

**STATUS**

Council Approved

September 20, 2007

CAO Approved:

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TITLE: York Region Transit Fare Policy	Approval Date: September 20, 2007 Last Updated:
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POLICY STATEMENT:

York Region Transit (YRT) operates its transit services in accordance with a comprehensive set of fare related policies.

APPLICATION:

This document applies to all YRT conventional bus services, including TTC contracted services operating north of Steeles Avenue, GO Transit route 69 and Brampton Transit services operating within York Region, to YRT Mobility Plus services and to Viva bus rapid transit services.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to formalize and document all YRT fare related policies. Actual fare rates will be reviewed separately as part of the annual business plan and budget process.

DESCRIPTION:**1. Fare Payment Process****a. Pay Fare on Boarding**

With conventional bus and Mobility Plus services, passengers pay upon boarding. On conventional buses, cash and unvalidated tickets are deposited into the farebox. Passes, validated tickets and transfers are presented to the driver for visual acceptance. On Mobility Plus buses, the correct adult cash fare or an unvalidated adult ticket must be deposited into the farebox or a valid pass presented to the driver for visual acceptance and recording. On Mobility Plus accessible vans and sedans that do not have a farebox, the correct adult cash fare or an unvalidated adult ticket is collected and a valid adult pass is visually accepted and recorded by the driver.

b. Pay Fare before Boarding

When taking the Viva service, passengers are required to pay their fare prior to boarding a Viva vehicle and to present proof of having made that payment on demand to a roving enforcement officer. Prior to boarding a Viva vehicle, pre-purchased and unvalidated tickets must be validated in a vivaNow validator located at each Viva station and at designated YRT and TTC bus terminals. A ticket that was properly validated and is still within the Transfer

Time Validity Window ('TTVW') or a valid monthly pass or GTA weekly pass is accepted as Proof-of-Payment by enforcement officers.

c. Fare Payment Options

i. Cash

Cash is accepted for fare payment in the farebox on conventional buses and Mobility Plus vehicles and is accepted to purchase validated single journey tickets and fare supplements at oneRide and multiRide fare machines. Exact change is required except at multiRide fare machines which will provide change. The cash fare for all passenger fare classifications is the same as the adult cash fare.

ii. Credit and Debit Cards

Credit cards are accepted for payment at oneRide machines and at the YRT Customer Service Centre. Debit cards are accepted for payment at multiRide machines and at the YRT Customer Service Centre.

iii. Transfers

A transfer that was issued by a YRT or GO Transit route 69 or Brampton Transit driver or was issued by a TTC driver operating under contract in York Region, or a YRT ticket that was validated by a VivaNow ticket validator or a validated single journey ticket that was issued by a oneRide or multiRide machine, in each instance before the expiry of the TTVW, constitutes an acceptable fare payment when presented to a conventional or Mobility Plus driver or an acceptable proof of fare payment when presented to an enforcement officer.

iv. Validated Single Ride Ticket

A validated ticket which is good for immediate travel may be purchased at oneRide machines using coins in exact change or using credit cards. Intended to be the equivalent of a passenger paying a cash fare in a conventional bus farebox, oneRide-issued tickets are available for all passenger fare classifications at the cash fare price. Single ride validated tickets may also be purchased at multiRide machines using cash or debit cards.

v. Multiple Ride Ticket Booklets

Unvalidated tickets available in the different passenger fare classifications may be purchased only in sets of 10 from multiRide fare machines, using coins, banknotes and debit cards. Booklets of 10 tickets in each passenger fare classification are also available from the YRT Customer Service Centre and from third party ticket agencies at a price that is discounted from the single ride ticket rate.

vi. Period Passes (Monthly Pass & GTA Weekly Pass)

