



Hamilton

# HAMILTON STREET RAILWAY (HSR) FARE POLICIES

October 15, 2024

# Fare Assist Pricing

The Council Vision to “be the best place to raise a child and age successfully” is a journey considered through fare choice.

0-5 years of age, 6-12 years of age (with Presto) and 80 years + (Golden Age Pass) do not tender a fare.

Fare Choice	Cash Price	13 – 19 Years Youth	20 - 64 Years Adult	65 - 79 Years Senior
Single Ride Fare	\$3.50	\$2.30 18% off Base Price	\$2.80 Base Price	\$2.30 18% off Base Price
Fare with Fare Assist Discount Applied	Not applicable	<b>\$1.61</b> 30% off	<b>\$1.96</b> 30% off	<b>\$1.61</b> 30% off

*Did you know? Fare Assist Prices are less than the approved cash fare in 1999.*

# Goals of Fare Assist

Fare Assist is designed to:

- Respond to community feedback for more affordable fare options;
- Increase the freedom to travel by transit;
- Increase ridership through making fares more affordable; and
- Deliver a means-tested approach for offering discounts.

# What Does Fare Assist Do?

## Fare Assist:

- Helps entire households;
- Provides discounts for people on both conventional and specialized transit;
- Eliminates the need to buy a monthly pass;
- Offers a "pay as you go" fare choice; and
- Rewards those making more than 11 trips a week with free fare.

# Grace Period

- At the December 13, 2023 Council meeting, staff were directed to report back to the Public Works Committee in September 2024 on the results of the six-month grace period for those currently utilizing the HSR Temporary Transit Fare Special program, which ended on June 30, 2024.
- The grace period addressed concerns that the application was not made available online until late December 2023 and to allow more time for education.

# Outreach and Education

- Advertising
- Digital Media
- Outreach events (over 10,000 interactions)
- Pamphlets at 23 community organizations and businesses
- Direct mail to 4,600 Accessible Transportation Services customers.
- Emails to 13,792 Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program clients.
- Front door entry training was made available to persons using mobility devices at various bus terminals or by request.

# Applications for Fare Assist

- From July 1 – August 9, applications increased by 15%.
- Redemptions increased from 62% to 70% when the grace period concluded.
- Approval letters are issued in 3 business days.
- Staff originally estimated 9,000 program participants; 55% of that goal has been reached.

# Our Applicants

## Number of Approved Applications by Income Category

Ontario Works	1,442	45%
Ontario Disability Support Program	1,280	40%
Low Income	509	15%
Total	3,231	100%

*\*Each household is considered one application*

## Number of Applicants by Age Category

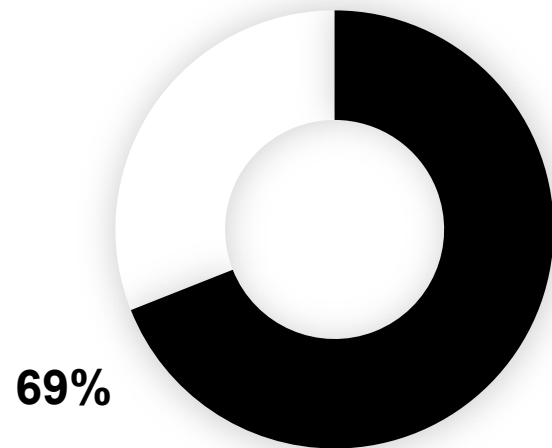
Adult	3,358	68%
Child	777	16%
Senior	224	5%
Youth	608	12%
Total	4,967	100%



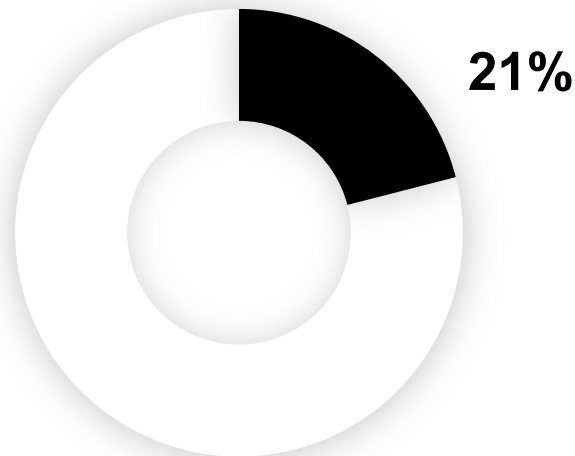
# Program Satisfaction Survey

Surveys were provided to all applicants. Respondents shared that they are:

