

OVERVIEW

The goal of annual Youth Ride Free program is to give a positive exposure to transit services for youth 18 years old and under. Last year, there were over 57,000 youth rides during the summer months. The Group Policy creates communication between operators and youth programs to allow buses to successfully accommodate all riders' needs. The Group Policy provides solutions to:

- Slow boarding times (causing delayed trips and difficulty to meet important transfer points)
- Overcrowding and standees on the buses
- Lack of seating for all riders and occasional inability to accommodate all riders
- Additional noise and crowding, leading to some customer complaints

The Group Policy addresses these issues by specifying group sizes and educating participants in behavior etiquette.

GROUP SIZE

A "group" is defined as **ten or more** passengers traveling together from one origin to one destination. Please note that attempts to get around group sizes by boarding at 2 different stops will not be accepted. RTA routes (RTA) will accept up to **15 free passengers** (including 2 chaperones). SLO Transit, Morro Bay Transit, and South County Transit (SCT) will accept up to **10 free passengers** (including 2 chaperones). If numbers exceed size limits please inform the transit provider using the below contact information.

PROVIDER:	SCT	PASO	RTA	SLO	MB
Dates	June 15th - August 15th			June 1st - August 31st	
Size Limit	25	10	Numbers larger than 20 are discouraged due to capacity restraints.		10
Free group (first riders free)	10	10	15	10	10
Fare	Please Call 781-4472			\$20 for 16-ride card	\$15 for 11-ride pass
Chaperones (up to 2)	Pay when the group exceeds the free size.				

ADVANCE NOTICE

To ease communication and manage passenger loads, we ask that groups give advance notice in these possible ways:

- Summer Camps provide transportation plans to Rideshare by **4/22/15** in writing. Plans must include origin, destination, travel times, transit operator(s) to be used and estimate of number of individuals traveling in the group. Group leaders should also notify the transit agency if they plan to make changes to their calendar after such date.
- Contact the transit operator(s) and let them know if they wish to use the transit service at least **5 business days** in advance.
- If there has been any trip changes that deviate from the transportation plan related to origin, destination, travel times, transit operator(s) to be used and group size, please call the transit operator you will be using at least **1 hour** prior to boarding the bus.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ALL OPERATORS:

- **RTA/Paso Express/South County Transit:** 541-2228
- **SLO Transit:** 541-2877
- **Morro Bay Transit:** 772-2744 *between 8-10 AM*

TRAINING

Rideshare and all transit providers ask groups planning to use the Youth Ride Free program to attend two (2) travel/trip planning trainings – one for their staff and another for youth participants to ensure successful participation in the program. Training will cover key actions: *Bus etiquette* such as letting seniors/persons with disabilities have a space off the passageway and at the front of the bus, how to signal a bus when waiting at a stop, how/when to notify the driver of the plan to get off the bus, how to use fare media, boarding and exiting and how/when to ask the driver destination questions, etc.

Contact Sara Sanders, Rideshare Program Coordinator, with questions and travel plans at 781-1385 or ssanders@rideshare.org.