



## Ride On Newsletter

January 2023

### Montgomery County Increasing Frequency on 31 Ride On Bus Routes Beginning January 29, 2023



The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will adjust Ride On bus schedules of 44 routes starting Sunday, January 29, to improve rider experience and improve efficiency based on ridership.

Throughout the year, ridership data and on-time performance are monitored regularly to identify routes that could achieve increased efficiency with schedule updates.

“Public transit that is reliable and on time is critical to the people who count on it,” said County Executive Marc Elrich. “It is a best practice to regularly evaluate and adjust bus service to ensure needs are being met. Dependability drives ridership which supports our sustainability efforts, reduces congestion and increases the quality of life for our residents.”

Montgomery County bus route changes include:

- 31 routes have increased frequency due to ridership: [1](#), [2](#), [5](#), [8](#), [11](#), [12](#), [14](#), [15](#), [17](#), [18](#), [22](#), [25](#), [29](#), [31](#), [33](#), [34](#), [36](#), [39](#), [47](#), [48](#), [51](#), [57](#), [63](#), [70](#), [76](#), [83](#), [98](#), [100](#), [101](#), and Metro Bus routes [L8](#) and [T2](#). Three of these routes also have slight time changes: [18](#), [48](#), [76](#)
- Four routes have decreased frequency due to ridership levels: [45](#), [46](#), [75](#), [96](#)
- Nine routes have time changes for accuracy but no changes in frequency: [9](#), [10](#), [30](#), [37](#), [38](#), [43](#), [44](#), [66](#), [67](#)
- Additionally, 20 of the above-listed routes will have a change in overall hours of operation: [1](#), [5](#), [14](#), [18](#), [22](#), [25](#), [29](#), [31](#), [33](#), [51](#), [57](#), [63](#), [66](#), [67](#), [70](#), [75](#), [83](#), [98](#), and Metro Bus routes [L8](#) and [T2](#)
- One route has slight route changes with no bus stop or time, or frequency changes: [51](#)

#### Updates by individual route:

- [Route 1](#): Increased trips on weekdays and Sundays. Significant span changes on Sundays.
- [Route 2](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- [Route 5](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on Saturdays and Sundays.
- [Route 8](#): Increased trips on weekdays.
- [Route 9](#): Schedule time was adjusted seven days a week.
- [Route 10](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays.
- [Route 11](#): Increased trips on weekdays.
- [Route 12](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- [Route 14](#): Increased trips on weekdays and Saturdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 15](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- [Route 17](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- [Route 18](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes were made on Saturdays, and running time was adjusted on Sundays.
- [Route 22](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 25](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 26](#): Metro Station name change on the route - White Flint to North Bethesda.
- [Route 29](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Modest span changes seven days a week.
- [Route 30](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays.
- [Route 31](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 33](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 34](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- [Route 36](#): Increased trips on weekdays.
- [Route 37](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays.
- [Route 38](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays, and Metro station name change on the route - White Flint to North Bethesda.
- [Route 39](#): Increased trips on weekdays.

