



Whatcom Transportation Authority

Fare Rates and Rules

Approved: February 1, 2024

Effective Date: February 1, 2024

Table of Contents

Section 1: Authority.....	1
Section 2: Effective Date.....	1
Section 3: Fixed/Flex Routes Fare Rates.....	2
Section 4: Paratransit Fare Rates	3
Section 5: Zone Service Fare Rates	3
Section 6: Definitions	4
Section 7: Rules.....	6
Section 8: Free Rides	7
Section 9: Bulk Discounts	9

Section 1: Authority

This document establishes rates for fixed routes, flex routes, paratransit service, zone service and vanpool services provided by Whatcom Transportation Authority. WTA is authorized to set its fares according to RCW 36.57A.090 (3). WTA will develop and implement administrative policies and procedures for fare collection as needed to implement these rates and rules.

Section 2: Effective Date

The changes in these Fare Rates and Rules will take effect no sooner than February 1, 2024.

Section 3: Fixed/Flex Routes Fare Rates

Cash Fare: Single Ride

Cash Fare	\$1.00
Reduced Fare	\$0.50
Route 80X Cash Fare (within one county).....	\$1.00
Route 80X Cash Fare (between counties)	\$2.00
Route 80X Reduced Fare (within one county).....	\$0.50
Route 80X Reduced Fare (between counties)	\$1.00

Passes:

Day Pass	\$3.00
11-Ride Pass	\$10.00
31-Day Pass.....	\$30.00
92-Day Pass.....	\$90.00
Select 31-Day Pass.....	\$15.00
Select 92-Day Pass.....	\$45.00
Student 31-Day Pass	\$15.00
Student 92-Day Pass	\$45.00

- The above passes cannot be used on Route 80X.

Skagit-Whatcom Day Pass.....	\$6.00
Select Skagit-Whatcom Day Pass.....	\$3.00
Regional 31-Day Pass.....	\$50.00
Regional Student/Select 31-Day Passes.....	\$25.00

Youth Pass (80X & High School or older, pass required).....	\$00.00
---	---------

Umo Stored Value Fare Caps

Once a Fare Cap is reached, all subsequent rides in that period are free.

Local Fixed Route

- Single Day
- Monthly (Calendar Month)

Route 80X

- Single Day\$6.00
- Monthly (Calendar Month)\$50.00

Smart Cards:

Umo Card (New and replacement cards)	\$3.00
Umo Youth Card	\$0.00
Replacement Free on Fixed Route Card.....	\$3.00

Free: Section 8

Section 4: Paratransit Fare Rates

Cash Fare: Single Ride

Cash Fare	\$1.00
Youth	Free
Paratransit Companion Riders	\$1.00

Passes:

Paratransit Pass on File (POF)	
Paratransit Calendar Month Pass	\$13.00
Paratransit Calendar Quarter Pass	\$35.00

Free: Section 8

Section 5: Zone Service Fare Rates

Cash Fare: Single Ride

Cash Fare	\$1.00
-----------------	--------

Section 6: Definitions

A **Ride** is a single boarding of the bus.

A **Day Pass** is good for unlimited rides until midnight on the day it is used.

A **Rolling Start** pass is “activated” on first use. It automatically expires after a pre-determined number of days. 31-day passes, for example, expire 31 days after they are first used.

The **Umo Reader** is a device located onboard the bus, near the farebox, which checks an **Umo Card** or an **Umo Mobile Ticket** for valid bus fare.

An **Umo Card** is a durable smart card encoded with a secure identification number linking it to a specific customer account. The card is designed to be used for five or more years.

An **Umo Ticket** is a disposable paper ticket with a printed Quick Response (QR) Code which is valid for a limited, pre-determined number of rides.

The **Umo Mobile App** can be downloaded to current (and next most recent) versions of Android and Apple operating systems. The **Umo Mobile App** can be used to purchase a fare product, add stored value and manage the rider’s Umo account. The product is then displayed on the smart phone screen and read by the **Umo Reader** onboard the bus.

