



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



STUDENT FARE COMPLIANCE INITIATIVE

Information for Parents, Guardians & Students



SEPTA Fare Evasion Information
→ septa.org/fareevasion

SEPTA Transit Police Student Resource Officer
✉ sro@septa.org | ☎ 267-319-3502



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INTRODUCTION

Years of research shows that students who attend school consistently are more likely to succeed academically. The School District of Philadelphia and SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) seek to remove as many barriers as possible to support students safely getting to and from school. The ***Student Fare Compliance Initiative*** aims to encourage students to safely and responsibly use SEPTA to travel to and from school, and to follow the rules while doing so. Currently, there are two primary components of the initiative:

- **The K-12 Student Pass Program** provides every [eligible student](#) a SEPTA Key card so that they can ride public transit to and from school without the barrier of cost.
- **The Student Fare Evasion Diversion Program** aims to curb instances of students receiving official summary citations for “theft of service”, by deferring the most serious consequences and providing an opportunity for families, educators, and communities to intervene with a student to address instances of fare evasion and seek solutions together.

SEPTA is working to reduce fare evasion incidents on the system across **ALL rider** groups. Fare evasion is not an infraction exclusive to school students. People of all ages, from every neighborhood in the greater Philadelphia region may fare evade, and the consequences of fare evasion are serious and can lead to a required court appearance, citation and a fine. Since our vision is to prepare students to imagine and realize any future they desire, we want to be proactive in supporting our students to overcome barriers and help them avoid consequences that may hinder their dreams for the future.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy

- **Every SEPTA Rider must present a fare EVERY TIME they ride a SEPTA vehicle.**
 - Not paying for riding SEPTA is called “FARE EVASION” or “THEFT OF SERVICE” and is A CRIME.
- **The Student Fare card is only valid for travel by the eligible student and cannot be shared. Parents/Guardians traveling with students must provide a separate fare.**
 - Use of the Student Fare card by someone other than the eligible student will result in an official citation for theft of service.
- **Rules of Riding SEPTA Public Transit**
 - See Code of Conduct guidelines at www.septa.org/customer-service/code-of-conduct
 - See Passenger Etiquette guidelines at www.septa.org/customer-service/passenger-etiquette
- **If not eligible for Student Fare Card, riders MUST purchase a standard fare to ride SEPTA vehicles**
 - Contactless - Credit Debit or Mobile (Apple or Google Pay)
 - SEPTA Key card or Quick Trip
 - Cash

SEPTA works with the various Southeastern Pennsylvania school districts to help eligible students get transportation. Student Fare cards are available to all school districts within the SEPTA service area with those Districts providing transportation to eligible students residing within District boundaries. The school district, not SEPTA directly, distributes the SEPTA Key Student Fare cards to eligible students during the first few days of school, with the same card used the entire time the student is enrolled at that school. If a Student Fare card is lost or stolen, replacement cards are issued, at no cost to the student, by the school administrator or transportation liaison, and the missing card is deactivated. It is required that the student produce, **and tap**, a Valid Student Fare card at the turnstile/validator or purchase a standard fare to ride.

Procedure

- Eligible students must use their Student Fare card at the validator at stations or on-board every time they ride a SEPTA vehicle, during the valid timeframe – approved school calendar days from 5:30am-8:00pm.
 - If the student does not have the Student Fare card with them, they must pay the standard fare.
- Students caught evading fare during approved school calendar days and hours of the Student Fare card, and who can present a valid School District of Philadelphia identification card, would be entered into the Diversion Program and be issued a warning (or Student Contact Report - SCR).



