



Free weekend public transport for older Victorians a hopeful sign ahead of State Budget

Melbourne, 19 May – Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) welcome a new announcement by the Victorian Government to make public transport free for older Victorians during weekends. We remain optimistic that further funding and supports are provided to older Victorians as part of tomorrow's Victorian State Budget.

Announced last week, the Victorian Government has pledged to make all weekend public transport free for older people from 1 January 2026. This will replace a current scheme in which valid Seniors Card holders can travel between two neighbouring zones at no cost.

"We welcome this initiative, and hope it to be the first of many that directly address the very urgent need for cost-of-living reductions for older Victorians," said CEO of COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria, Ben Rogers.

"The expansion of free public transport will save those who travel up to \$360 per year," Mr Rogers continued. "While this will help to ease pressures being faced by one of our state's most vulnerable cohorts, far more needs to be done."

It's important for older Victorians to remember that they'll need to hold a valid Seniors Card and continue touching on and off as normal using their Senior Myki when the free weekend public transport initiative commences.

Access to affordable transport is not just a convenience, it's essential for social inclusion, independence, and overall wellbeing in later life. Without targeted support, many older people risk becoming isolated.

“We’re hearing from older Victorians that public transport costs can be a barrier to staying properly connected with their communities,” said Mr Rogers. “As people age, that connection becomes even more important. The rising cost of living is making it harder.

“Older Victorians have made their thoughts clear on social connectivity as part of a survey we’ve recently distributed,” he said, “and will have another opportunity to [directly speak their mind at an in-person forum that we’ll hold later in June](#).

“As part of our ongoing commitment to better represent and inform older Victorians, we’ll be analysing tomorrow’s budget documents as soon as they’re available,” Mr Rogers said. “We’re hopeful to see initiatives that will directly support older people across the state, on challenges from transport and housing, to health and digital access.

“We trust that this year’s State Budget will keep older Victorians front of mind as our state continues to age.”

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Further information

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About us

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria is the leading not-for-profit member organisation representing the interests and rights of people aged over 50 in Victoria. For over 70 years, we have led government, corporate and community thinking about the positive aspects of ageing in the state.

Today, our focus is on promoting opportunities for and protecting the legal rights of people 50+. We value ageing and embrace its opportunities for personal growth, contribution, and self-expression. This belief drives benefits to the nation and its states alongside communities, families, and individuals.

Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) is a program of COTA Victoria and the key state-wide service dedicated to advancing the rights of older people and the early intervention into, or prevention of, elder abuse in our community.

SRV has a team of experienced advocates, lawyers, and social workers who provide free information, advice, referral, legal advice, legal casework, and support to older people who are either at risk of or are experiencing elder abuse. SRV supports and empowers older people through the provision of legal advice directly to the older person.