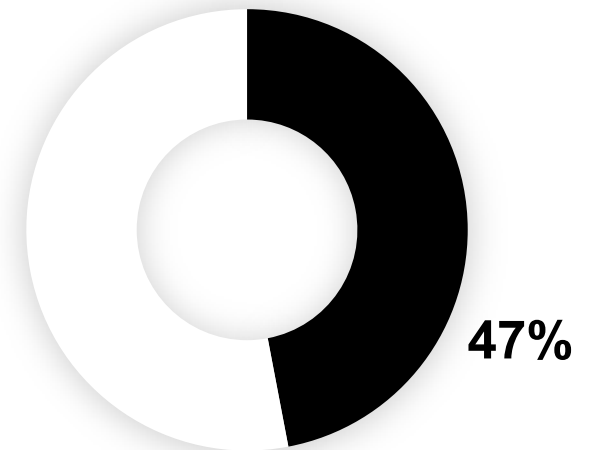
Single Person Household



Family



Identified as a Person with a Disability



# Program Satisfaction Survey



- 25% (133 respondents) previously used the Affordable Transit Pass program.
- 15% (78 respondents) previously used the Temporary Transit Fare Special program.

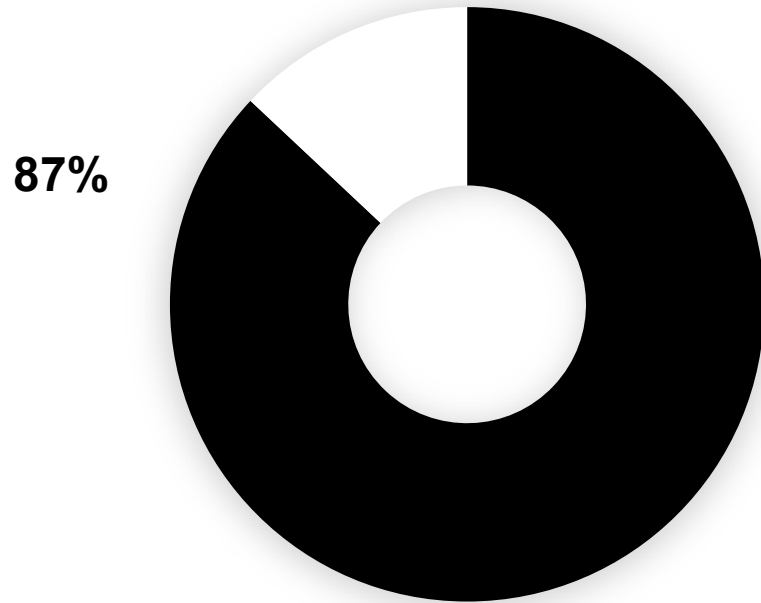
# Program Satisfaction Survey

## Application Process:

- 87% found the application process “relatively easy”
- 88% found the PRESTO registration process “easy”
- 87% were satisfied with the length of time it took to apply for and start using Fare Assist

# Program Satisfaction Survey

Overall Satisfaction with Fare Assist



- 86% of respondents appreciate the 30% discount, finding it beneficial in reducing their overall transit costs.
- 90% would recommend this program to friends and family.

# Program Satisfaction Survey

## Satisfaction with the Program:

- 8.8% (45 respondents) previously accessed either the Affordable Transit Pass or the Temporary Transit Special Fare program and have responded that they are “somewhat dissatisfied” or “extremely dissatisfied” with the program, preferring the suspended programs instead.

# Program Satisfaction Survey

The survey asked respondents if it allowed them to travel more frequently because of the price reduction.