YRT passes, that are available in the different passenger classifications and that are acceptable for unlimited travel for a calendar month, may be purchased from multiRide fare machines using coins, banknotes or debit cards and from third party ticket agencies at a price that is discounted from the corresponding multiple ride ticket rate. The GTA Weekly Pass can be purchased throughout the GTA and is valid for travel on TTC, Mississauga Transit, Brampton Transit and YRT's conventional buses and Mobility Plus and Viva bus rapid transit services. The GTA weekly pass is valid for unlimited travel on YRT in a single fare zone. A fare supplement is required for travel on the YRT Express Bus services and when

traveling on YRT across the zone boundary. All passes are to be presented to conventional and Mobility Plus drivers on boarding and to enforcement officers on demand while riding Viva. YRT adult monthly passes and GTA weekly passes are transferable between passengers, but can only be used by one passenger at any one time.

vii. Zone Upgrade Fare Supplements

Passengers can purchase a Zone Upgrade fare supplement from both oneRide and multiRide machines. A fare supplement is also required when travelling on the YRT Express Bus services using an adult, student or senior ticket or YRT monthly pass or using a GTA weekly pass.

viii. Ride-to-GO Fare Supplement

While YRT and GO Transit do not have an agreement to honour each other's transfers, there is a special discount 'Ride to GO' fare available for YRT passengers to ride YRT to or from a GO rail station when connecting to GO rail service. YRT passengers must present the YRT driver with proof of paying a 'valid GO fare' to be able to travel on YRT for this discounted fare which requires depositing 50 cents into the farebox or requires purchasing a valid Ride-to-GO fare supplement from a oneRide or multiRide machine prior to boarding Viva or YRT. Riders also have the option of purchasing a GO sticker, which is sold with monthly GO passes.

For travel inbound to the GO rail station, a 'valid GO fare' would be a valid GO pass (with proper ID) for travel originating at that station or a multi-ride GO ticket for travel originating at that station with adequate validation room (defined as having at least one unused ride left). For travel outbound from the GO rail station, a valid GO fare would be a valid GO pass (with proper ID) for travel terminating at that station or a ticket for travel on GO termination at that station that was recently cancelled or validated such that the passenger proves that they were on the most recent GO rail service that arrived at the station.

ix. Scrip Ride Fares (Mobility Plus only)

The Scrip Ride Program is a spontaneous service for Mobility Plus customers who need to take last-minute or unplanned trips. This service enables same-day trips to be arranged through local taxi firms. Fares are paid with Scrip Ride coupons which can be obtained through the mail or at the YRT office (at 50% of book value). Amounts vary depending on the distance of the trip (see appendix 2).

x. Employee Commuting Option (ECO Pass)

The Employee Commuting Option Program is an employer benefit for free use of the transit system by York Region employees (taxable benefit). A separate employer policy outlines the parameters for participation in this program which began May 1, 2008. It replaced the former policy, which provided adult tickets at a 50% discount for Region staff.

2. Fares

a. Passenger Fare Classifications

YRT passenger fare classifications include:

- Adult
- High School Student
- Senior
- Child
- Post-Secondary Student (possible future use)

Children under 5 years of age ride free. All Mobility Plus service passengers are currently deemed to be part of the adult passenger fare classification.

For formal definitions please refer to appendix 1.

b. Fare Table

The fares that YRT charges its passengers are specified in a fare table, which is reviewed as part of YRT's annual business planning and budgeting cycle. Revisions are submitted to Regional Council for approval. YRT practice has been to seek approval for fare adjustments effective January 1 of each year.

c. Flat Fare

YRT has set one common fare for all passengers in the same passenger fare classification. These will apply to all YRT services including conventional buses, Mobility Plus and Viva bus rapid transit services. The fare is the same for journeys of different distances within the same fare zone.

d. Fare Payment Zones

YRT has divided the Region into three fare payment zones and has created a fourth zone for Mobility Plus service only. For a detailed description of the zones please refer to appendix 2.

