

New York City's Fair Fares Program

In early 2019, New York City's Fair Fares Program was launched to help low-income residents afford the cost of public transportation by allowing eligible individuals to receive a 50% discount on subway and eligible bus fares. The program was created by Mayor Bill de Blasio and NY City Council and the city allocated 106 million of its budget to fund the program. Initially, the program was available to around 30,000 New Yorkers whose incomes were at or below the federal poverty line, and were already receiving cash assistance benefits. Since then, the program has gradually expanded to include more eligible users: in spring 2019 the city rolled out the pay-per-ride option, and late last year, eligibility opened up to New York City Housing Authority residents, City University of New York students, and veterans at or below 100 percent of the poverty line.

On January 27th 2020, the city launched open enrollment for the program, providing the Fair Fares Metrocard to any individual who applies and meets the following eligibility requirements:

- Are between (and including) the ages of 18 and 64;
- Are not participating or eligible to participate in the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) disability or senior discount fare programs;
- Are not receiving carfare from the Department of Social Services (DSS), Human Resources Administration (HRA), Department of Homeless Services (DHS), or any other NYC agency; and
- Have a pre-tax annual household income that is at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level

Interested residents can submit an online application to enroll in the program. Once accepted, participants in the program receive a special Fair Fares MetroCard in the mail with no value or time in it. If the card is filled with a value and swiped at the turnstile, it will automatically charge half of a normal single-ride subway fare. If participants choose to add time to the card, as with a weekly or monthly unlimited pass.

Since its launch, more than 150,000 residents have enrolled in the program, however more than 800,000 may now be eligible after the expansion to open enrollment.



Source: City of New York