

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SunLine Transit Agency
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SunLine Transit Agency Resumes Level 1 Service

(Thousand Palms, CA) – SunLine Transit Agency is moving to Level 1 service beginning September 7, 2021. The Agency has been operating at Level 3 service since March 21, 2020, due to the impacts of COVID-19.

The schedule change from Level 3 to Level 1 will result in SunLine buses operating with increased frequency during the weekdays. Despite reduced service levels during the pandemic, SunLine was able to launch some of the new services the Agency has had in the planning stages since 2017 as part of the SunLine Refueled initiative. These included the introduction of the Consolidated Fixed Route and SunRide in January 2021, as well as the 10 Commuter Link in July 2021.

SunRide – a microtransit service available in four Coachella Valley zones connecting riders to the Consolidated Fixed Route Network – will be expanding in three of the four geofence zones which will include 51 additional bus stops. Riders use this service with a smartphone app, alerting a SunRide vehicle to pick them up at a destination within the zones to bring them to and from bus stops within the same zone. SunRide has been pivotal in providing a quick and easy way for riders to access SunLine’s fixed route bus system.

The myStop Mobile App, SunLine’s trip planner, has been updated with the new Level 1 schedule so riders can start planning their trips beginning September 3rd. Downloadable PDF timetables specific to each route are also available for download on the SunLine’s website.

At this point, SunLine is also offering seasonal services such as School Trippers. With the resumption of in-person learning and students heading back to the classroom, it is essential that SunLine allocate its available resources to meet the community’s needs. Students across the Coachella Valley in high school, College of the Desert and California State University, San Bernardino make up a large percentage of SunLine’s ridership. The number of high school riders is expected to go up, as well, thanks to the newly expanded Haul Pass program – which provides local 9th – 12th grade students fare-free rides.

As SunLine gears up for the return of Level 1 Service, the Agency asks the community to be mindful of the fact that there is currently a nationwide shortage of bus operators which means there may be occasions when service disruptions are unavoidable. SunLine is looking to grow its team, and encourages anyone interested in helping to keep the Coachella Valley moving to visit SunLine.org/Driver.

The best way to stay up-to-date with any prospective service disruptions that may occur is to use the myStop Mobile App. SunLine actively posts updates on social media and is responsive to any feedback and questions that are submitted through its channels.

In compliance with the Transportation Security Administration's directive that masks be worn on all forms of public transportation through January 18, 2022, SunLine Transit Agency requires face coverings for the safety of our riders, employees and local communities. This extends to customers riding on board any SunLine bus (fixed route, paratransit and the 10 Commuter Link), SunRide vehicle and taxis as well as at bus stops. A face covering means material covering the nose and mouth (with no visible holes) of the individuals, excluding face shields. SunLine will enforce face coverings to be worn in a correct manner, with no exceptions, until otherwise mandated by federal regulations.

As SunLine service levels may adjust slightly, visit SunLine.org/Service-Levels to learn more about what each level means for daily service schedules.

To learn more about SunLine's return to Level 1 service, please visit www.SunLine.org.

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About SunLine Transit Agency

SunLine provides public transit services in California's Coachella Valley spanning 1,120 mile-service area and carrying approximately 4.2 million riders. It has pioneered zero-emission bus deployments, particularly for hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEB). In 1993, SunLine's Board adopted a voluntary policy of pursuing alternative fuel solutions that provide the lowest possible emissions, which led to SunLine becoming the first transit agency in the state to convert its entire fleet to compressed natural gas (CNG). SunLine is committed to transitioning its entire bus fleet to zero-emission by 2035. SunLine Refueled is a multi-tiered initiative that brings exciting new transportation alternatives to the Coachella Valley. To learn more about SunLine Transit Agency's services and policies, go to SunLine.org.