

## Free Ride Benefit for APS Students on ART buses

The Arlington County Transit Bureau has made all travel for APS students on ART buses free with a registered **iRide SmarTrip card**. Students with existing iRide SmarTrip cards will automatically receive the free ride benefit and do not need to perform any additional requirements. If a student would like the option to participate in the free ride benefit program but does not have an iRide SmarTrip card, they will need to either contact the Transportation Coordinator (TC) located at their school or visit a Commuter Service Store. The initial number of iRide SmarTrip cards will be limited but additional cards will be available in



October. For additional details, please see the attached frequently asked questions.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

*Who is eligible to participate?*

All students are eligible, but the program is mainly aimed at middle and high school students.

*When can I ride for free?*

Students with iRide SmarTrip cards can ride any ART bus route beginning Monday August 29, 2022, the first day of school for 2022-23.

*Can I also ride Metrobus for free?*

No, the free ride benefit is only valid on ART buses. Any travel on Metrobus will incur a fee.

*I already have an iRide SmarTrip card from last year. Can I ride ART for free?*

Yes, the free ride benefit will be available to all APS students with existing iRide SmarTrip cards.

*If I don't have an iRide SmarTrip card, where can I get one?*

There are two options available for a student to acquire an iRide SmarTrip card. The iRide SmarTrip card is free.

- 1) A school's Transportation Coordinator (TC) will have iRide applications the week of September 12th. The TC will assist with applying for an iRide SmarTrip card. TCs will also distribute the cards to students. Allow for a one week turn around.

- 2) Visit a Commuter Service Store located at the Ballston Metro, Crystal City Metro, Shirlington Bus Station, Rosslyn Metro, Pentagon Metro, or the Mobile Commuter Store.

*Does the iRide SmarTrip card need to be registered?*

Yes, the iRide SmarTrip card will need to be registered to the student. If the student participated in the Student Free Fare Pilot during school year 2021-22, please see the FAQ below.

*Why do I need to register the iRide SmarTrip card?*

The iRide SmarTrip card must be registered in the event the card is ever lost, stolen, or damaged and a replacement needs to be issued.

*I participated in the Student Free Fare Pilot during school year 2021-22, is my iRide SmarTrip card eligible for the free ride benefit?*

Yes, all iRide SmarTrip cards issued last year during the Student Free Fare Pilot can begin to ride ART buses for free beginning Monday August 29, 2022.

*I participated in the Student Free Fare Pilot during school year 2021-22, can I register my iRide SmarTrip card?*

No, at this time students that received iRide SmarTrip cards during the Student Free Fare Pilot cannot register those cards.

*Why is there a limited number of iRide SmarTrip cards available for students at the beginning of the school year?*

Specific cards are required for the free ride benefit program and the manufacturer of the cards has been impacted by supply-chain issues.

*When will more iRide SmarTrip cards become available for student registration?*

The manufacturer of the cards has indicated the County can anticipate another shipment of cards sometime in October 2022.