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Play is free on Mondays at two public courses

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Lawmaker shares experience when cops called

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# Low Income Fares Begin

## Adults who qualify pay half the cost

Some good news on affordability for public transit this month as new low-income fares went into effect for qualified adult riders on TriMet and new governmental agreements mean many Portland area high school students will again ride free when classes start back in the fall.

TriMet officially began its low-income fare program on July 2, allowing adults who qualify to pay half the cost of a single ride or day pass, or to purchase a monthly pass at a 72 percent discount, the same as it now offers on "Honored Citizen" fares.

Reducing costs for low-income riders removes a barrier to using transit. The financial help is one of TriMet's goals for better access to the public system and a top priority by rider advocates like Opal Environmental Justice Oregon, a group that's advocated for a low-income fare program.

"Adding this new eligibility to our Honored Citizen program removes yet another barrier to using transit," TriMet General Manager Doug Kelsey said, announcing the low-income fare last month. "When that happens, doors of opportunity open. Whether it's getting to a new job or a child's daycare, making transit accessible and affordable for those struggling financially make a difference in the communities we serve."

The transit agency began testing reduced fares for low-income adults in June. The program expands eligibility to TriMet's "Honored Citizen" fare, the term the agency uses for providing reduced fares for people over 65 and for people with mental and physical disabilities.

Now those earning up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for the discount, reducing a single trip from \$2.50 to \$1.25 or a monthly pass from \$100 to \$28. That means individuals who make \$24,276 or less annually can qualify (an



The July start for TriMet's new low-income fare reduces barriers to public transit making access to the system affordable for those struggling financially.

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