For a two-zone journey, passengers must pay or possess proof of payment of having paid a two-zone fare or must pay or possess proof of payment of a fare zone supplement in addition to the one zone fare.

e. Premium Services

YRT operates premium Express Bus services on the 407ETR for which a higher fare is charged and for which all passenger fare classifications pay the same fare.

f. Discounted Fares

i. Fare Classification

YRT offers a discount from the cash fare and from the adult ticket fare to full-time high school students (with valid identification), to seniors (with valid identification) and to children for the pre-purchase of tickets in books of ten. Children under five years of age ride free. YRT does not currently offer a fare discount for post-secondary students,

however if a post- secondary student referendum approves a University Pass (U-Pass), then YRT will provide a discounted pass product. Mobility Plus passengers must pay the adult fare.

ii. Pre-purchase

To encourage the pre-purchase of tickets and passes and to encourage increased ridership through lower fares, a price discount from the cash fare is provided on the pre-purchase of 10-ride tickets and a larger discount from the cash fare on the pre-purchase of monthly passes.

iii. Volume purchase

YRT is conducting a pilot of its RideSaver program which allows participating businesses to receive a 15% discount off the price of a regular adult or express monthly pass on the condition that participants commit to purchase a minimum of 15 transit passes per month. Participants may charge their employees any price for the pass that is equal to or less than the price paid to YRT. Results of the ongoing pilot program will be presented to Regional Council in the fall of 2009.

iv. York Region employee

York Region employees can participate in the ECO pass program as of May 1, 2008. This provides free travel (taxable benefit) on the entire YRT\Viva system. (see Fare Payment Options item x)

v. School Board purchase

YRT provides the York Region School Boards with a price discount for the purchase of student passes by the School Boards. This agreement minimizes the requirement for the use of yellow school buses by school boards where public transit is available and accessible to students.

g. Free Travel on Conventional Transit Services (YRT/Viva)

i. Emergency Services Workers

YRT offers free travel to emergency service workers (fire fighters and paramedics) in uniform and while travelling to and from work or while on duty. YRT offers free travel to sworn police officers upon identification to the driver and presentation of their badge and photo ID (warrant card) while on or off duty (but excludes retired police officers).

ii. YRT Staff / Contractor Property Passes

YRT staff may participate in the ECO pass program (non-taxable benefit). Free travel is also offered to any of its contractor staff carrying a valid YRT photo ID in addition to their Corporate issued security pass, while on duty.

iii. Persons with Visual Impairments

YRT offers free travel on conventional or Viva services to any client of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (“CNIB”) or any other approved agency dealing with visual impairment with appropriate identification.

iv. Travel Training for Persons with Disabilities

YRT provides free tickets and passes to approved organizations for the purpose of training persons with disabilities to use public transit. Participants are taught how to use public transit safely and independently. Interested organizations can apply to this program and will be accepted only for use for training persons with disabilities to use transit independently.

v. Special Dates/Times

YRT offers free travel to certain passengers on certain dates and at certain times including:

- *August- Warriors Day* - YRT offers free travel to veterans and their families with appropriate identification, including uniforms, medals or service papers.
- *November 11* - YRT offers free travel to veterans and their families with appropriate identification, including uniforms, medals or service papers.
- *December 31*- YRT offers free travel to anyone after 7:00 p.m. on New Years Eve.

vi. Special Events

Free tickets/passes are occasionally provided to participants at special events requiring travel on YRT/Viva. Marketing opportunities are considered as part of this approval. These tickets and passes can be used for the approved event purposes only.

vii. Prizes

YRT occasionally provides a limited number of free tickets or passes to organizations as a prize for fundraising events or where a ridership marketing development opportunity is deemed to exist. These requests are approved by the Manager, Marketing and Customer Service and/or the General Manager of Transit.

viii. Marketing - Ridership Development

YRT periodically offers free or concessionary travel to conventional service target market groups with a view to encouraging ridership trial and development as a part of the marketing program. A follow-up review of program effectiveness is conducted.

3. Transfers**a. Between YRT Services**

The time printed on YRT transfers is the expiry time of the Transfer Time Validity Window ('TTVW'), which is an established length of time from the moment a passenger pays the fare on boarding the initial bus or makes the initial fare payment of a oneRide ticket or the VivaNow validator. YRT has established the TTVW to be 120 minutes. Prior to the expiry of the TTVW, YRT transfers are valid for travel in any direction on YRT, Viva, and TTC and Brampton vehicles operating in York Region. YRT drivers manually update the time set on transfers every fifteen minutes. Validated tickets, which are issued by oneRide and multiRide machines and which function essentially like transfers, have the TTVW expiry time prominently printed on the tickets at the time of purchase. Pre-purchased tickets that have been validated at a vivaNow machine also function essentially like a transfer with the TTVW expiry time prominently printed at the time of validation.