- **18% increase:** 192 customers now travel daily, versus 162 before Fare Assist.
- **20% increase:** 173 customers now travel 3 to 4 days a week versus 144 before Fare Assist.
- **240% increase:** 31 survey respondents reported they travel by transit only one day a month, while only 9 survey respondents reported one day a month travel with Fare Assist in place.

# Program Satisfaction Survey

47% (253 respondents) identified as a person with a disability. Of these respondents:

- 85% found it was easy to apply for the program.
- 85% found it easy to register their PRESTO card.
- 85% are “somewhat satisfied” or “extremely satisfied” with how quickly they were able to apply and start receiving the discount.

# Program Satisfaction Survey

When asked the question “The 30% discount on single-ride PRESTO fares has made a positive impact on you and/or your family's monthly spending”, of the 242 responses from those who identify as having a disability:

- 200 (83%) somewhat agreed or agreed
- 17 (7%) neither agree nor disagree
- 25 (10%) somewhat disagree or disagree

Overall, this group reported an 85% satisfaction level with the Fare Assist program.



# Customer Feedback

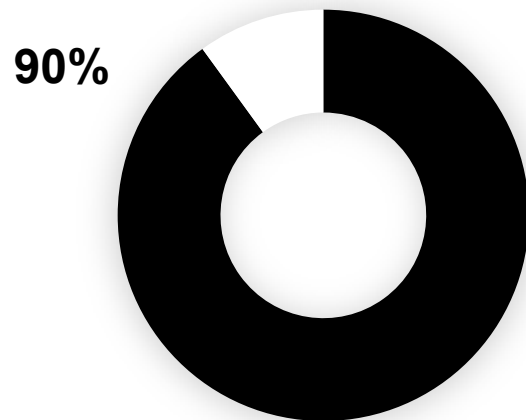
HSR tracks customer contacts received by phone or email. Contacts relating to the grace period were as follows:

- 83% of the contacts received were general inquiries about how the process worked or help to enrol or activate their discount.
- 6% of the contacts were complaints regarding the removal of the Affordable Transit Pass and Temporary Transit Special Fare Program.
- 72 in-person support interactions occurred at 36 Hunter Street after the grace period ended.

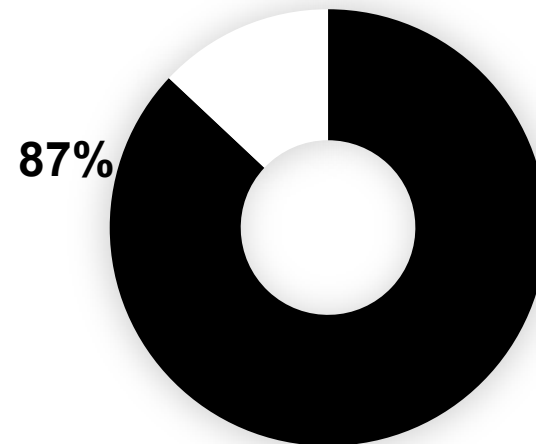
# Summary

Overall, the results of the first months of the Fare Assist Pilot Program are promising and provide a strong foundation for transit affordability for Hamiltonians.

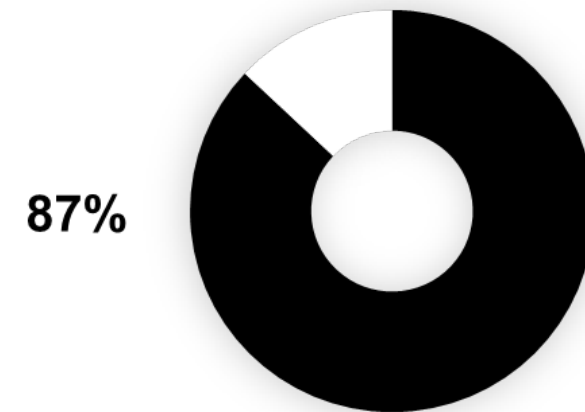
Would Recommend Fare Assist



Easy to Access



Overall Satisfaction with Fare Assist





Hamilton

THANK YOU