

For Immediate Release
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Santa Cruz METRO Announces Free Fares County-Wide on New Year's Eve and on Hwy-17 Express New Year's Day

Santa Cruz, CA (Wednesday, December 30, 2020) - The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) announces that METRO will be providing free local transit rides county-wide including the Hwy-17 Express all day on New Year's Eve, Thursday, December 31, 2020 and free fare on the Hwy-17 Express on New Year's Day, Friday, January 1, 2021.

METRO would like to express our gratitude to all essential workers who continue to assist our community in these difficult times and as a sign of our appreciation, we are saying goodbye to 2020 and ringing in a brighter 2021 by providing free fares all day to our riders.

The health and safety of METRO customers and operators has been a priority for METRO since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and as 2020 comes to an end, we want to express our appreciation to all of our essential workers who support our community as the nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.

METRO continues to follow public health guidelines from official sources such as CDC, State, and local guidance whenever possible. Cleaning and disinfecting transit vehicles frequently and requiring face coverings and other protections. Keeping passengers informed and providing resources to support safe travel. In addition, to putting health first by requiring riders and employees to avoid public transit if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or feel ill and installing additional safety measures.

This promotional campaign, offering riders free transportation to and from essential jobs and services is just another way METRO is committing to the health and safety of our customers and operators. This free fare day will provide a touchless boarding process without the need to navigate fare payment, minimize interaction between riders and operators, and reduce boarding times at bus stops while giving back to those who support essential functions.

METRO will continue to enforce physical distancing guidance onboard vehicles, and limit the number of passengers onboard at any given time.

If you haven't used METRO services in the past we encourage you try us out for free as we say goodbye to 2020 and welcome in an optimistic 2021.

Please note that on New Year's Day METRO will only be providing Weekend-Level service on the Hwy-17 Express to Diridon Station, all other routes will not be in service.

For information on METRO, visit scmttd.com. For future fare purchases check out our touchless and contactless mobile ticketing app, METRO's Splash Pass, at scmttd.com/apps.

For information on METRO routes and schedules visit scmttd.com/en/routes or to stay connected to bus arrival information in real-time visit scmttd.com/en/riders-guide/stay-connected.

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About Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District:

Established in 1968, Santa Cruz METRO provides fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service throughout Santa Cruz County, with limited service connecting to Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center and Santa Clara County, transporting more than 5 million passenger trips a year. METRO also operates ParaCruz paratransit service to Santa Cruz County, providing about 73,500 trips per year. METRO's operating budget in FY21 is almost \$55 million and is funded through a combination of farebox revenue, sales tax, and state and federal sources. Today it operates a fleet of 102 buses on 26 fixed-routes. For more information, visit www.scmtd.com.