Passenger Transportation Board
MOVING FORWARD, TOGETHER

Updated policy for inter-city bus licensees

November 24, 2023

The Passenger Transportation Board (Board) has revised its Inter-City Bus Minimum Route Frequency Policy for inter-city bus (ICB) licensees. These revisions reflect the changed landscape following the COVID-19 pandemic. They are intended to ensure ICB operators continue to operate a basic minimum level of service while providing enhanced flexibility to adjust minimum route frequency (MRF).

Background

The Board's established MRF policy previously required ICB operators to apply to the Board to amend the terms and conditions of licence to adjust MRF.

Since March 18, 2020, the Board has permitted ICB operators through the ICB COVID-19 Policy to temporarily reduce or suspend scheduled service to below MRF requirements in the terms and conditions of their licence without applying to the Board for a reduction of service amendment.

As the ICB COVID-19 Policy is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2023, the Board has revised the MRF policy rather than revert to the previously established MRF policy.

Highlighted changes

Under the new policy, ICB operators are no longer required to apply to the Board to reduce MRF, provided that an active level of service is maintained. ICB operators must simply maintain an active service on a Board-approved ICB route, as identified in the terms and conditions of their licence.

“Active service” means maintaining at least one scheduled service per month. In the case of seasonal operations, it means one scheduled service per month during the seasonal period identified in the terms and conditions of licence.

This update to the Board’s policy reduces regulatory burden and provides ongoing support to ICB operators as they transition from the COVID-19 pandemic. It also advances the Board’s priority of maintaining an expected level of service to the public and supporting operators who are committed to provide ongoing ICB services.

This update to the Board’s MRF policy does not change or revise any requirements in the terms and conditions of licence regarding route points on Board-approved routes.

ICB operators who intend to reduce frequency of service on a Board-approved route must provide advance notification to the public. Operators should aim to provide at least 24 hours for changes to weekly service schedules and at least two weeks for changes to monthly schedules.

Effective date

The updated MRF policy takes effect on the expiration of the ICB COVID-19 Policy on December 31, 2023. There will be a period of 90 days to transition to the updated MRF policy. The policy applies to all current and future ICB operators licensed to operate by the Board.

More information

For complete details on the new policy, ICB licensees are asked to refer to the Inter-City Bus Minimum Route Frequency Policy.