Conventional bus drivers will issue a one-zone transfer upon request unless the passenger pays the second zone supplement or deposits a two-zone ticket, in which event the driver will issue a two-zone transfer. Tickets purchased for two-zone travel prominently indicate the two-zone transfer validity.

To make a second transfer by boarding a third YRT conventional bus prior to the expiry of the TTVW, the passenger is required to retain the original transfer to present to the driver on boarding the third bus. Passengers transferring to Viva service must retain the transfer and display it to the enforcement officer on demand. The time printed on the transfer/ticket must be later than the time of inspection.

b. Between YRT and TTC Contracted Services

In contrast with YRT practice, TTC drivers set the time on their transfers to be the start time of their northbound or southbound route or when the northbound bus crosses Steeles Avenue, rather than the expiry time of the TTVW. YRT drivers and enforcement officers must calculate whether the transfer is still valid by adding on the established TTVW time to the time on the transfer.

c. Between YRT and Brampton Transit Services

In instances where BT and YRT operate a common route and a common schedule, BT drivers will accept YRT or BT passes and will issue a YRT transfer for fare payment either by cash or by BT or YRT ticket. YRT drivers will accept BT and YRT passes and will issue a YRT transfer for fare payment by cash, BT or YRT ticket or valid BT transfer. BT follows the same policy as TTC when issuing transfers, setting the transfer time to the beginning of the trip and not adjusting it throughout the trip.

4. Enforcement

a. Transit Bylaw

Transit Bylaw No. R-1415-2005-028 provides the legal framework for fare payment and passenger conduct on YRT public transit vehicles.

b. Challenge but Concede

Drivers are expected to refuse boarding to any passenger that declines to pay the correct fare. Should the passenger continue to refuse payment, insist on boarding or become unruly, drivers shall allow the passenger to board the vehicle. The purpose of this response is to avoid any confrontation or physical/verbal assault on drivers. In order to maintain driver safety, drivers should call for assistance through their respective dispatch office after the passenger has boarded. Dispatch staff will escalate as required.

c. Refusal of Passage

- i) No passenger will be required to leave a bus, if there is any concern for their personal safety.
- ii) Notwithstanding subsection i), any individual who is perceived to pose a safety risk to other passengers, employees or the safe operation of the vehicle shall be refused passage.

d. Penalties – Warnings, Summons & Provincial Offence Notice

At the discretion of the enforcement officer, passengers violating the Transit Bylaw may be issued a warning, a summons or a provincial offence notice. All incidents are maintained in a database and may be used to ascertain repeat offenders.

5. Fare Media Design Modification Process

The current design specification for the fare media including tickets, passes and transfers represents a very carefully determined design compromise that balances the often conflicting requirements of the various equipment and consumable suppliers. YRT has determined that even the most minor changes to this specification including graphics and colour must be approved in advance by all of the following individuals:

- YRT Manager, Finance
- YRT Manager, Transit Management Systems
- YRT Supervisor, Fare Enforcement

6. Refunds & Exchanges

YRT allows pro-rata refunds of monthly passes only on compassionate grounds or in the event that a passenger moves out of the Region. A per day reduction of twice the current cash fare value will be applied to the refund starting from the first day of the month. An additional \$10.00 administration fee will also be deducted from the refund total. Refunds are available only at the YRT Customer Service Centre at 50 High Tech Rd.

YRT does not allow refunds of tickets, but allows the exchange of tickets from an earlier fare period for tickets from the current fare period, when the customer pays the difference between the earlier and current ticket prices. Tickets can be exchanged only at the YRT Customer Service Centre at 50 High Tech Rd.

RESPONSIBILITIES:**REFERENCE:**

“Review of Fare Policies at York Region Transit” – July 14, 2006

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APPROVAL INFORMATION

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