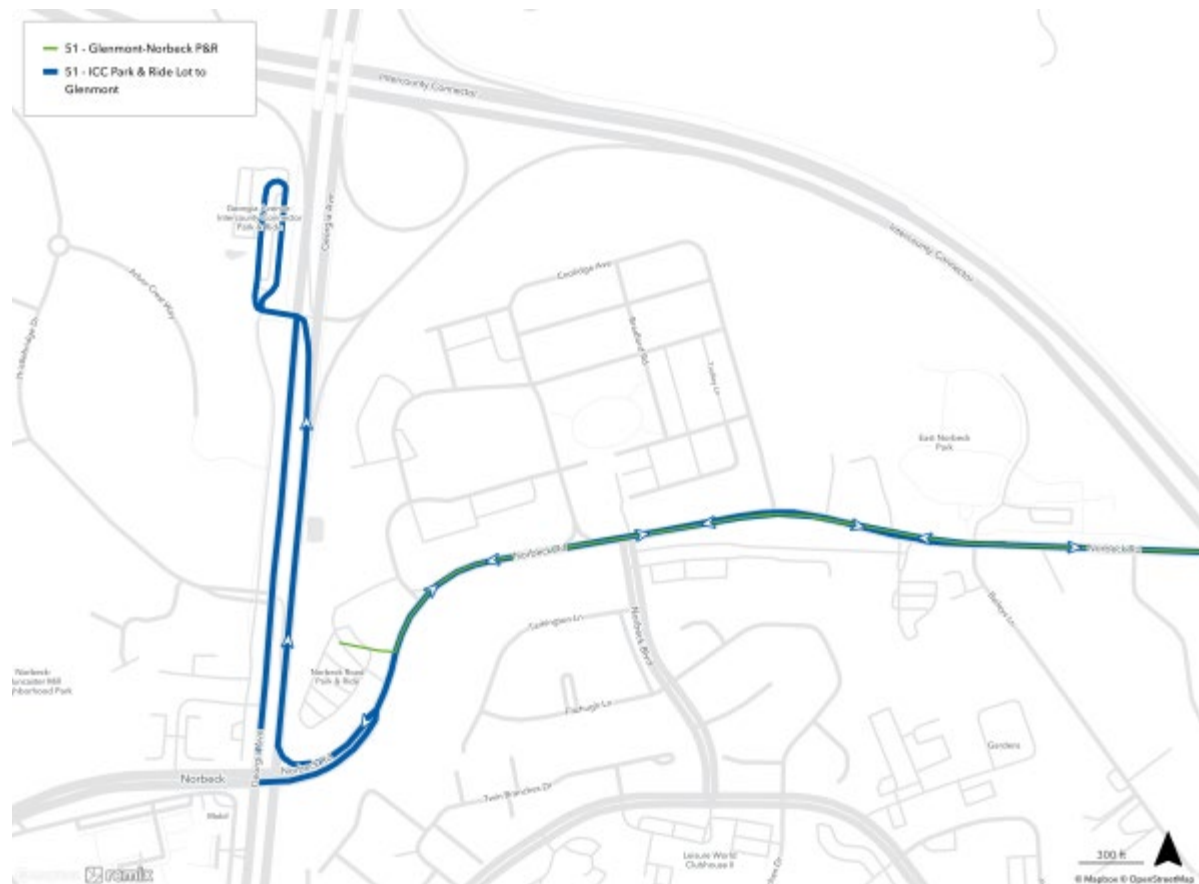
- [Route 42](#): Metro Station name change on the route - White Flint to North Bethesda.
- [Route 43](#): Trip time changes were made seven days a week.
- [Route 44](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays.
- [Route 45](#): Decreased trips on weekdays.
- [Route 46](#): Decreased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Metro Station name change on route - White Flint to North Bethesda.
- [Route 47](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- [Route 48](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays. Increased trips on Saturdays and Sundays
- [Route 51](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays. Now extended to terminate at Georgia Ave ICC Park and Ride.
- [Route 57](#): Increased trips on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Modest span changes seven days a week.
- [Route 63](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 66](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 67](#): Trip time changes were made on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 70](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 75](#): Decreased trips on weekdays. Modest span changes on weekdays.
- [Route 76](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Trip time changes were made on Saturdays.
- [Route 81](#): Metro Station name change on the route - White Flint to North Bethesda.
- [Route 83](#): Increased trips on weekdays and Saturdays. Modest span changes on weekdays and Saturdays.
- [Route 96](#): Decreased trips on weekdays.
- [Route 98](#): Increased trips on weekdays and Saturdays. Modest span changes on weekdays and Saturdays.
- [Route 100](#): Increased trips on weekdays.
- [Route 101](#): Increased trips on weekdays. Metro Station name change on route - White Flint to North Bethesda.
- [Route L8](#): Increased trips on Saturdays and Sundays. Modest span changes on Sundays.
- [Route T2](#): Increased trips on Saturdays and Sundays. Modest span changes on Saturdays and Sundays.