A **Registered Umo Card** refers to an Umo account linking a smart card to specific person. If a **Registered Umo Card** is lost or stolen, a new card may be purchased. When the new card is linked to the account, previously purchased products become immediately available.

Stored Value allows riders to load funds to their Umo account to pay per trip. Stored value does not expire and can be used on any fixed route bus, including the 80X. Stored value cannot be added to Youth Cards or Free on Fixed Route cards where rides are exempt from charges, including on the 80X.

Fare capping sets a “cap” on the amount a rider will pay within a specific time period. Once the Fare Cap is reached, all rides are free until the end of that time period. This provides an incentive to ride (once all rides are free) and allows riders to get a “pass like” discount even if they prefer to pay as they go.

A rider may elect to set up **Autoload** on their account. With the **Autoload** feature, payment information is securely stored so that a new pass or stored value amount is automatically purchased before the current pass expires or Stored Value runs out, ensuring bus fare is always available.

Youth are riders aged 18 and under or enrolled in High School or a Community Transitions program.

Students are riders enrolled at a college, university or vocational school physically located in Whatcom County or Skagit County.

Select products are available for veterans, seniors and riders with disabilities.

Veterans are any former member of the US armed services.

The **Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP)** serves as identification for reduced fares. The card is available for seniors and riders with disabilities.

Seniors and Riders with Disabilities meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Age 65 or older.
- On Medicare.
- Is currently participating in a vocational career program with the Washington Individual Education Program.
- Riders who, because of illness, injury, age, congenital malfunction, or other incapacity or temporary or permanent disability, cannot use a public transportation service or public transportation facilities effectively without special facilities, planning or design. (U.S.C. § 5307(d) reduced-fare requirement)

A **Reduced Cash Fare for Seniors and Riders with Disabilities** is provided to riders who present one of the following at boarding:

- A Regional Reduced Fare Permit (or a previously issued WTA Reduced Fare Card)
- Proof of age (must be 65 or older)
- A Reduced Fare Card from another transit system
- A Medicare Card

A **Reduced Cash Fare for Veterans** is provided to riders who present a **WTA Veteran Reduced Fare Card**.

Paratransit service provides curb-to-curb minibus service to people whose disability prevents them from riding fixed route buses.

A **Free on Fixed Route Card** allows a Paratransit eligible rider, who is able to make some trips on fixed route, to ride fixed route for free. **Free on Fixed Route** eligibility is tied to the riders Paratransit eligibility.

Zone Service provides curb-to-curb minibus service on designated days of the week to parts of the county not served by fixed route service. Zone Service is open to the public.

A **Personal Care Attendant (PCA)** is someone who travels with and helps a rider who is not able to travel alone.

A **Paratransit Companion** rider, who is not also paratransit eligible, accompanies a paratransit passenger, boarding and de-boarding at the same time as the paratransit rider. Paratransit Companion riders 75 & older ride free. A Companion is different than a PCA.

Section 7: Rules

1. Operators and fareboxes do not make change.
2. 1, 31, and 92 day passes are valid from the day they are activated until midnight on their expiration day.
3. Calendar month passes for Paratransit are valid on the first day of the calendar month and expire at midnight of the last day of the calendar month.
4. Calendar quarter passes for Paratransit are valid on the first day of the calendar quarter and expire at midnight of the last day of the calendar quarter.
5. Passes are non-transferable.
6. Passes are not refundable.
7. Passes have no cash value.
8. Cash, Umo Stored Value, Skagit-Whatcom Day Passes, Regional Passes, Free on Fixed Route Passes, Youth Passes and certain school IDs are the only forms of payment accepted on Route 80X. People who ride for free (see Section 8) also ride free on Route 80X.
9. Regional 31-day passes are accepted for local service on both WTA and Skagit Transit, as well as Route 80X and 90X.
10. The Skagit-Whatcom Day Pass is accepted for local service on both WTA and Skagit Transit, as well as Route 80X and 90X. Fixed route/flex route passes are not accepted on Paratransit or Zone Service.
11. Paratransit passes are only available to riders approved for Paratransit service.
12. When making their trip reservation, Paratransit riders should indicate if they plan to travel with a PCA or Companion, ensuring adequate space for all riders.
13. PCAs and Companion Riders must board and de-board at the same location as the rider on Paratransit or Fixed Ride. PCAs ride free on both modes.
14. WTA follows the same process as the Regional Reduced Fare Permit to establish eligibility for discounts for Seniors and Riders with Disabilities.

