

City of Racine: Announces veterans “RYDE” free

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City of Racine - As Veterans Day approaches, the City of Racine’s Transit Commission proposes to the Common Council a new policy to waive fares for veterans of the United States Armed Forces upon proof of service while boarding fixed-route transit. According to the Racine County Veterans Services Office, the RYDE Racine urbanized service area is home to approximately 8,000 individuals who served in the United States in the Armed Forces, about 6% of the area’s population.

“Understanding that freedom and mobility go hand in hand, RYDE Racine is proud to provide this benefit to those who have fought for our freedom, our veteran community. We salute their service and hope they enjoy the *RYDE*,” **stated Mayor Cory Mason.**

Too often veterans face economic hardships and in some cases, mental and physical challenges connected to their service overseas that hinders their ability to drive independently or access necessary social services. Examples of the veteran population that may benefit most from the policy include wounded veterans, veterans with disabilities, student veterans, low-income veterans, and homeless veterans.

“Transportation has been a huge issue for so many Veterans here in SE Wisconsin and as a Veteran advocate and Marine Corps Veteran myself, I could not be prouder of the City of Racine for addressing this need for our Veterans.”, **stated Zach Zdroik, Executive Director Veterans Outreach of WI.** “This is a prime example of when we work together as a community; we can make the necessary changes that our Veterans and community need.”

“Racine has built an awesome transit system and granting veterans a fare waiver is truly a huge recognition to veterans for their dedication of service to our city, state, and country...thank you!”, stated **Shawn Rivers, Racine County Veteran Service Officer**. “Many veterans have no means of transportation. This fare waiver from RYDE Racine will allow them to get to work, shopping, and other resources.”

Upon boarding veterans must present a veteran’s photo identification card or valid Wisconsin driver’s license, with a veteran’s designation, and the fare will be waived. RYDE Racine joins Kenosha Transit in providing this benefit to veterans. Fox Cities Valley Transit and Green Bay Metro also waive fares for veterans with service-connected disabilities.

“It is an honor to provide this benefit to our veteran community. Breaking down transportation barriers will aid our veterans in finding safe and affordable housing, securing economic stability, and accessing social services,” stated **Transit and Mobility Director Trevor Jung**.