

Fare enforcement policy update

*Rider Experience and Operations Committee
Executive Committee
January 16, 2020*



Agenda

Briefing with no Board action required at this time.

- Interdisciplinary work group.
- Data collection and engagement update.
- Current fare enforcement process.
- Proposals under consideration.
- Evaluation criteria.
- Next steps.

Workgroup

Diverse internal voices at the table

INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK GROUP

Passenger Experience

Public Safety (Operations)

Equity and Inclusion, including Title VI

Research and Innovation (PEPD)

Finance

Govt and Community Relations

Business/Labor Compliance

Communications

Legal

Office of the CEO

Operations

Policy update process

Working Group

Early-mid 2019

Form working group

Develop outreach and data collection plan

Identify initial policy and program options

Data Collection

Mid-late 2019

Administer online survey

Administer onboard survey

Conduct listening sessions

Engage FE Officers

Policy Changes

Late 2019 – Early 2020

Analyze data

Develop recommendations

Engage external stakeholders

Determine and implement administrative actions

Advance potential board action and budget amendments

Serving our customers, meeting our commitments

Vision

A system where everyone taps — where everyone who has fare media can get to where they want to go, and everyone who needs fare media can get access to it.

Mission

To understand the impacts of our current program and develop recommendations that provide an equitable and customer-focused experience, including safety for all riders and integrity of decision making, while ensuring strong financial stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Fairness to everyone our system impacts

Objectives

- Sound financial stewardship, as indicated by continued high fare payment rates, low evasion, and exceeding farebox recovery minimums.
- Equity and fairness to our riders, stakeholders, community members, and taxpayers.
- Continuous improvement that is measurable and accountable.
- Uphold Sound Transit's values of Customer Focus, Integrity, Inclusion and Respect, and Safety.

Data Collection and Engagement Update

A robust response

To address concerns about disparities with the current fare enforcement process, an engagement effort was conducted to evaluate perceptions and outcomes of fare enforcement approaches as they relate to the agency's values, including customer focus, integrity, inclusion and respect.

- Conducted on-board survey — over **1,000** completed surveys.
- Conducted online survey — over **8,000** completed surveys.
- Held **six** listening sessions — Pierce, King and Snohomish.

Received a large volume of useful data; deserves time for in-depth analysis to help guide solutions.

Onboard Survey

Background & Objectives

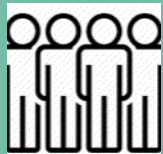
One component of this work was an on-board survey of riders as they experience the fare enforcement process to . . .

Determine the primary reasons why customers do not, or are unable to, provide proof of payment when requested.

Measure the quality of the experience customers have when asked for proof of payment.

Identify what, if any, differences exist in the customer experience across demographic groups.

Onboard Survey Methodology



Interviewing teams shadowed fare enforcement officers. FEOs followed their standard protocol of requesting proof of payment throughout the vehicles.



If rider did not show proof of payment the FEO introduced a surveyor to the rider. There were no warnings or citations given to these riders.



Interviewers randomly approached potential respondents once they had followed protocol throughout a vehicle. Received over 1,100 complete surveys.

Margin of error within target on Link

Goal in sampling was to ensure large enough sample of those unable to provide proof of payment to allow for reliable analysis of that group's responses

		Sample Size Achieved	Margin of Error
Link	w/o Proof of Payment	497	4%
	w/ Proof of Payment	472	5%
Souder	w/o Proof of Payment	68	11%
	w/ Proof of Payment	63	12%

Online Survey

Background and Objectives

One component of this work is an online survey of Sound Transit district residents' experiences to understand the fare enforcement process to . . .

Determine the primary reasons why customers do not or are unable to pay fares.

Learn about their attitudes and preference toward Sound Transit fare payment and policies and proposed changes.

Identify what, if any, differences exist in the attitudes and preferences across demographic groups.

Online Survey Methodology



Survey Development – questions about perceptions as well as current and proposed practices and policy proposals



Survey Implementation – Available online 11/13/19 - 12/6/19, translated in 8 languages, promoted via email, Facebook and Twitter, and specialized media



Data cleaned resulting in over 8,000 completed surveys

Listening Sessions

Background and Objectives

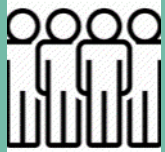
One component of this work was listening sessions throughout the Sound Transit district to . . .

