Frequently Asked Questions About Amtrak



What is Amtrak?

It is the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, known as Amtrak. Amtrak operates 21,000 route miles in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces. Amtrak operates more than 300 trains each day — at speeds up to 150 miles per hour — to more than 500 destinations. Amtrak is also the operator of choice for statesupported corridor services in 15 states and for four commuter rail agencies. Details are available at www.amtrak.com or (800)872-7245.

What is the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner?

The Pacific Surfliner offers twelve daily round-trip services between San Diego and Los Angeles, and between Santa Barbara and San Diego. Be sure to also check out the Pacific Surfliner's limited stop service on the express train that runs Monday – Friday, departing at 7:05 am from San Diego to Los Angeles.

How do I find out about the schedule?

If you are traveling between San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties, use the Southern California Passenger Rail Timetable combining the schedules of the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner, Metrolink and COASTER commuter trains to plan your trip to cities and towns not served by your primary rail provider.

How do I purchase tickets?

Tickets may be purchased online at www.Amtrak.com, at any staffed Amtrak station and purchased with cash, credit and debit cards, or transit vouchers. Tickets may also be purchased at Quik-Trak ticket vending kiosks located at most larger Amtrak stations. Ticket purchases also available 24 hours a day by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245).

Is there a tax benefit for commuting by train?

Employees may purchase transit vouchers through the payroll deduction process using pre-tax dollars. This reduces your taxable income by up to \$255 per month so that you may pay lower income taxes. These vouchers can be used at any staffed Amtrak ticketing window.

What if I need to leave work early or stay late or if I am stranded at work without a ride home on a day that I commute by train?

A Guaranteed Ride Home reimbursement program is available for rideshare participants so that they can get reimbursed for the ride home or to their vehicle under certain emergency situations.

Are bicycles permitted on trains?

Full-size bicycles may be carried on certain trains with designated walk-on bicycle service. Bicycles must be stowed in the designated space within the body of the car. Reservations may be made online or by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL. A \$5 - \$10 charge may apply.

How do I get from the Amtrak Station to my work or home?

Amtrak does not provide shuttle service. Check the OCTA local bus routes for transportation from the Amtrak station to your worksite. The OCTA bus fare would be at your expense.