15. Veterans must present either a VA medical card or a DD-214 document to be eligible for WTA's Veteran Reduced Fare card and Select products.
16. WTA is authorized to provide contracted service. When providing contracted service, WTA will still collect regular fares.
17. Vanpool fares are based on commute distance. Vanpool fares cover costs for fuel (unless provided by the employer), maintenance, insurance and miscellaneous vanpool-related expenses.
18. WTA may contract with retail outlets, allowing up to a 5% administrative fee to sell fare products.
19. A passenger may move their Umo account access from a smart card to the mobile app once, after which the card is no longer valid.
20. Umo readers may not be able to read a fare product displayed on a cracked or dirty phone screen. Riders will need to present an alternative fare media if the reader cannot determine pass validity.
21. Youth riders as defined in Section 6 who are enrolled at a college, university or vocational school shall present a Youth pass (or their school ID for WWU, WCC, and SVC) at the farebox.

Section 8: Free Rides

WTA allows the following people to ride free:

Youth 18 & under (or still in high school) on all routes.

Persons aged 75 & over are eligible for a Gold Card on all local routes.

Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) traveling with and helping a rider who has been pre-approved for PCA assistance. The rider must present either a Regional Reduced Fare card or a WTA issued card indicating pre-approval to travel with a PCA.

Riders who present approved credentials while attending local conferences. Conference organizers must establish an agreement with WTA in advance.

WTA provides passes at no cost to the following:

1. Youth aged 18 & under.
2. Riders 75 & older can obtain a “Gold Card”. Gold Cards are not valid on the 80X.
3. Riders who are eligible for Paratransit can obtain a “Free on Fixed Route” pass. “Free on Fixed Route” passes are valid on Route 80X.
4. WTA’s Board of Directors.
5. Volunteers serving on Board-established committees. Pass duration is based on assignment.
6. WTA employees, their spouse, and dependents eligible for enrollment in WTA’s medical plan.
7. Retired WTA employees (minimum 10 years WTA employment) and their spouses. Employees must have left in good standing.
8. WTA student interns and temporary employees. Pass duration is based on assignment.
9. Volunteers or employees of approved non-profit organizations, public agencies or schools who provide training on how to ride the bus. Pass duration is based on the event or curriculum. Arrangements must be made in advance. Group size is limited to 25 per bus.

WTA provides passes at no cost for the following promotional purposes:

Passes donated for community events, to be used as door prizes or similar.

Passes in partnership with programs at libraries, schools, etc.

Passes distributed to promote transit among potential riders, or to promote new fare products.

1-Ride Umo tickets to riders we have inconvenienced, by causing them to miss a connection, etc. This is at the discretion of staff.

Passes distributed with the authority of the General Manager.

Through our partnership with Whatcom Smart Trips, 31-day passes to first-time bus commuters at Commute Trip Reduction worksites and Smart Trips Employer Partner worksites.

Through our partnership with Whatcom Smart Trips, 6-ride Umo tickets for outreach to employer partners and at community events.

WTA provides 6-Ride Umo tickets at no cost to Social and Health Services Providers

WTA provides up to 50,000 6-Ride Umo tickets annually to approved Social and Health services providers. These 6-Ride Umo tickets are not valid on the 80X or Paratransit.

Free Fare Days

WTA offers ten consecutive free fare days during August. WTA Free Fare Days do not extend to Route 80X.

The General Manager or designee may declare free fare days during transportation emergencies or when called upon by emergency services.

Section 9: Bulk Discounts

WTA can enter into bulk discount agreements with accredited colleges or universities, schools, employers, housing developments and other organizations.