



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Southern Maine Transit Agencies Introduce Dirigo TouchPass,
a Contactless and Safer Electronic Fare System, on October 1, 2020**

(PORTLAND, Maine) – On Thursday, October 1, [Greater Portland METRO](#), [Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit \(BSOOB Transit\)](#), and [South Portland Bus Service](#) will begin requiring fares as the three transit systems introduce [Dirigo TouchPass](#), their new contactless and safe fare system that uses a mobile app and smartcards for fare payment. On that date, all three systems will resume front-door boarding on buses and also implement [a fare increase](#), which was approved in 2019 following an extensive public review process for each of the agencies.

In March 2020, in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, the three agencies had reduced service schedules, suspended fares, limited the number of passengers on board, and required riders to board the bus through the back door (except for passengers needing assistance). They have all resumed regular service schedules. Safety precautions, including enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of buses and physical distancing when possible, will continue. The agencies have also installed safety shields inside buses to help ensure the safety of bus operators and passengers. All riders are required to wear a face covering. Individual agencies may have passenger capacity restrictions and other requirements listed on their websites.

Dirigo TouchPass includes a pay-as-you-go benefit, called [fare capping](#), which improves equity and affordability in the cost of using transit. It allows all riders using the Dirigo TouchPass Card or the Mobile App equal access to discounts. Riders pay only for what they use. This new benefit also provides a new monthly fare cap for reduced fare riders. The introduction of Dirigo TouchPass, along with a fare increase, was initially planned for April 2020, but was delayed due to the pandemic. Previously, paper tickets, transfers, and passes, along with cash, were used to pay fares. Passengers will still have the option to pay in cash.

The most convenient way for riders to access the new fare system is to download the TouchPass Transit App. on a smartphone, click on the DiriGo/Southern Maine option, register an account, add value using a credit or debit card, and, beginning October 1, start using a smartphone to pay their fare by scanning the QR code when boarding the bus. DiriGo TouchPass Cards can also be used and will be available at the METRO Pulse at 21 Elm Street, Portland; BSOOB Transit Customer Service (Saco Transportation Center, 138 Main St., Saco,); and South Portland City Hall (25 Cottage Rd., South Portland).

Staff from the three participating agencies are also holding additional outreach events to distribute DiriGo TouchPass Cards and help riders learn how to use the new fare system. Outreach events, along with locations where riders who do not have access to a computer can reload their smartcards, are listed at DirigoTouchPass.org. During this introductory period, DiriGo TouchPass Cards will be distributed FREE of charge and include two FREE rides.

Transit Agency Updates and Information:

- **Greater Portland METRO**

GPMETRO.ORG | 207-774-0351 | info@gpmetro.org | Facebook | Instagram
Greater Portland METRO provides transportation to Brunswick, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, Portland, South Portland, Westbrook, and Yarmouth.

General Manager Greg Jordan | gjordan@gpmetro.org | 207-517-3025

“We’re excited to resume the introduction of DiriGo TouchPass, our new electronic fare payment system. The DiriGo TouchPass system will make paying fares easier and reward passengers with discounts the more they ride. While cash will continue to be accepted, the new system allows riders to use smartcards or smartphones, which offers a contactless and safer form of payment. Riders can just board the bus, scan the QR code on their phone or tap their smartcard, and find a seat.”

- **Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit (BSOOB Transit)**

BSOOBTRANSIT.ORG | 207-282-5408 | info@BSOOBTransit.org | Facebook
Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit provides transportation between member communities and to the University of New England (Biddeford), Downtown Portland, and the Maine Mall.

Executive Director Tony Scavuzzo | tscavuzzo@BSOOBTransit.org | 207-283-3645

“BSOOB Transit is eager to launch the region’s new electronic fare payment system, DiriGo TouchPass. Contactless fare payments made via mobile phone application or stored value smartcard will make the passenger experience safer and more efficient. Fare capping creates equal access for all toward earning rewards for frequent ridership. While cash will still be accepted, we encourage all riders to take advantage of our new cash free, contactless payment option.”

- **South Portland Bus Service**

SOPOBUS.ORG | SoPoBus@SouthPortland.org | 207-767-5556 | Facebook

South Portland Bus Service provides transportation throughout South Portland, the Scarborough Gallery area, and into downtown Portland.

Donna Tippett – Bus Director (dtippett@southportland.org):

“There’s always a learning curve when introducing a new way of doing things, especially when technology is involved. We are committed to assisting our riders with the transition and helping them get the most out of the new system.”

DiriGo TouchPass Links, Information, & Resources:

- Website/FAQ’s– DiriGoTouchPass.org
- Customer Service: 1-833-272-7270
- New Fare Prices: [Regional Fare Information](#)
- Reduced Fare – [Application and Guidelines](#)
- DiriGo TouchPass [video](#)
- How To **(add links)**:
 - Download and use the DiriGo TouchPass Mobile App
 - Register and use your DiriGo TouchPass Card
- [Fare Capping Video](#)
- **COVID 19 Updates and Guidelines**
 - [Greater Portland METRO](#)
 - [Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit](#)
 - [South Portland Bus System](#)