



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SunLine Transit Agency to Offer Free Fares on Local, Fixed Route Bus Service in Response to COVID-19**

*March 17, 2020 – (Thousand Palms)* SunLine Transit Agency is making some changes in response to the COVID-19 health emergency. Beginning Tuesday, March 17, 2020, local fixed route bus service will be provided free-of-charge. This free fare will begin with the first bus trips beginning as early as 5am on March 17 and will continue until further notice.

“We’re so incredibly proud of the dedicated team at SunLine and the efforts made to quickly mobilize this response to recommendations by health officials. It reflects how we all truly care for our riders, each other and the community we serve,” said Lauren Skiver, CEO/General Manager. “We understand this pandemic is affecting our riders on a multitude of levels, and believe helping out our customers impacted by this health emergency is the right thing to do.”

SunLine Transit Agency is taking precautions to provide the recommended social distancing and to help the community in these uncertain times. Passengers without disabilities will be directed to use the rear door of the vehicle for boarding and alighting to minimize contact with transit operators at the front door and farebox area. People utilizing mobility devices or who need the ramp will be allowed to board and alight from the front door of the vehicle.

In addition, SunLine implemented enhanced cleaning procedures to include additional disinfecting efforts for fixed route and paratransit vehicles and bus stops. SunLine Transit Agency places the health of riders and the community as top priority, and will continue to monitor updates from the CDC and act accordingly.

SunLine is posting information and education about its temporary free fares and other potential service impacts on the Agency website. All relevant information related to SunLine Transit Agency’s response to COVID-19 can be found by visiting [www.sunline.org/COVID](http://www.sunline.org/COVID).

For more information, call Brittney Sowell at 760-285-3526 or e-mail at [bsowell@sunline.org](mailto:bsowell@sunline.org).

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### **About SunLine**

*SunLine Transit Agency is a joint powers authority formed in 1977 to operate the Coachella Valley’s public transportation system. SunLine offers fixed route bus service and curb-to-curb paratransit for the mobility impaired. Its fixed route and paratransit vehicles travel more than 4.1 million miles per year, covering over 619 bus stops located throughout a 1,120 mile-service area, carrying approximately 4.2 million riders. SunLine Services Group regulates the region’s taxi businesses who provide taxi services throughout the Valley. SunFuels alternative fueling station offers compressed natural gas and hydrogen for SunLine and the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To learn more, please visit [www.sunline.org](http://www.sunline.org).*