

Media Relations Contact:
Morgan Lyons

August 28, 2003

Effective September 1

A change in state law allows DART to charge fare violators a \$75 administrative penalty

Beginning September 1, people riding DART trains or buses without paying the appropriate fare will be subject to a new fare evasion citation requiring them to pay a \$75 DART administrative penalty within 30 days.

The citations are being issued under a new state law that makes fare evasion similar to a traffic ticket, so it can be handled administratively. Under the old law, fare evasion was called "theft of service," and considered a "crime of moral turpitude." As a result, fare evaders convicted of theft of service could be prohibited from holding certain jobs or obtaining some state licenses.

A person receiving the new DART fare evasion citation has up to 30 days to pay the administrative penalty in person at the DART Store at Akard Station, through the online store at DART.org, or by mail. Upon timely payment of the penalty, the case will be considered resolved. If the administrative penalty is not paid on time, the citation will be forwarded to the appropriate Justice of the Peace Court for prosecution as a Class C Misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500.

The new law also allows DART Police to augment its force with special fare inspectors. The first group of fare inspectors is scheduled to begin work in 2004.

Additional details about the change and the DART Police Department is available on the DART website, www.DART.org/departments.asp.