Riders can get county bus schedule and trip planning information by visiting the Ride On Real Time webpage [here](#).

“Being dependable is our priority,” said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. “We are continually making data driven, changes to improve consistency and reduce travel times.”

All County buses have a fare of \$1 to ride, reduced from the \$2 pre-pandemic fare.

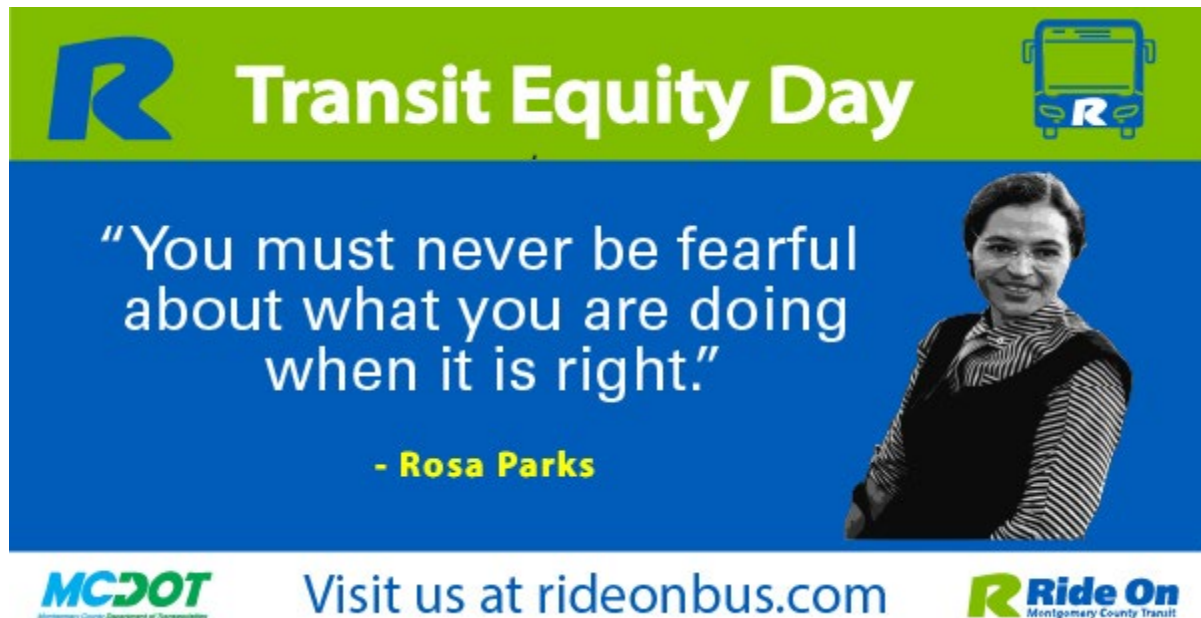
## MCDOT Proposing Extension to Route 51 Service



Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Ride On Transit Services is proposing an extension to Route 51 service. As part of the county's commitment to receive comments from the public, a public forum was conducted on the proposed new extension on January 5, 2023. This process allows Montgomery County Department of Transportation- (MCDOT) -to gather the most information possible regarding the proposed service change which will provide the best opportunity for success.

The new proposed routing will operate between the Georgia Avenue ICC Park & Ride lot and the Glenmont Metro Station. This proposed routing will travel along Hewitt Avenue, Rippling Brook Drive, Bel Pre Road, Layhill Road, Park Vista Drive, Wintergate Drive, Norbeck Road, Georgia Avenue and terminate at Georgia Avenue ICC Park & Ride Lot. There are no changes to the existing stops leading up to Norbeck Road; therefore, passengers will board and alight along the current stops.

