

Port Authority

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (September 24, 2021) – Port Authority of Allegheny County’s Board on Friday approved a new five-year agreement with that will continue to allow more than 40,000 students, faculty, and staff at local universities to ride public transit in Allegheny County for free.

The University of Pittsburgh and Chatham University will pay 60 percent of the \$2.75 base fare for each trip taken in 2021, increasing 3 percent in each of the next five years, to 72 percent by 2026. The Authority is in talks with Carnegie Mellon University to reach a similar agreement.

The universities currently pay 50 percent of the base fare, or \$1.25, per trip under previous agreements executed in 2012.

“I want to extend a sincere thank-you to our university partners. We are delighted to be able to provide transportation to their students, faculty, and staff,” said Port Authority CEO Katharine Kelleman. “Now that we have finalized these agreements with our existing university partners, we intend to expand this program to additional institutions so even more people riders can benefit.”

Expansion of the program will coincide with the completion of the mobile ticketing rollout to Port Authority's light rail system next year.

Port Authority began negotiations of the new agreements earlier this year following an extensive study of its fare structure by Four Nines Technologies. Four Nines’ study found Port Authority’s previous agreements were financially unsustainable and recommended increasing the institutions’ contributions.

The program has been a financial boon for the Authority, leading to increased revenue each year since its inception in 2012. In Fiscal Year 2013, the universities paid Port Authority a total of \$7.7 million for 6.2 million rides; they paid \$11.21 million for nearly 9 million rides in FY2019, accounting for more than 14 percent of the agency’s total passenger revenue that year.

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