



## **VIA Suspending Fares Beginning Saturday**

*Fare relief period will minimize interactions, help protect passengers and operators*

### **STATEMENT FROM VIA PRESIDENT/CEO JEFFREY C. ARNDT**

VIA will implement a systemwide fare relief period for all VIA fixed-route bus service, VIAtrans trips, and VIA Link on-demand services, beginning Saturday, March 21, 2020. All fares will be suspended through 1 a.m. on April 1. At the end of the period, we will evaluate and provide an update for moving ahead.

This is one of several measures we are implementing to meet our goal of maintaining essential service in a safe environment, providing some social distancing for our operators, and offering some relief for those in our community who have been impacted by recent events related to COVID-19 (coronavirus).

We realize that public transit is a necessity for many in our community every day and perhaps especially during a crisis, including those whose work is essential during emergencies, or who may rely on transit as their only means of travel to workplaces, meal distribution sites, critical service centers, or other necessary trips.

VIA operators, maintenance, safety and customer care teams have been hard at work to keep our customers moving in a clean and safe environment. I thank them and commend them for their dedication, professionalism and valor during these unprecedented times.

In keeping with local, state and federal public health emergency guidelines and restrictions, VIA is taking this additional step to help minimize in-person interactions when boarding a VIA bus or van. Fare-free service eliminates the need for passengers to use the farebox, speeds boarding and minimizes crowding at the front door.

We urge everyone to continue practicing good hygiene to help slow the spread of germs, including washing their hands frequently, sneezing or coughing into their arm, and avoiding public places if they are ill. Our customers and employees are asked to practice social distancing, which could mean staying at least 6 feet away from your neighbor when aboard the bus or in any other public space or avoiding unnecessary travel.

In the coming days, VIA will continue to monitor developments and utilize every available resource to help secure the health and safety of riders, the public, and transit employees.

*For more information about VIA's response to COVID-19, please visit [VIAInfo.net/covid-19](http://VIAInfo.net/covid-19) and follow our Facebook and Twitter pages for updates.*