## Celebrating Mrs. Rosa Parks on Transit Equity Day, February 4



Transit Equity Day is observed annually on February 4th, Mrs. Rosa Parks birthday, to commemorate her life and legacy. Rosa Parks became a key figure in the Civil Rights era when she refused to give up her seat on a segregated Montgomery, Alabama public transit bus and was arrested in 1955. Her actions sparked the Montgomery bus boycott and the U.S. Supreme Court decision declaring segregation on buses unconstitutional. The actions and legacy of Rosa Parks are tied to the concept of transit equity for all.

In recognition of her history altering bravery, MCDOT posted commemorative bus cards on all buses in December 2020, 2021, and 2022. Transit Equity Day began in 2017, when a network of labor unions, community organizations, and environmental groups declared February 4 "Transit Equity Day," a national day of action to commemorate Parks and other civil rights icons, and to advocate for accessible, reliable, and affordable transit powered by renewable energy.

MCDOT is committed to providing equitable transportation for all. Montgomery County is stronger when everyone has access to reliable and affordable transportation. MCDOT continues to connect people to jobs, health care, schools, grocery stores, housing, public services, and more, while eliminating barriers to transit.

### **Transportation and Sustainability**

Equitable transportation in Montgomery County includes investing in clean transportation options and infrastructure. In September 2020, MCDOT launched our first four electric buses and ordered ten more, to reduce greenhouse gases from the transportation sector. The goal is to convert the entire fleet of buses to electric by 2035, thus dramatically reducing our carbon footprint. In September 2022, MCDOT hosted the



completion ceremony ceremony for the first in the region Integrated Microgrid and Charging Infrastructure Project for Ride On Electric Bus Fleet at Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot. This one-of-a-kind project which was featured on a global list of intriguing microgrid projects to watch in 2022, will support the first 44 electric buses planned for deployment.

### **Title VI of the Civil Rights Program**

MCDOT works closely with the Maryland Transit Administration to meet its Title VI program requirements which help ensure our public transportation service is provided in a non-discriminatory manner. Montgomery County assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Act of 1987, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity.

## **Feature Interview with Nicholson Court Depot Chief - Prasanna Karunadasa**



**Tell us how long you have been with MCDOT and describe your career path within MCDOT.**

I've been with the County for 17 years; I started my career as a bus operator. Afterward, I was promoted to Transit coordinator, Transit Operator Supervisor, and Transit Service Supervisor within the department. Before I became chief, I served as the Depot Safety Manager for the Nicholson Court Ride On Depot before being promoted to the Depot Chief position at Nicholson Court Ride On Depot.

**Please describe the day-to-day activities pertaining to your work.**

A typical workday for me includes leading a fantastic team of transit supervisors, transit coordinators, transit bus operators, and other supporting administrative staff. My primary responsibilities include project execution, management, mentoring, and guiding my team for tremendous success.

**Many organizations were forced to close or suspend operations due to the pandemic, but Ride On never shut down operations. What role did you and your team play to ensure that Ride On continued its services?**

When many organizations were forced to shut down due to the pandemic, we re-evaluated our safety measures. As a result, we implemented new strategies to ensure the safety of employees and customers. For example, we restricted the number of bus passengers to ensure proper social distancing. Also, we provided face masks in all our buses for operators and riders. In addition, we enhanced the cleaning of the bus interior, exterior, filtration, and ventilation systems with a hospital-grade anti-viral disinfectant cleaner and ensured we followed the CDC guidelines.

**What other organizations does your team interface with to ensure successful operations?**

We interface with many counties and other organizations, such as Montgomery County Fire and Rescue, Montgomery County Police, the Department of Health and Human Services, and Montgomery County Public Schools.

**What are the most challenging parts of your job?**

Montgomery County's transit system is one of the most important resources we offer to our communities. We are committed to providing our residents with a reliable and safe transit option. Although we are best known for providing excellent service to our residents, it can be challenging because we are not just transporting people. We are also creating opportunities for our county residents.