- o SCRs would be issued on up to three separate occasions if necessary (three violation maximum).
 - o On the fourth and any subsequent incidents, a student will receive an official citation for theft of service.
 - o If an infraction takes place outside approved school calendar days and hours of the student fare card, a student will receive an official citation for theft of service.
 - o If an individual cannot produce a valid student identification card, or alternative and acceptable proof of their enrollment at a school, they will be issued an official citation for theft of service.
 - See the SEPTA Transit Police Student Contact Report in “MORE INFORMATION”
 - Once issued, the citations process is handled by the Philadelphia Court system, NOT SEPTA. See instructions on the ticket for court date and associated fine.
 - o **If a student receives a SCR in the morning**, they must alert their transportation liaison and be issued a new Student Fare card which will be able to be used the following morning for their commute to school. The student must retain the physical SCR citation for access to ride SEPTA in the afternoon. A student will not be issued 2 citations in one day as long as they have the SCR present.
 - o **If a student receives a SCR in the afternoon**, they must retain the SCR for transportation to and from school the next day. Once at school the next day, the student must alert their transportation liaison and be issued a new Student Fare card which will be able to be used the following morning.
- A dedicated SEPTA representative will oversee and manage the program and communicate with schools every time there is a fare evasion incident with a student.
 - o This program, with an emphasis on education and intervention, provides an opportunity for caring adults within the school system – teachers, principals, counselors, parents, guardians – to work with the student to address any issues that may be preventing them from using the student fare card properly. The ultimate goal is to support students in riding SEPTA responsibly, and avoid receiving citations and entering the judicial system.
 - If a student’s fare card is declined, they must pay the standard fare to ride a SEPTA vehicle.
 - o Upon arriving at school, if the student believes their card is malfunctioning, they must check in with the transportation liaison at their school to resolve the issue or get a new card. The transportation liaison will then deactivate the malfunctioning card in the SD Fare Card App.
 - At the beginning of each school year, student records reset so that every student starts the year with a clean ridership record.



Card Administration at Schools

- Each participating school will have a designated transportation liaison who is the administrator of the program.
- The transportation liaison will ensure that all new incoming students (students new to the school) who are eligible for the Student Fare card receive it within the first two days of school. Each card is logged in the SDP Fare Card App.
- The transportation liaison will ensure that any student who becomes eligible (residence change, IEP, etc) for the Student Fare card receives it within the first two days of school, or within 2 days of becoming eligible. Each card is logged in the SDP Fare Card App.
- The transportation liaison receives reports from SEPTA on all incidents of fare evasion by students at the school and determines how to provide the necessary support to the students to curb future incidents.
- Any questions about the Student Fare Compliance program from students, parents or guardians can be directed to the school-level transportation liaison or to SEPTA.
-

WHAT DOES THE PFU TRAINING SESSION COVER?

Online Informational and Training Session

The Parent and Family University Training Session is meant to be a full program review for Students, Parents/guardians, and Administrators. The SEPTA team will cover the following info:

1. The goal of the program
2. SEPTA's Fare Compliance policy
3. Fare compliance background: Why it's important!
4. Rules of Riding SEPTA Public Transit
5. The Student Fare card program
6. The Student Fare Evasion Diversion Program procedures
7. Q&A from participants
8. Access to everything covered as well as additional information

*A recording of the session will be made available on the School District Office of Transportation website.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

- 1. How does a student know if they are eligible for the Student Fare card?** Eligibility is determined by the School District with a set criteria. Details can be reviewed at the School District Transportation website, under the “Requesting Transportation” tab.
- 2. How are Student Fare cards issued and tracked?** Student Fare cards are issued by the school administrator of the program and tracked at the schools/district with the SDP Fare Card App. Each card has a number that is associated with a student, but this number is private and only known by the school and the student’s name is never shared with SEPTA.
- 3. What happens if the student forgets their Student Fare card one day?** Every rider must pay a fare every time they ride a SEPTA vehicle. If a student forgets their Fare Card, they must pay the standard fare to ride.
- 4. Since children under 12 ride free, can the parent use their child’s Fare card to travel and simply bring their child?** No, the Student Fare card is valid for student travel only. Parents/Guardians traveling with students are required to pay their own fare.
- 5. What if the Student Fare card is lost, stolen or damaged?** The student should report this to the school administrator as soon as possible to be issued a replacement card. The school administrator will deactivate the old card. If a student is issued a Student Contact Report - “SCR” in the morning, they must retain the SCR citation for access in the afternoon. If a student is issued a SCR in the afternoon, they must retain the SR citation for access to and from school the next day. A student will not be issued two SCRs in one day if using the SCR for access to ride SEPTA.
- 6. When can students use the Student Fare card?** On approved school calendar days between 5:30am – 8:00pm, with up to a maximum of 8 taps per day. The Student Fare Card is not valid on weekends or holidays when students have off from school.
- 7. What SEPTA vehicles can a student ride with a Student Fare Card?** All of them! Buses, Metro and Regional Rail. Student Fare Cards must be tapped on-board or at the station turnstile every time a student rides SEPTA.
- 8. Is the Student Fare card prepaid or at cost to the student?** The Student Fare card provides free travel to eligible students, but it is imperative that students tap their card for each ride. Student compliance supports the continuation of the free ride program.
- 9. How does this program reduce fare-related citations?** This program allows caring adults like parents, guardians, administrators, and teachers to guide student riders to use the system legally and responsibly. It provides an avenue for administrators to identify which students are not complying with SEPTA policies, and an opportunity to engage with the student before the violation escalates to an official summary citation.



