



Frequently Asked Questions about the SmartPass Clipper Card

Q. What is a SmartPass Clipper Card?

A. The Clipper card is an all-in-one transit card for the Bay Area. The Clipper Card will allow an employee access to unlimited trips on all VTA-operated bus and light rail service, except VTA Express Bus service.

Q. Why was I given a Clipper Card?

A. SmartPass Clipper Cards are provided to all employees and allow unlimited use on the VTA buses, excluding Express buses, and light rail system as long as you are employed with the County of Santa Clara. Employees will no longer need to receive a new card on an annual basis. The same card will be used as long as you are part of the program. The County will not receive any specific information regarding employee utilization or travel. At the point you retire or leave employment with the County, your card will be deactivated but you can continue to use the card by loading personal funds to ride public transit. There is no need to return the card to the County.

The SmartPass Clipper Card is not valid for free travel or discounts on any other transit system. However, additional fares from other agencies may be loaded on the **same** Clipper Card. To use any of these transit agencies you can load personal funds in several ways. *It is highly recommended that Clipper Cards with additional fare be registered at www.clippercard.com.* In the event a registered Clipper Card is lost or stolen, the value of the additional fare loaded on the card will be replaced. If you have questions about coordinating your SmartPass Clipper Card with other transit services, you can contact Clipper customer service by email at custserv@clippercard.com or by phone at (877) 878-8883 for more information.

Q. When will I receive my SmartPass Clipper Card?

A. All new employees are supposed to receive their SmartPass Clipper Card during the onboarding process when they are first hired. If an employee did not receive a card during this time, please contact the Employee Benefits Department at benefits@esa.sccgov.org.

Q. How do I use my Clipper Card?

A. Locate the Clipper Card reader either at the front of the bus or on the light rail platform near the ticket vending machine.

Tag your card by touching the Clipper logo on the reader, making sure to hold the card flat long enough until a single beep is heard, and a green light is displayed by the card reader. *Forgetting to tag your card prior to boarding light rail could result in a fine.*

After tagging your card please have it available to show a VTA fare inspector when asked. Customers only need to tap their card on the platform reader once, at the beginning of their trip, before entering the vehicle. Also, customers do not need to tag off. You must also carry your County identification when using the Clipper Card and present it if asked. *Failure to not carry your County identification when using your Clipper Card could result in a fine.*



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Q. Where can I use my clipper card?

A. You can use the Clipper card throughout Santa Clara County VTA's bus and light-rail routes, except VTA Express Bus service. You can also use AC Transit, BART, CalTrain, Muni and SamTrans, among many others, however, you would have to load your money onto it.

Q. How much does my Clipper Card cost?

A. There is no cost. This a benefit as an employee with the County of Santa Clara. If an employee leaves employment the Clipper card will be deactivated but you can continue to use the card by loading personal funds to ride public transit. There is no need to return the card to the County.

Q. I sometimes need to ride an express route. Can I use my Clipper card?

A. If you want to use your SmartPass on an express route, you must have cash value on your card to cover the upgrade to the express fare. When you tag your card, Clipper will automatically deduct the value of the Express fare. If you do not have enough cash value to pay the upgrade, you will need to pay the full Express fare in cash at the fare box.

Q. What happens if I lose my Clipper Card? How do I get a replacement?

A. For replacement cards, please contact the Employee Benefits Department at benefits@esa.sccgov.org.

Q. What happens if my SmartPass Clipper Card is not working or giving an error message?

A. If your card is not working or is giving you an error message when you try to use it then please report this to your local HR service center or to benefits@esa.sccgov.org. Once reported a request will be made to VTA to reactivate your card. The reactivation process takes 3-5 business days to complete. If your card is still not functioning correctly after the reactivation request has been made then please contact your local service center or benefits@esa.sccgov.org to have a new card assigned to you.

Q. What happens if my SmartPass Clipper Card is lost or stolen?

A. Lost or stolen Clipper Cards will be replaced at no charge no more than one-time per calendar year. If your card is lost or stolen, then please inform your local service center or benefits@esa.sccgov.org to have the SmartPass Clipper Card deactivated and to have a new card issued to you.

Q. I don't plan to use my SmartPass Clipper Card. Can I give it or sell it to someone else?

A. **The SmartPass Clipper Card is non-transferable.** Each pass has a unique number which is assigned and tracked to each employee. The SmartPass Clipper Card can only be used by the employee to whom the card is issued. **Anyone who alters, defaces, transfers or duplicates the SmartPass Clipper Card with the intent to evade the payment of a fare is in violation of California Penal Code 640 and may**



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be punishable by a fine of up to the maximum allowable by law, and may also be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, VTA may confiscate the SmartPass and pursue claims and demands against, or seek prosecution of, anyone who duplicates, alters, or commits unauthorized use of the SmartPass Clipper Card.

Q. What about Clipper on light rail?

A. When using Clipper on VTA light rail, customers only need to tap their card on the platform reader once, at the beginning of their trip, before entering the vehicle. If you need to transfer to a second or third light rail vehicle to complete this trip, you **do not** need to tap your Clipper card again prior to boarding unless the transfer is more than 2 hours after starting the original trip.

Q. Can I use my card to pay the fare of someone traveling with me?

A. Each rider 5 years of age or older must have their own card. Clipper cards will not allow a customer to tag more than once on the same bus within a 5-minute time frame. This ensures that customers do not accidentally tag and get charged twice

Have more questions? Please contact Employee Service Agency (ESA) at benefits@esa.sccgov.org.