**What is the best part of your job?**

The best part of my job is showing that I am giving back to the community with reliable transportation and exemplifying the County Government services. Also, having the support of my team in many improvement-related transportation issues and the feeling of self-belongingness makes me love my job more.

## **Ride On Riders Rights and Responsibilities**

As a valued Ride On customer, you have rights as well as responsibilities, to ensure you have an overall great experience while riding with us. As always, we are dedicated to providing a safe and reliable transportation service which meets your needs.



### **Rider Rights:**

1. Ride in a safe and clean vehicle, in good condition.
2. Be treated with value, respect and dignity while traveling with us.
3. Be informed about the services available to you, including different language and skills.
4. Be picked up/dropped off at the scheduled time.
5. Provided information about route detours and delays.
6. ADA accessibility for those who need it.
7. File a complaint if service is not satisfactory.

### **Rider Responsibilities:**

1. Be respectful of the staff and fellow passengers on board and while at the stops.
2. Pay the exact fare.
3. Be sure to clean up after yourself while at the bus stops and on board.
4. Keep your property including service animals under control at all times.
5. Notify staff of any relevant matter that may affect your care or your fellow passengers.

## **Wheaton and Glenmont Metro Stations Experience Bus Bay Relocations**

Starting January 17, 2023, sections of the bus loop at the Wheaton Metro Station will be closed for Phase 3 of pavement rehabilitation. Bus Bays G, L, M, N, and P will be closed. Additionally, all buses will use the north exit. Temporary bus boarding locations, for affected Ride On bus routes 4, 37, 38 and 48 can be found in the map below.



**EFFECTIVE: Tuesday, January 17, 2023**  
 for approximately five weeks  
*A partir del martes, 17 de enero de 2023*  
*durante aproximadamente cinco semanas*

### Temporary Bus Boarding Locations

*Lugares temporales de abordaje para autobús*

**LEGENDA/LEYENDA**

- Bus Stop / Parada de autobús
- Temporarily Closed Bus Stop / Parada de autobús cerrada temporalmente
- Temporary Bus Stop / Parada de autobús temporal
- ⬇ Pedestrian Tunnel / Túnel peatonal
- ⬆ Elevator / Ascensor
- M Metro Station / Estación de metro
- ⬇ Pedestrian access to temporary bus stops / Acceso peatonal a las paradas de autobús temporales
- Closed Canopy / Cobertizo cerrado
- H Pedestrian Ramp to Georgia Avenue / Ramp peatonal a Georgia Avenue

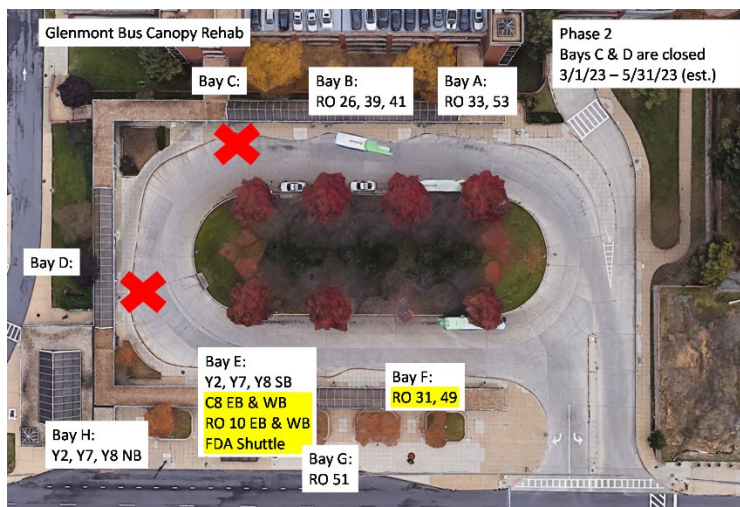
Route / Ruta	Destination / Destino	Bus Stop / Parada de autobús
4	Silver Spring	T3
37	Potomac	T4
38	North Bethesda	T2
48	Rockville	T1

Questions? / ¿Tiene preguntas?