Get feedback from those who are usually marginalized in these conversations.

To seek community input to ensure that Sound Transit's decision-making is well informed.

Identify what, if any, differences exist in the attitudes and preferences across demographic groups.

Listening Session Methodology



The Equity and Inclusion office partnered w/ Tacoma Urban League, Casa Latina, Station Coffee Shop, Phinney Neighborhood Association/Edmonds Library to reach communities of color and individuals in proximity to poverty.



Questions asked — how often do you ride; do you usually pay; is it easy to navigate; how would you improve experience; perception of current program; and how would you prioritize program goals?



Sound Transit held 6 listening sessions, covering Pierce, King and Snohomish Counties.

Current Fare Enforcement Process

Board policy established 10 years ago















2009 Board adoption of proof-of-payment system without fare gates or physical barriers.

- Designated fare enforcement officers per state statute.
- Established procedures to address riders who repeatedly do not pay fare; use of standard civil citation form and \$124 fine.*
- Authorized the CEO to establish, monitor and update fare enforcement procedures.

****Sound Transit does not collect fine revenues; fines are paid to the court.***

Enforcement at all Link and Sounder stations

Covers 27 stations in 12 cities

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Everett |  Kent |
|  Edmonds |  Auburn |
|  Mukilteo |  Sumner |
|   Seattle (14) |  Puyallup |
|   Tukwila (2) |  Tacoma |
|  SeaTac (2) |  Lakewood |



Sounder and Link inspection procedure



- Procedure adopted in 2010 to ensure equal treatment and reduce potential for profiling.
- Fare enforcement officers enter train cars from both ends and ask all riders for proof of payment, working toward the center of the car.

Fare enforcement process

Within any rolling 12-month period

- 1st interaction: Sound Transit issues a warning and records interaction into database.
- 2nd interaction and following: civil citation(s) issued.

Sound Transit has suspended referrals for criminal charges for fare evasion while the agency conducts continuous improvement review of its fare enforcement program.

***Proposals under
consideration***

Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

- Cost-efficient, timely, and feasible implementation
- Racial equity
- Customer-focused experience
- Rider safety and security
- Impact on fare evasion rates
- Community support

Proposals to be considered

Options emerged from:

- Benchmarking agencies nationally and locally.
- Feedback from Sound Transit Diversity Oversight Committee.
- Feedback and engagement in early 2019.

Proposals to be considered

- Expand opportunities for access to ORCA LIFT and other programs.
- Participate in a Very Low Income Fare program.
- Expand and target communications and marketing about how to access and use valid fare media.



Proposals to be considered

- Reduce the shelf life of WARNINGS from 12 months to 6 months.
- Reduce the amount of fines.
- Create option to resolve fine by crediting the citation dollar amount to the rider's ORCA card.
- Create option to resolve fine if a qualified rider enrolls in ORCA Lift.
- Create option to resolve citations through community service.



Proposals to be considered

- Review the role of fare enforcement officers to make customer service the top priority.
- Change fare enforcement uniforms to project customer relations focus.
- Review current training modules and protocols to prioritize training in customer service, de-escalation, and anti-bias training.
- Bring fare enforcement officers in house.
- Define parameters for times to suspend inspections during special circumstances, such as severe weather and the first day of school.
- Move fare enforcement activity from train to platform.

New proposals for consideration

Options emerged from recent engagement

- Develop youth-focused program.
 - Create separate procedures, consequences, resolution pathway for young/student non-paying riders (ages 6-18), and develop consistent parental notification procedure.
 - Ensure FEO training includes specialized training for handling interactions with youth.

New proposals for consideration

- Improve transfers.
 - Extend the amount of time transfers are valid.
 - Accept transfers from all regional partners on Sound Transit system.
- Review procedure that engages law enforcement on matters solely related to fare enforcement and create guidelines.

Proposals NOT considered at this time

- Build new physical barriers at Link and Sounder stations.
- Eliminate fares.
- Eliminate enforcement of fares.



Next steps

Upcoming Timeline

January



- Process update
- Engagement and survey updates
- Criteria for policy/program evaluation
- Next steps

February



- Survey results
- Listening session results
- Proposal analysis

March



- Full board consideration of potential actions
- Update fare enforcement policy and budget (if needed)

Thank you.



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