

On the Go

Rideshare News for Southern California Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETCs)

May/June 2020

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A Note About This Issue:

On the Go provides help to ETCs with managing employees' commutes—which usually involves promoting rideshare options. The May/June issue addresses the challenges currently facing ETCs. How can you help essential workers get safely to their jobs? What's the best way to oversee temporary teleworkers? Are there commute options that allow "social distancing" other than driving alone? It also contains information on essential jobs and programs that are ongoing.

Where to Find Important Transportation Updates

Most Southern California transit providers have remained in service, providing vital transportation to essential workers. Temporary adjustments—including changing or consolidating routes, switching to back door boarding, and in some cases waiving fares—are being made to ensure safety of both passengers and transit workers.

A segment of the 511 network that provides free traveler information online at go511.com is posting the latest transportation information changes due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes updates on freeways, express lanes and specific transit providers in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura counties.

Other resources for transportation news updates:

- L.A. Metro: metro.net
- L.A. Metro's blog *The Source*: thesource.metro.net
- Metrolink: metrolinktrains.com
- Omnitrans: omnitrans.org
- Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA): octa.net
- OCTA's blog *On the Move*: blog.octa.net
- Riverside Transit Agency: riversidetransit.com
- Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC): goventura.org
- In the Victor Valley: vta.org



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Tips for Effective Telework

While telework has been around a long time, the majority of Southern California companies either don't offer it or have informal programs—and now have had to scramble to help many or all employees effectively work from home.

As an ETC, telework often falls into your purview since it is recognized as a commute alternative for clean-air mandates. Yet this is not “business as usual” in terms of how telework programs are typically launched. There was little or no time for training, establishing rules or arming employees with proper technology.

So how can you make it work? How do you manage a telework program that has most likely been thrown together with the best of intentions and most likely a minimum of technical support?

Here, we offer advice from **Elham Shirazi**, principal at e-Planning, a Los Angeles-based telework and commute alternatives consultant firm:

- **Establish goals and track deliverables.** “For the employees that have gone home and have non-essential jobs, it's likely there's never been a discussion of goals and deliverables,” says Shirazi. She suggests managers establish and revisit on a weekly basis what those deliverables are and check in with employees on how those are being met. “A lot of employees may be lacking direction as to what they should be doing.”

- **Put a face on it if you can.** Phone calls are important, but also use video (such as Zoom conference calls)

if you can. For employees who may be feeling lost or isolated, it's a more personal way to connect.

- **Be flexible.** Yes, establishing core hours for employees is a good idea, but those core hours may need to vary based on an individual employee's needs. They may be juggling work with school age children at home due to school closures or while sharing resources such as computers or bandwidth with spouses or roommates.

If you have formal telework policies, even those may need to be relaxed. “With Covid-19, everything has to be fluid,” Shirazi adds.

- **Gather around the water cooler.** It's important to connect employees with each other, like doing a “water cooler” type of a meeting online or a virtual break. People need to have the time and the ability to share some

issues that are happening in their household and get advice.

- **Get legal input.** Even for the short term, it is smart to consult your attorneys to make sure you do not violate any laws regarding workers' protection, even when work is being done at home.

- **Recognize this isn't typical telework.** Workers suddenly working at home are doing so as a response to a pandemic emergency, not as a commute alternative strategy. Make sure management understands that if there are bumps in the road, telework could still be an effective strategy when proper planning is possible. Says Shirazi, “The moral of the story is that telecommuting can work if it's implemented in a well thought-out manner with seamless technology and with management commitment.”



Office to Home—Making the Shift

Irina Taylor, talent manager/human resources at the George P. Johnson agency in Torrance



Started telework:
March 13

How telework policies were determined: The department head for each team set out how it would work. "We tried to encourage managers to set clear rules with their staff, i.e., 'I expect you to return a phone call within 15 minutes... return an email within an hour,'" Taylor says. "So the manager knows you're working and also that you're okay."

Staying connected: The HR department has continued its regular meetings, only now doing so remotely. "We're touching base with each other and will be putting together Google pages so our employees can have one place centrally where they go for all information."

