



State of California launches Cal-ITP Benefits, the first online tool for transit riders to verify their identity and benefit eligibility and link fare discounts to debit and credit cards

California is one of the first states to integrate the federal government's secure Login.gov sign-in service, enabling older adults to tap to pay a discounted bus fare at participating transit agencies

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2022, Sacramento, CA — The debut of a new web application called [Cal-ITP Benefits](#) allows transit riders to quickly and securely verify their eligibility online for discounted fares and link that discount benefit to a contactless debit or credit card to automatically receive reduced fares whenever they tap to pay with the card.

Cal-ITP Benefits is initially available for people 65 and older who ride Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) buses, with plans to expand the service to other transit agencies—including ones outside of California. The web application is available in multiple languages and uses Login.gov as a secure sign-in service to verify a transit customer's age for a "senior fare" discount. This removes the need for someone to appear in-person at a transit agency to apply for the discount-fare benefit—saving time, money, and paper.

"Cal-ITP Benefits can help decrease the administrative burden on transit agencies and remove barriers for riders to receive fare discounts while improving social equity and the customer experience," says Caltrans California Integrated Mobility Program Manager Gillian Gillett, who leads the California Integrated Travel Project ([Cal-ITP](#)). "Our web app makes accessing lower fares easier for customers, which will help grow transit ridership."

Cal-ITP Benefits is the product of a collaboration between Cal-ITP and the Digital Identity team at the California Department of Technology ([CDT](#)), leveraging CDT's

expertise from researching the development of a Digital ID system to be used across all state departments and transitioning all state forms to be signed and submitted electronically. In the future, the Cal-ITP Benefits platform can be expanded to provide digital eligibility verification for students, veterans, people with disabilities, low-income residents, and others who are eligible for transit discounts. There's also the potential to expand the service to other benefits beyond transit.

“The Cal-ITP project offered us a test-case to deliver dependable and equitable public services, and reduce outdated paper-based processes,” says Greg Fair, California Digital Identity Chief and Acting Chief Product Officer at CDT. “Cal-ITP Benefits’ [open source software](#) and lessons learned from streamlining identity and eligibility verification for this secure government product could be applied to more of California’s social service benefits, from park passes and electric vehicle benefits to unemployment and food assistance programs.”

While more than 30 federal agencies already use Login.gov for single sign-in and digital identity verification—including the Social Security Administration, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, the Transportation Security Administration (including Global Entry), and the Small Business Administration—California is one of the first states to collaborate with Login.gov on an application of its secure and centralized verification service.

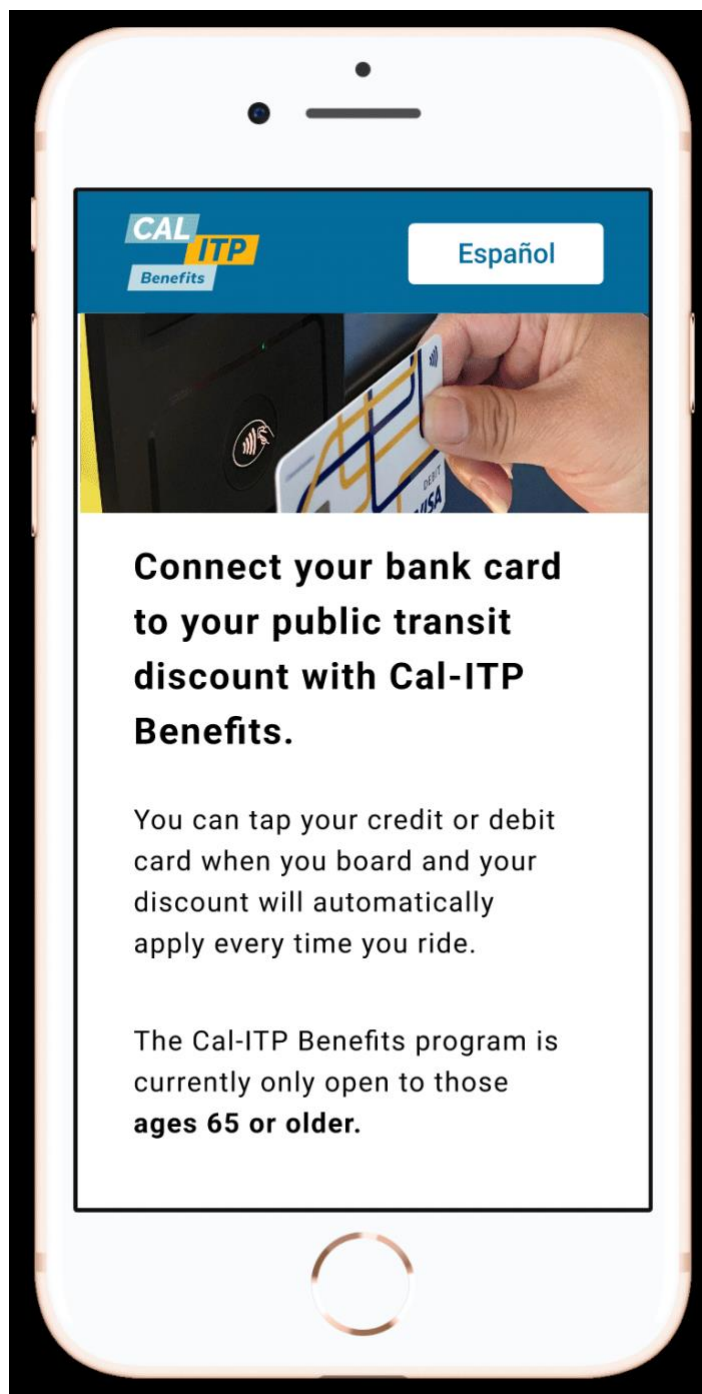
“Having access to a secure, seamless, and equitable identity verification service is key when receiving benefits, and strong, effective partnerships on the state level is a great point of entry into shared services like Login.gov,” says GSA’s Technology Transformation Services Acting Director Lauren Bracey Scheidt. “Our California partners were focused and driven to making a difference in this federal-state collaboration, and we at GSA are excited to help serve members of the public in the Monterey-Salinas Transit area.”