- 10. What role does the school district play in the program?** The school district is the managing partner of the Student Fare card program – your school is where you get your original card and any replacements over the course of a student’s enrollment in a participating school. The school is also a critical piece of the Diversion Program, as adults at the school will support students in overcoming barriers to riding SEPTA properly.
- 11. What do I do if the student receives a Student Contact Report?** If a student receives a Student Contact Report, they must provide a valid fare to ride. Review the rules and policies for riding SEPTA and adjust your planning, preparation, and behavior to follow guidelines. Planning and preparation will keep students from experiencing more serious consequences.
- 12. What do I do if the student receives a summary citation?** Read all the information on the citation and follow directions shown on that document. The citation may require a court date and a fine of up to \$300 (plus court fees) may be incurred. Neither SEPTA nor the School District has any discretion or control over the handling of a citation once issued.
- 13. Does the official summary citation go on the students' public record?** Yes. Not paying a fare is stealing and is punishable by law. This is why the Diversion Program is so important - we want to help students avoid this consequence.
- 14. How does a student exit the Diversion Program?** At the beginning of each school year, student records reset so that every student starts the year with a clean ridership record.
- 15. What if SEPTA is running late?** Download the SEPTA app to any smartphone to see schedules and real-time vehicle status. Also access emergency services through the “Help” tab.
- 16. Other than an official School ID, what are acceptable alternate forms of school identification?** SEPTA will consider every reasonable proof of studenthood before issuing citations. Alternative forms of school ID may include: school uniform, proof of ability to login to your school portal on a device, or other school issued documents. *Please note that these alternative forms of identification are applicable for the Diversion Program, but will not be acceptable to travel on SEPTA vehicles.*

RESOURCES

Student Fare Card Eligibility

- www.philasd.org/transportation/#requestrans
 - See “Transportation Eligibility Guidelines”

Student Fare Card Guidelines

- www.philasd.org/transportation/#septafre
 - See “Guidelines and Eligibility”

More About Fare Evasion

- www.septa.org/fareevasion
 - This information is NOT specific to students.

SEPTA’s Policies

- Code of Conduct www.septa.org/customer-service/code-of-conduct (P.10)
- Passenger Etiquette www.septa.org/customer-service/passener-etiquette (P.11)

To contact SEPTA’s Transit Police Student Resource Officer (SRO)

- sro@septa.org | 267-319-3502

SEPTA Transit Police Student Contact Report

- Front and back of the warning citation issued to students (P.9)

Student Contact Report

SEPTA TRANSIT POLICE

STUDENT CONTACT REPORT

INCIDENT NUMBER	DATE	TIME
LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME		
ADDRESS OF VIOLATOR		
CITY		STATE ZIP
DATE OF BIRTH	AGE	RACE GENDER
JUVENILE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		PARENT NOTIFIED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
PARENT/GUARDIAN		PHONE NO.
ADDRESS		
STUDENT PASS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	STUDENT ID#	STUDENT GRADE
FARE CARD NUMBER		
SCHOOL NAME		
MODE OF TRANSPORTATION <input type="checkbox"/> BSL <input type="checkbox"/> TROLLEY <input type="checkbox"/> NHSL/MSHL <input type="checkbox"/> CONCOURSE <input type="checkbox"/> MFL <input type="checkbox"/> BUS <input type="checkbox"/> REGIONAL RAIL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION CENTER		
LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE		
OFFENSE ADDRESS		
<p style="font-size: small;">All students with a Student Key Card must tap at the validator. Student fare evasion occurs when the student does not tap their Student Fare card, or their Student Fare card is declined. Additional Code of Conduct violations are listed in the violation section below. The SCR procedure will defer any criminal citation issuance until the individual school has the opportunity to apply corrective actions. Student are only eligible for the diversionary program for incidents that occur during the hours that Student Key Cards are valid. On the 4 and subsequent occurrences, the student will be issued a criminal summary citation.</p>		
THEFT OF SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> 10-3926 THEFT OF SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> WITH PASS ON PERSON <input type="checkbox"/> WITHOUT PASS ON PERSON <input type="checkbox"/> NOT PASS ELIGIBLE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 01 10-602 SMOKING <input type="checkbox"/> 02 10-603 LOITERING <input type="checkbox"/> 03 10-5503 DISORDERLY CONDUCT <input type="checkbox"/> 05 10-3503(B) DEFIANT TRESPASS <input type="checkbox"/> 06 10-2102 SMALL AMOUNT OF MARIJ. <input type="checkbox"/> 07 OTHER: _____
NARRATIVE: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____		
ISSUING OFFICER	BADGE#	DISTRICT /UNIT VIOL. DIST.