[wmata.com/alerts](https://wmata.com/alerts)

202-637-1328

On Sept. 12, 2022, Metro began replacing the glass canopies at the Glenmont Station. During glass canopy construction, some bus bays will be closed in phases and the associated bus routes will be temporarily relocated. Phase One of construction ended December 27 with the re-opening of Bays A & B. Phase Two is projected to begin March 1, 2023, with the closing of Bays C & D and lasting for approximately three months.



## Winter Public Transportation Rider Tips



Winter has arrived in Montgomery County, and winter weather is already upon us. Taking public transportation is a great alternative to avoid the hassle of driving in poor weather conditions. Our valued customers can count on Ride On being safe and reliable, getting you to your destination while you stay warm and relaxed in our buses.

The safety of our customers continues to be our top priority. Here are seven (7) safety tips we recommend you take while riding with us during the Winter weather:

1. **Plan for extra time in your commute.** Winter weather conditions such as snow and ice may cause delays to the bus schedule. Planning extra time may ensure that even with the delays, you can get to your destination on time.
2. **Dress accordingly.** Be prepared to wait extra time for the bus to arrive. As a result, what you wear is crucial to staying warm while waiting on the bus or walking to your destination.
3. **Consider getting a virtual SmarTrip Card:** Our hands tend to suffer the most during the Winter weather because they are usually exposed due to activity. With a virtual SmarTrip card, you can simply use your phone to pay for fares while still wearing your gloves. It also saves you time looking for the

physical card while staying contactless. Virtual SmarTrip Card is available for iOS and Android cellphones.

4. **Be Visible.** It gets dark early so be sure to make yourself visible to an approaching bus.  
Hold a flashlight or use your cell phone's light so that the bus operator can see you at the stop. If possible, wear reflective apparel or safety items (bands, pins) for more visibility on your coat or clothing.
5. **Stand clear from the curb.** Standing close to the curb is dangerous especially during inclement weather. Buses may slide on snow as they approach the curb. Be sure to stand clear from the curb until the bus comes to a complete stop and is ready for boarding. NEVER stand in the street.
6. **Be careful when boarding and stepping off the bus.** Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before trying to board. Bus steps can become slippery from snow. Try to clean the snow off your shoes before boarding. Be sure to always use the handrails while getting on or off the bus and take your time.
7. **Use our Trip Planning App.** Use [Ride On Real Time](#) for real bus time information, trip planning as well as viewing delays and arrival times of the bus.
8. **Get updates by subscribing to our emails and/or text alerts and by checking our webpage frequently.**

## Ride On's Transit Advisory Group

The Transit Advisory Group (TAG) was created in 1997 by the Division of Transit Services. TAG is a consumer advocacy group that serves as an advisory board for the Division of Transit Services and provides feedback on Ride On policies and programs, passengers' and community needs. They are an important source of suggestions for improvements and new ideas. TAG also serves as the eyes and ears of Ride On management. TAG consists of 14 Montgomery County volunteers committed to serving a two-year term. In addition to these residents, three Ride On Operators also serve on the group. The group meets 3 – 4 times a year. **We are currently recruiting high school students and disabled riders. Please email your interest to [RideOn.CustomerService@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:RideOn.CustomerService@montgomerycountymd.gov).**

## **An Interview with TAG Member Thomas Timberg**



### **How long have you been riding with Ride On and what year did you begin?**

I've been riding with Ride On since I moved to Montgomery County in 1986. I used to take buses from Friendship Heights to NIH.

### **Why did you or your family select Ride On to begin your public transit experience?**

I use Ride On to get to work in DC every morning. My family also uses Ride On to get to synagogue.

### **What routes have you ridden the most over the years?**

Over the years I've ridden Routes 29 and 32, 36, and T2. In recent years I especially use the 38, and others.

