



King County | Office of the Executive

Executive Girmay Zahilay

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401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

April 2, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
COURTHOUSE

Dear Councilmember Perry,

As required by Ordinance 18789 and King County Code 2.16.142, this letter transmits Metro's 2025 Bus Fare Enforcement and Fare Violation Program Report. This report captures the data collected around issued warnings and citations by bus route, citations resolved, riders suspended due to fare evasion, riders charged with criminal trespass, and the demographics of riders who received citations. The report also captures the activities of the Fare Adjudicator and their efficacy.

Ordinance 18789 authorized Metro to utilize alternative processes for administratively resolving fare evasion violations separate from District Court. Prior policy directed Metro to refer fare evasion citations to District Court as a civil infraction or misdemeanor. However, a 2018 audit revealed concerns of inequitable outcomes for riders experiencing housing insecurity. In 2018, the County amended King County Code via Ordinance 18789 enabling Metro to separate fare evasion offenses from the criminal legal system and offer in-house adjudication options. The King County Metro Fare Violation Program was subsequently developed as the in-house program responsible for administering the fare violation resolution processes separate from the court system. This program began operating in January 2019 and assists customers in resolving violations apart from the criminal legal system in a manner that prioritizes their needs for sustaining access to transit and transit fare resources. As required, this annual report provides data on fare evasion warnings, citations, and resolutions administered by the Fare Violation Program.

In March 2025, King County Metro resumed its fare inspection operations, which were temporarily paused in March 2020 as part of the transit agency's response to the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic. During this suspension, Metro began work to reexamine and reassess its transit safety, security, and fare enforcement policies and practices through the Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative. SaFE Reform has been working alongside community members through the SaFE Equity Workgroup, a group of nine community members representing various community-based organizations, two bus operators, and one former fare enforcement officer supervisor. The workgroup which represented priority populations who have historically experienced negative impacts from policing sought to reimagine and reform transit safety and security functions at Metro by examining impact of prior practices and

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restructuring and co-creating new approaches such as the fare education campaign and how we ultimately resumed fare inspection and enforcement.

King County Metro resumed fare inspection, the act of inspecting riders' fare payments, in March 2025 and resumed fare enforcement, the issuance of warnings and citations, in May 2025. Between March and May 2025 Metro's fare enforcement officers helped riders to understand fare inspection and what to expect when asked for valid proof of payment. During these two months, riders did not receive warnings or citations. In May 2025, fare enforcement officers began issuing warnings and citations to riders who were unable to show valid proof of payment. During this time, Metro's Fare Violation Program – administered by the Fare Adjudicator, previously known as the Fare Violation Program Manager – was reinstated. The Fare Adjudicator began to reach out to riders who had warnings and citations to ensure that they understood the process of the Fare Violation Program.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. If your staff have questions, please contact Renee Hosogi, SaFE Reform Initiative Lead, Metro Transit Department, at 206-263-6963.

Sincerely,



for

Girmay Zahilay
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
 ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council
 Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council
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