



Commuter Shuttle Program FAQs

March 2017

1. What is the Commuter Shuttle Program?

The Commuter Shuttle Program regulates employer-provided shuttles in San Francisco, charging a fee and requiring shuttle operators to adhere to a set of rules and regulations in order to access a network of shared Muni zones and shuttle-only white zones.

2. Where did the Commuter Shuttle Program come from?

Commuter shuttles have existed in the Bay Area for decades, but their numbers have grown significantly in the last several years. In 2014, the SFMTA created the Commuter Shuttle Pilot program to test regulation of these shuttles in order to rationalize the network, reduce conflicts with Muni, and minimize private shuttle impacts on San Francisco neighborhoods.

During the Pilot, which lasted from August 2014 to January 2016, the SFMTA collected data from shuttle operators, riders, San Francisco residents, and community stakeholders. Based on this data, the SFMTA recommended a number of changes for a new Commuter Shuttle Program moving forward. In November 2015, the SFMTA Board passed legislation creating the new Commuter Shuttle Program. The Program went into effect in April 2016 with a term limit of one year.

In February 2017 the SFMTA board voted to approve the Commuter Shuttle Program. The vote allows the SFMTA to continue regulating operations of commuter shuttles in San Francisco and charging a per-stop fee beyond March 31, 2017, when the Program was set to expire.

3. How many shuttle service providers have permits through the Commuter Shuttle Program?

There are 17 shuttle service providers with Commuter Shuttle permits:

- Bauer's Intelligent Transportation, Inc.
- Black Tie Transportation
- Compass Transportation /SFO Airporter
- Corinthian International Parking Services
- Gateway Global
- Kaiser Permanente
- LOOP Transportation
- Lux Leasing
- Lux Bus America
- MV Transportation
- Pure Luxury Transportation
- Royal Coach Tours
- San Francisco Minibus
- Storer Coachways

- Sunset Development/Bishop Ranch
- Transmetro
- WeDriveU

4. How many commuter shuttle vehicles are operating in San Francisco on an average weekday?

360 to 390 shuttle vehicles

5. How many zones are in the commuter shuttle network?

There are 111 zones in the shuttle network: 83 are shared Muni-commuter shuttle zones, 28 are permitted commuter shuttles-only white zones. The Program allows up to 125 zones in the city, and the SFMTA frequently makes changes to the stop network to address operational problems.

6. What are the rules of the Program?

Commuter shuttle permit terms and conditions include but are not limited to:

- Shuttles with permit authorization stickers may use zones in the commuter shuttle network.
- Muni buses must be given priority at all shared commuter shuttle-Muni stops.
- Shuttles must use designated stops only while actively loading and unloading.
- Shuttles are to pull as far forward as they can and to the curb. They must not block crosswalks or impinge on bike lanes or other traffic lanes.
- Shuttles must follow all existing traffic laws, including [street restrictions](#) and CPUC permitting requirements.
- Shuttles over 35 feet in length must travel only on Caltrans-designated arterial streets.
- Shuttles must provide data feeds to the SFMTA on a daily basis that track stop events and operations in San Francisco.
- New shuttles must comply with 2012 California vehicle emissions standards.
- All drivers must be trained with the SFMTA large vehicle urban driving safety video.

7. Where can shuttles travel?

Larger shuttles over 35 feet in length are allowed to travel only on streets designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as arterials. Shuttles under 35 feet long are permitted to travel on non-arterial streets, as long as they are not restricted. No commuter shuttles are permitted to travel on 3-ton weight-restricted streets or 8-passenger capacity-restricted streets. Please see the [map of arterial and restricted streets](#). Shuttle companies violating these restrictions are subject to administrative penalties of up to \$500 per violation and up to \$1,000 for repeated violations within a 12 month period.

8. How much do shuttles pay to use the designated zones?

- \$7.31 per stop event. A “stop event” is an individual instance of stopping at one of the designated zones in the program network.
- A provider that stops at 10 different zones 10 times per day would be invoiced for 100 stop events per day (\$731 per day).

9. How many stop events do shuttles make on an average day?

Permitted shuttles make about 3,200 stop events per day at zones in San Francisco’s shuttle network.

10. How is the program being enforced?

There is a detail of SFMTA Parking Control Officers who are specifically focused on Commuter Shuttle Program enforcement. The most common citations issued include double parking, Muni zone violations and idling. In addition, the SFMTA issues penalties to operators when their vehicles are detected traveling on non-arterial or restricted streets in violation of permit terms.

11. How do I know if a bus is allowed to stop at a specific shuttle zone?

- Valid shuttle buses have blue permit authorization stickers with unique six-digit identification numbers (xx-xxxx):



- Approved shared Muni-commuter shuttle zones have a red sticker stating it is a permitted commuter shuttle loading zone:



- Permitted shuttle-only white zones have signs posted indicating the hours of operation for the commuter shuttle zone:



12. How can residents help the SFMTA ensure compliance with the program?

Residents can alert the SFMTA to shuttle bus issues via 311. In addition to calling 311, there is also a [webform](#) for sending shuttle bus concerns. SFMTA staff follows up on complaints by contacting individual shuttle operators and alerting our enforcement team. Please let us know if you see:

- Shuttle buses double parking (stopping in the traffic lane to load or unload passengers)
- Shuttle buses staging in a Muni zone, the middle of the street, or anywhere else that is not legal curb
- Shuttle buses using stops outside of the network
- Shuttle buses without permit authorization stickers using any Muni zone
- Unsafe behavior
- Shuttle use of restricted streets
- Damaged or missing signage on approved shuttle zones

13. How is the current program different from the 18-month pilot and the 12-month program that ran from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017?

The one year program that launched on April 1, 2016 was established after an 18-month pilot program that tested the first formal regulation of a commuter shuttle network in San Francisco. Following an evaluation report and several SFMTA Board hearings, the pilot policies and rules were updated to inform the establishment of the 2016-2017 Commuter Shuttle Program. Key rules that were informed by the pilot evaluation and included in the 2016-2017 program are:

- Shuttles over 35 feet in length must travel only on Caltrans-designated arterial streets
- New shuttle vehicles must meet 2012 California emissions standards
- Shuttle operators must provide a Service Disruption Prevention Plan describing how they deal with service disruptions, including through potential labor disputes

A six-month evaluation of the 2016-2017 Program was conducted in the Fall of 2016. Data collected and analyzed from April 2016 through September 2016 showed that the 2016-2017 Program had improved shuttle operator behavior while minimizing the impacts of shuttle vehicles on the rest of the transportation network. Given these findings, the current Commuter Shuttle Program maintains the policies of the 2016-2017 program. However, additional operator requirements have been implemented and the maximum fine for permit violations has been increased.

