



Essential Trip Card Program Frequently Asked Questions

How do I load my card to pay for my trips?

Once you receive your Essential Trip Card, you will need to activate it. Your Essential Trip Card has a sticker on it with instructions. Funds can be added by:

- Setting up an account online at sfparatransittaxi.sfmta.com
- Providing payment information over the phone at 415.351.7052 (for debit/credit payments only)
- Sending a check in the mail to SF Paratransit, 68 12th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; or
- Arrange to pay in cash by calling SF Paratransit at 415.351.7052.

How often can I load a card?

Cards may be filled once a month, for each month of the reduced transit service.

What if I need to take more than \$60 worth of taxi trips each month?

This program is intended to support essential trips only. If you find that \$60 does not meet your monthly essential trip needs, contact the SF Paratransit Office at 415.351.7053 or MobilityOptions@SFMTA.com to speak to a representative who can discuss and evaluate your monthly allotted value.

How do I get a taxi once I have my card?

To start a trip, ETC cardholders can hail taxis, including ramp taxis, on the street, by phone, or by Flywheel app. Get details on all San Francisco taxi companies at SFMTA.com/taxi or in your ETC orientation packet.

I am an older adult/person with a disability and need other services in addition to the Essential Trips Discount Program; where should I go?

For other needs, the City's Disability and Aging Service helpline at 415.355.6700 now operates 7 days per week from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Disability and Aging Service helpline operators are available to connect people to the City's existing service providers and expanded services as they become available.

Can I ride with a family member or caregiver while using my Essential Trips Discount card?

You may ride in a taxi with the maximum number of people that can be safely secured and transported (usually four adults). We recommend a maximum of one driver and two passengers, who should ride in the back seat, to prevent close contact between non-family members. No extra fares will be required for additional passengers.

Can I let someone else like a family member or a caregiver use my card?



Your Essential Trip Card may only be used by you to pay for an Essential Trip Card trip. It is illegal to allow anyone else to use your card. This action could lead to suspension or revocation of your taxi riding privileges under this program.

What do I do if I lose my Essential Trip Card?

You can report a lost Essential Trip Card by calling (415) 351-7053 or emailing us at MobilityOptions@SFMTA.com. As of January 1, 2024, in keeping with SFMTA policy, all Essential Trip Cards are required to feature the rider's photo ID on each Essential Trip Card. Replacement cards for the program which were originally issued between April 2020 and December 2023 will need to be updated with a Photo ID appointment at the SF Paratransit office.

Why do I need to have my picture on my Essential Trip Card ?

SFMTA's taxi program policy requires that your photo is featured on your SFMTA issued taxi card. Including your photo on SFMTA Taxi program cards provides an added level of security that protects your card and account should your card get lost, stolen, or an attempt at misuse is made. Essential Trip Cards issued in the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic do not feature a rider's photo ID due to SFMTA's compliance with the shelter in place order during the public health emergency. In the future, all riders whose current card does not feature their photo will be required to obtain a new card with their photo. We will provide information on this transition in the future.

How long does the program last?

The Essential Trip Card program will end upon announcement by the SFMTA that the program is ending. Once the SFMTA announces an end to this temporary and special program, participants will be able to exhaust any remaining value on the Essential Trip Card.