following routes will remain reduced. We intend to add service as soon as possible. Ongoing staffing shortages continue to be a challenge for UTA.
 - Route 39 — remains at 30-minute weekday frequency until we can increase to 15-minute
 - Route 201 — remains at 60-minute weekday frequency

- Route 218 — remains at 60-minute weekday frequency
- Planned changes from the Five-Year Service Plan (FYSP) are being delayed due to labor shortages. FYSP is being revised in 2024 and will re-prioritize key routes that have remained reduced.
- UTA has been working over the past several years to revise the staffing model to more sustainably hire operations staff while improving operator working conditions, shift selection, and employee support.

DO THESE CHANGES IMPACT THE FIVE-YEAR SERVICE PLAN (FYSP)?

Planned changes from the Five-Year Service Plan are being delayed due to labor shortages. The FYSP is being revised this year and UTA will re-prioritize key routes that have remained reduced. Stay informed about UTA's FYSP at rideuta.com/FYSP.

WHY IS THERE A HIGH TURNOVER RATE FOR OPERATORS?

We've seen a high turnover rate among our early operator hires. Figures show that the one-year retention rate (from the first day operators started at the service unit after training) is between 59% and 63% for fixed bus routes. Currently, 25% of all fixed-route operators have been with UTA for less than a year and, of those 25%, 60% have been hired since August 2023, highlighting a significant reliance on a relatively new workforce.

WHAT MEASURES ARE BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE RETENTION?

Understanding the importance of retention, we've shifted our focus towards shorter milestones to monitor progress more effectively, as opposed to waiting for one year. These new metrics will help us gauge the impact of improvements in working conditions on retention rates more quickly.

ARE STAFFING SHORTAGES AN INDUSTRY-WIDE ISSUE?

Yes. The high turnover rate and staffing challenges are not unique to UTA but are prevalent across the industry. However, we are in a relatively better position compared to many of our agency peers, thanks to our efforts in improving working conditions and focusing on sustainable service delivery.

WHERE CAN I GO TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Find information about August Change Day and public comment opportunities at rideuta.com/ChangeDay.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Submit comments: Share your comments using the form linked at rideuta.com/ChangeDay (also here: forms.office.com/r/7KEiegQYfU).

You can also share your comments using any of the following:

- **Email:** hearingofficer@rideuta.com
- **Phone:** 801-287-3888
- **Mail:** Jolisha Branch, C/O Utah Transit Authority, 669 W. 200 S., Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Join the discussion on March 13

A virtual livestream meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 13, at 6 p.m. Please register to participate using the link below.

https://rideuta.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_H3lRdnn-RMKfkqgqmTPmlQ

- *Listen Only:* If you wish to view and listen (only) to the formal meeting, you can do so live at UTA's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/RideUTA/>
- A recording will be made available at rideuta.com/ChangeDay after March 13.

DOES UTA HAVE A TITLE VI PLAN?

The Utah Transit Authority operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with the Utah Transit Authority. To view the plan, visit rideuta.com/-/media/Files/About-UTA/Title-Six/2022_Title_VI_Program.ashx.