Tips for managing home/work balance: "My dining and living room are set up as my home office. At 5 o'clock I turn off my computer and go into a bedroom so I can feel like I'm leaving work."

A bit of advice: "I think that people should be patient with their coworkers and themselves," Taylor says, pointing out that others may have spouses, roommates or off-school children at home. "You have to be patient and flexible and hopefully your bosses will be understanding. It's just necessary at this time, unfortunately."

John Zivi, learning consultant at Kaiser Permanente offices in Downey



Started telework:
March 16

How telework policies were determined: His office already allowed employees to work at home twice a month, so they were a step ahead as far as having some telework policies in place. "I have deliverables, and we have checkpoint meetings where we're asked what we're working on."

Staying connected: "A lot of the people I work with on my team are in different locations anyway, so we already do conference calls as part of our daily routine."

What he misses about the office: Because he'd only recently started teleworking, he didn't have many files handy at home. "There are some hard copy materials that it would have been nice to have. But since everything is so digital these days, you just sort of live without it."

What he doesn't miss: His usual 20-mile commute. "What everybody seems to be saying is that when this is over, we're going to want to telecommute more often...saving on commuting time. Less wear and tear on the car. Plus the flexibility you have."

Diana Bevacqua, environmental health and safety manager for Ontic Engineering and Manufacturing



Started telework:

Telework for non-essential employees (about half the staff) started March 23

Prepping employees: "The stay-at-home order came through on a Thursday but didn't go into effect until Monday. We used Friday and the weekend for people to be able to come in and work, take home their laptops, monitors—anything they needed to work at home."

Staying connected: Employees primarily use phone and email, as well as using Microsoft Teams—a video chat service—for meetings and conference calls.

An unexpected perk: People are reporting that they're more productive without interruptions from coworkers repeatedly popping in with questions. "It happens all the time that someone just comes by and hits you up for an insta-meeting, which disrupts you from what you were doing," says Bevacqua. "Now they're writing it in an email so you're only responding to them once."

How employees are coping: "It's been received overwhelmingly well. After this is over, we will look at how and where we can continue to telework."



5 Ways to Support Bike Commuting



National Bike Month, usually held in May, is postponed to September this year, yet biking is still an important method of transportation for essential travel that allows for social distancing.

Here, we offer ways to support biking to the worksite—for people who live close enough to bike the entire way and as a transit/bike mix for those who rely on transit to get to work.

1. Make the worksite “bike friendly” by providing a place for employees to safely stow their bikes or allow them to bring bikes into the office, and, if possible, somewhere to change or wash up after the ride in to work.

2. Let employees know they can find routes that give preference to bike lanes and wider streets using [mapmyride.com](#), [bikemap.net](#), [strava.com](#)—there are plenty of free bike routing apps available.

3. Get information on bike resources such as biking classes, bike parking, bike maps, incentives offered to bicyclists and more:

- Los Angeles: [metro.net/bike](#)
- Orange: [octa.net/bike](#)
- Riverside/San Bernardino: [IECommuter.org](#)
- Ventura: [goventura.org/getting-around/bike/](#)

4. Promote bike sharing, a system in which people can access bikes any time—24-hours a day/7 days a week—to make short trips, get to a transit station or complete the last leg of a transit journey. (Bike Share attended hubs may not be

currently available; bikes may be limited to self-serve kiosks only.) Find information on Metro Bike Share at [metro.net/bikeshare](#), as well as links to Bike Share systems in Santa Monica, West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, UCLA campus and Long Beach, as well as private companies.

5. Post bike information—including helpful links and any worksite resources or benefits—on your company Intranet.





Los Angeles

Are You Due to Conduct Your Transportation Survey?

If you are an employer in Los Angeles County that needs help with your AVR survey to meet South Coast AQMD Rule 2202 mandates, Metro Shared Mobility is still able to help. An ETC Briefing can be offered in a webinar format to guide you through the process. Email SharedMobility@metro.net to schedule a one-on-one webinar.

You may also [contact the South Coast AQMD](#) to inquire about scheduling an extension, if necessary.