IMPORTANT ... SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK.

THIS VIOLATION NOTICE IS A WARNING ONLY. ISSUED FOR THE OFFENCE OF A SUMMARY VIOLATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO A CITATION/ FINE. THIS WILL NOT APPEAR OR BE ASSOCIATED WITH ANY CRIMINAL RECORD OR COURT DATABASE. IF/WHEN THE OFFENDER RECEIVES THREE (3) NOTICES, THE 4TH WILL RESULT IN A CITATION/FINE ASSOCIATED WITH THE OFFENCE.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

TRANSIT POLICE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER
 sro@septa.org
 1234 Market Street, 6th Floor
 Philadelphia, PA 19107
 267.319.3502

Code of Conduct

To ensure that transit passengers enjoy a safe, secure, comfortable and inviting travel experience at all SEPTA stations and vehicles, please observe the following rules:

- Customers shall treat other patrons and SEPTA representatives with respect and civility; allowing the use, operation, and enjoyment of the SEPTA system in a safe and efficient manner for all persons.
- No person shall engage in harassment of any kind against SEPTA employees or passengers including sexual harassment, defined as any unwelcome physical, verbal, or written conduct of a sexual nature.
- No person may interfere with the delivery of transit service.
- No person shall obstruct the flow of pedestrian traffic at any public transportation facility or interfere with the safe and efficient operation of this facility.
- No person may lie down, put their feet up, or place personal belongings on any bench or seat in a transit or railroad station including any associated concourse or platform.
- No person or any of their personal belongings may occupy more than one seat.
- No person may obstruct the free movement of any individual by lying, sitting or placing personal belongings on the platform floors, the concourses, the stairs or landings at a transit or railroad station.
- No person may use the public restrooms at a transit or railroad station to change clothes, wash or rinse clothes or bathe, except to wash their hands or face.
- No person shall smoke or vape on SEPTA property or in vehicles.
- Use of SEPTA services and facilities is for transportation purposes only.
- Pets are allowed on SEPTA property in standard sturdy pet carriers; this includes companion animals, therapy, comfort, mental health, or emotional support animals. [Service animals](#) can ride on board SEPTA.
- Please remember to use the proper receptacles for trash disposal and recycling.
- Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct may result in fines and a one-year ban from using the transit system. Those violating a ban order will be arrested and prosecuted for defiant trespass.
- Please contact SEPTA Transit Police if you witness harassing or violent behavior. The [Operator Assault Campaign](#) encourages citizens to report crimes against SEPTA operators and employees.
- To report unsafe behavior, call SEPTA Transit Police at: 215-580-8111 | Text: 215-235-1911



No Smoking or Vaping.



No Littering.



Do Not Occupy Multiple Seats.



Do Not Block Doors, Hallways or Stairwells.



Security Cameras in Use.



Harassment of any kind is prohibited.



Passenger Etiquette

- Smoking is not permitted by law in stations, on platforms, in transit shelters or on any transit vehicle. This includes vaping.
- Gasoline-powered vehicles, mopeds, and motorcycles are not allowed on SEPTA vehicles.
- Consumption of alcohol is forbidden at all times.
- Correct fares are required for transportation. Have fare ready to help speed boarding.
- Please always yield designated seats to seniors and riders with disabilities.
- Do not occupy more than one seat. Do not place feet on seats. Do not place belongings on adjacent seat.
- Don't share your music. Use earbuds or headphones.
- Keep phone calls short. Talk quietly. Don't use the speaker.
- Drinks with secure lids are allowed, as are light snacks. Do not consume any hot or processed foods. (You may carry foods in bags to eat later).
- Make sure you have all of your belongings before leaving. Take any trash or recyclables with you and dispose of them properly.
- When standing on a vehicle, especially near doors, please move to allow other riders to board or exit. On subway or elevated trains, "step out, step in" to allow others easy access to the train.
- SEPTA employees want to make sure you and all other riders are always safe and all rules for riding are followed. If an employee asks for your cooperation, please comply. If you question the employee's directive, please call SEPTA Customer Service and ask to speak with a Specialist.
- To ensure all transit passengers enjoy a safe, secure, comfortable and inviting travel experience at SEPTA stations and on vehicles, observe the [code of conduct](#).