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Tuesday, September 29, 2020

***With less polling locations, free transit can help bridge the gap between where residents live and where they vote***

Watch the promotion video on [Dropbox](#)

**San Diego** – The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and North County Transit District (NCTD) announced today that the agencies will host the region’s third “Free Ride Day” on Tuesday, November 3. Fixed-route bus and rail services will be free for everyone to use throughout San Diego County, ensuring residents are able to reach their polling place and exercise their right to vote.

“Free Ride Day this year has a different purpose than in past years,” said Nathan Fletcher, MTS Board Chair and San Diego County Supervisor. “We are holding it on one of the most important days for our country – Election Day. We want San Diego residents to have every opportunity to participate in our democracy. Free transit rides all day long will help do just that.”

NCTD Board Chair and Encinitas Councilmember Tony Kranz said, “North County Transit District is a proud supporter of Free Ride Day because it’s critical to our agency’s effort to promote transit ridership and improve air quality. However, NCTD is honored this year to provide transportation at no cost to our residents on Election Day. These rides will help bridge the gap between where people live and where they can cast their vote on November 3.”

“Free Ride Day coinciding with Election Day elevates access for all of our San Diego voters to get to their assigned polling place,” said Michael Vu, Registrar of Voters. “We encourage voters to do their homework if they plan to vote at their polling place. Double-check the location because it may have changed, wear a face covering and mark your sample ballot in advance to quickly fill in the official ballot at the poll.” For more information, visit [sdvote.com](http://sdvote.com).

Free rides will be honored on all MTS and NCTD fixed-routes services including buses, the Trolley, SPRINTER, and COASTER. MTS and NCTD services will operate on a normal weekday schedule. Passengers will not need a Compass Card or valid fare for either system, but face coverings will continue to be required on board all MTS and NCTD vehicles and at transit facilities. Participants are encouraged to RSVP through the [MTS Facebook page event](#), or online at the [Free Ride Day webpage](#) to receive event reminders about Free Ride Day, tips for taking transit, and more. Services not included during the Free Ride Day promotion are Amtrak Rail 2 Rail, MTS Access, and NCTD LIFT paratransit.

A big reason for hosting Free Ride Day on Election Day is that transit can help bridge the gap between where a voter lives and where they need to vote. The San Diego County Registrar of Voters will have fewer polling places than in prior elections, so many voters will be required to drop off or cast their ballot at a different location than they did for the primary election in March. There will be 235 “Super Poll” locations, which is down from approximately 1,600 polling locations during the primary. To help with social distancing and limiting crowds, the Super Poll locations will be open for four days leading up to Election Day.

Both MTS and NCTD have implemented new cleaning and sanitizing protocols and practices on vehicles and at transit stations. Vehicles are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily with CDC-approved solutions for COVID-19. Disinfectant is applied to all hard surfaces and common areas that are routinely touched or used such as seats, seat backs, fare boxes, driver controls, all handrails, walls, and windows.

For more details about cleaning protocols for MTS, visit the [Clean Ride webpage](#).

For more details about NCTD cleaning protocols, visit the [NCTD Commitments webpage](#).

## **About the Partners**

MTS continues to operate about 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines. Frequencies and spans have been restored to near-pre-COVID-19 levels. Updated schedules can be accessed on the MTS website. MTS asks that that people wear face coverings at all times and practice physical distancing when possible.

The North County Transit District is a public transportation agency providing over 10 million passenger trips in Fiscal Year 2019 throughout North San Diego County and into downtown San Diego. NCTD’s system includes BREEZE buses (with FLEX service), COASTER commuter trains, SPRINTER hybrid rail trains, and LIFT paratransit service. NCTD’s mission is to deliver safe, convenient, reliable, and user-friendly public transportation services. For more information visit: [GoNCTD.com](#).

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