Metro Speeds Up Purple Line Construction

Metro with the Beverly Hills City Council agreed to close portions of Wilshire Boulevard to speed up construction of the Wilshire/Rodeo

Station for the **Purple Line Extension** of the subway.

The closure will allow Metro's contractors to finish portions of the station sooner than expected and will help minimize future construction impacts to local businesses as they struggle to overcome the impacts of the COVID-19 health crisis.



Metro and its contractor will adhere to strict social distancing protocols and other recommendations as set by local public health experts and the Center for Disease Control.

Orange

Remember: It's 55 on the I-405

Many freeways are temporarily moving faster, so it's a good time for this reminder: The speed limit on I-405 between I-605 and SR-73 is 55 (vs. the usual 65) due to ongoing construction.

State law allows traffic fines to be doubled for violations that occur in highway work areas.

For construction updates and more information about the I-405 Improvement Project, visit octa.net.



Eat Shop Play Continues to Help Businesses

OCTA's Eat Shop Play program supports Santa Ana businesses located along the future OC Streetcar route by offering marketing assistance during construction.



During this challenging time, the program's focus has shifted to using social media ads to promote participating businesses offering to-go and pick-up services. For more information on the Eat Shop Play program or the OC Streetcar project, please visit [here](#), or follow it on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).



Riverside/San Bernardino



IE Ridesharers Contribute Big to Cleaner Air, Less Traffic

Based on annual commute data from IE Commuter clients in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, ridesharers made a big impact in 2019. Last year, IE ridesharers...

- Cut the number of one-way trips to worksites by nearly 2.8 million.
- Saved about 55 million miles vs. driving alone—or enough to circle the earth 2,220 times.
- Reduced nearly 33,000 tons of emissions.
- Saved more than \$32 million in gas and other commute expenses.

RTA Cancels May 10 Schedule Changes

Riverside Transit Authority (RTA) announced it will not be making schedule changes planned for May

• 6 May/June 2020



updates in Ventura County via the GOVCbus app. Download the app today at govcbus.com.



10. Instead, it will continue operating on April's revised schedule, which includes mostly reducing service to Sunday levels. Like other transit agencies, RTA is keeping riders apprised of service changes as they unfold. Get updates and the current schedule at riversidetransit.com.

Ventura

An App for Ventura County Transit News

The transit industry is rapidly evolving to keep riders safe. You can stay informed on the latest regional





South Coast AQMD Temporary Policy Changes

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) recently released temporary policy changes regarding Rule 2202, which are as follows:

- If you are due to conduct your transportation survey during this time period of COVID-19-related social distancing, you may choose to proceed, or you can delay until closer to your due date. With widespread telework, the South Coast AQMD expects most employers would be able to meet rideshare goals.
- All employers are being granted an automatic 90-day extension to their survey due date during this time of social distancing. No fee or request is necessary.
- Essential employees, who must travel to their work site, are not required to carpool or vanpool while social distancing recommendations remain in place. Employers are not required to offer rideshare incentives to essential employees.
- ETC training is currently canceled through May. At this time, there is no training video available.

For more information or clarification on how these temporary policy changes affect your program, call the South Coast AQMD at 909.396.3271, email transport@aqmd.gov or visit them online at aqmd.gov.

Calendar Network Opportunities

Please note: Events and meetings listed here may be canceled or conducted as webinars.

Burbank TMO serves businesses in Downtown and Media District areas; call 818.953.7788, bronwen@btmo.org.

Century City TMO serves businesses in the Century City area; call Linda Paradise Lyles, 310.453.1714, linda@cctmo.org.

Compass at Playa Vista meets regularly; call Aaron Gaul, 310.929.5946, aaron@playavistacompass.com.

Go Glendale meets regularly; call 818.543.7641.

IE Commuter offers bi-annual marketing workshops for ETCs in the Inland Empire; call 1.866.RIDESHARE (866.743.3742).

Irvine Spectrum TMA meets regularly; call 949.727.4273, email steve@spectrumotion.com.

Orange County Network meets regularly; email sharetheride@octa.net.

Pasadena TMA meets regularly; contact Talin Shahbazian at tshahbazian@cityofpasadena.net.