### **What do you like the most about your Ride On experiences?**

It exists!

### **How has Ride On changed over the years from a rider's perspective?**

Since COVID it's definitely been less crowded, though it was never very crowded at hours I typically ride it.

### **What other family members use the Ride On system and for what purposes?**

My wife recently took it for a period when she couldn't drive because of a broken arm. Over the years in the 1980s and 1990s our daughters also used the service from time to time.



## Operator Training Graduation Held December 9, 2022



The latest class of Ride On bus operators graduated and will join the ranks of those driving 385 Ride On buses. On December 9, 2022, a class of six operators participated in graduation ceremonies at the Public Safety Training Academy. The graduates come from a variety of backgrounds and experience and are looking forward to their new career with Ride On.

Operator training is a 6-week course that covers a variety of topics such as transit safety, defensive driving, customer service and Americans with Disability Act coverage, and road driving skills, among others. In order to pass the course, aspiring operators must achieve a passing grade in the course curriculum, driving and maneuvering on the "Skills Pad" driving course, and learn customer service skills. If the trainee passes the 6-week course, they will then begin on the road training to familiarize them with the bus routes, schedules and time points. If the trainee successfully completes this portion of the training, then they are placed in revenue service.

Looking for a meaningful career in public service? Consider being a MCDOT bus operator. Our bus operators play an integral part in the communities they serve. They are committed to safety, customer service and a genuine care for the community. Does this sound like you? Then we want to hear from you. To learn more and to apply go to <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-transit/jobs.html>.



Fare collection resumed on all Montgomery County buses on August 1. The one-way pre-pandemic fare, which was \$2 per ride, is now \$1. Monthly passes, which were \$45 per rider, are now \$22.50

Riders using Montgomery County's Ride On buses are encouraged to wear a mask but are no longer required to wear them. Masks are available on all buses for riders who need them.

Bus interiors will continue to be cleaned by the County's Department of General Services with hospital-grade disinfectant. Bus filter and ventilation systems are also treated with a disinfectant.

Riders can plan trips online with [Ride On Real Time](#).

For the most up-to-date service information, riders should follow @RideOnMCT on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#). Additional information is available at [RideOnBus.com](#), by subscribing to receive email alerts at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/govdelivery](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/govdelivery), or texting MONTGOMERY RIDEON to 468311 to receive text alerts.

For information on MCDOT programs and services visit [montgomerycountymd.gov/mcdot](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/mcdot), follow @MCDOTNow on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) and [subscribe](#) to MCDOT's "Go Montgomery!" newsletter.

## **Of Note**

### **Important Information to Include When Contacting MC311**

When submitting a complaint on MC311, social media, or our website, it's important to include certain necessary information in order to ensure we can properly investigate. Whether you dial 311 from inside Montgomery County, 240-777-0311 from anywhere, or submit a complaint online via social media or at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mc311/>, be sure to include the **route or bus number, the date and time of the incident, the location or bus stop number, and the direction or destination of the bus route.**

### **Free COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Taxi Service**

MCDOT is providing FREE Taxi service to COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites to pick up N95 masks and at-home testing kits, for residents 65+ and residents with disabilities. To schedule a trip, call Connect-A-Ride at 301-738-3252 to get your free taxi code. Then call one of the following taxi services: Action Taxi 301 840-1000, Anytime Taxi: 301-637-9292 or Regency Taxi 301-990-9000 to schedule your trip.

## **Farebox Updates Allow Seniors and Youth to Tap and Ride Free with Specialized SmarTrip Cards**

When riding with a Senior SmarTrip or Youth Cruiser SmarTrip card, please remember to tap the card on the farebox upon entry in order to provide us with an accurate count of Senior and Youth ridership. Updates have been made to all fareboxes to ensure that rides within the County remain free at all times. With accurate counts, we may continue to provide free rides for Seniors and Youth and work to further improve our service.