Santa Monica TMO meets regularly; contact Puja Thomas-Patel, 424.330.4298.

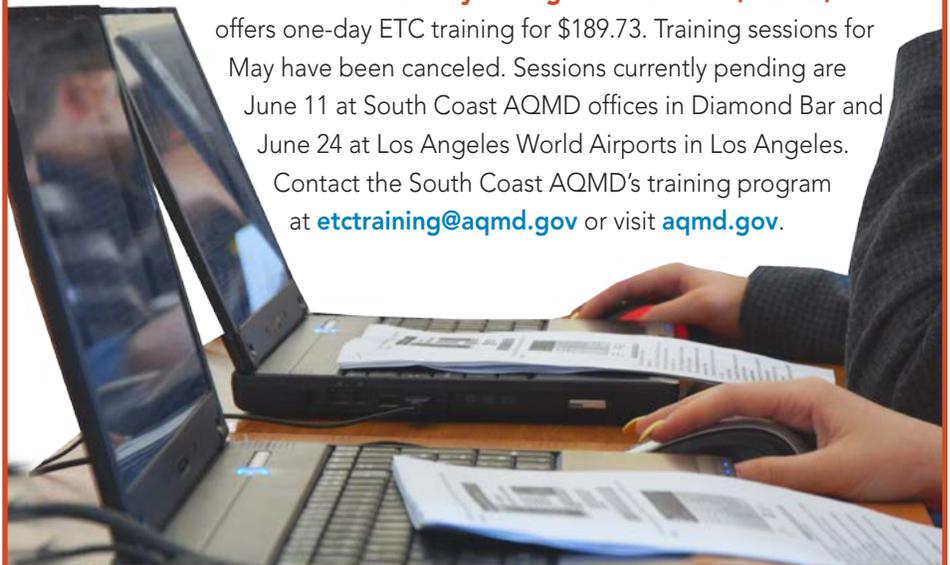
Torrance Transportation Network meets regularly; call Kim Fuentes at 310.784.7902.

Training

Metro Rideshare/Shared Mobility offers free ETC Briefings where Los Angeles area employers can learn about the transportation survey process. The next Briefing is May 13, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. and will be offered online. To sign up, send an email to SharedMobility@metro.net; you will be sent a link with a password to log into the meeting. If you can't make that meeting, email Metro to set up a one-on-one virtual meeting. ETC Briefings are also scheduled for June 10 and July 15; contact Metro for information on how to participate on these dates.

South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD)

offers one-day ETC training for \$189.73. Training sessions for May have been canceled. Sessions currently pending are June 11 at South Coast AQMD offices in Diamond Bar and June 24 at Los Angeles World Airports in Los Angeles. Contact the South Coast AQMD's training program at etctraining@aqmd.gov or visit aqmd.gov.



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Riverside/San Bernardino Rideshare Program

IE Commuter

Business: 1.866.RIDESHARE
(866.743.3742)

Twitter: [@IECommuter](#),
[@TheRCTC](#), [@goSBCTA](#)

Facebook: [@IECommuter](#),
[@TheRCTC](#), [@goSBCTA](#)

Instagram: [@iecommuter](#), [@therctc](#),
[@gosbcta](#)

Blog: <http://www.rctc.org/the-point/>

Metro Regional Rideshare/ Shared Mobility

One Gateway Plaza
MS 99-19-06

Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952
Business: 213.922.2811

SharedMobility@metro.net
<http://thesource.metro.net/>

Twitter: [@MetroLosAngeles](#)

Facebook: [LosAngelesMetro](#)

Ventura County Transportation Commission Commuter Services

950 County Square Dr., Ste. 207
Ventura, CA 93003

Business: 951.352.8006

goventura.org/rideshare

Twitter: [@GoVCTC](#)

Facebook: [GoVCTC](#)

Instagram: [@goVCTC](#)

OCTA Share the Ride Programs

550 S. Main St., Orange, CA 92868

Mailing address:

PO Box 14184, Orange, CA 92863

Business: 714.636.RIDE option 4

Twitter: [@GoOCTA](#)

Facebook: [OCTASharetheRide](#)

Commuter Information 511

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