Cal-ITP Benefits reduces administrative costs to the government and meets the customer-oriented government goals established by President Joe Biden’s [Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government](#) Executive Order.

Cal-ITP Benefits also embraces California Governor Gavin Newsom’s equity and inclusion goals in his:

- New [Executive Order N 16-22](#), which aims to tackle disparities in opportunities and outcomes and advance equity in part by designing and delivering state services to address unequal starting points and drive equal outcomes.
- [Master Plan for Aging](#), which notes that by 2030, 10.8 million Californians will be an older adult—one-quarter of the state’s population.
- Executive Orders [N-19-19](#) and [N-79-20](#), which call for more equitable access to and easier use of public transportation to fight climate change.

How Cal-ITP Benefits works: A user visits the Cal-ITP Benefits web app, either directly or linked from a transit agency. They then [verify their identity via Login.gov](#), and the Cal-ITP Benefits web app links the customer's fare discount benefit to the contactless Visa or Mastercard debit or credit card of the user's choosing. See this process in action in [this GIF](#).



The payment processing and discount groups are handled by Littlepay, a U.K.- and Australia-based provider of payment infrastructure for transit and mobility. The Benefits web app was designed and developed for Cal-ITP by Compiler, a Los Angeles-based software consultancy.

“ ‘How do I get my fare discount onto my contactless bank card?’ is the top question asked by MST riders since my transit agency launched the state’s first contactless open-loop fare payments demonstration with Cal-ITP last year,” says Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) General Manager/CEO Carl Sedoryk.

“We needed a digital tool that is convenient to use, maintains customer privacy, and respects both my staff and customers’ time—and dignity—while offering instructions in both English and Spanish to meet the needs of our service-area residents,” Sedoryk continues. “We get all of that with Cal-ITP Benefits. Plus, the web app is open to anyone with a Login.gov account who is 65 or older and wants to ride MST for half-price when they visit our world-class Central Coast region for business or pleasure.”

For more information about [Cal-ITP Benefits](#), contact hello@calitp.org.

About this demonstration project’s stakeholders

Cal-ITP

The California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP) was established by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to both improve and encourage the use of multimodal travel throughout California—by enabling contactless open-loop payments, standardizing information for easy multimodal trip planning, and automating customer discounts (Cal-ITP Benefits). Prior to launching Cal-ITP Benefits, the Cal-ITP team successfully led contactless open-loop payment demonstrations with Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) as well as public transit agencies in Sacramento and Santa Barbara County. Learn more at calitp.org and on [@California_ITP](https://twitter.com/California_ITP) on Twitter, or by subscribing to the [Caltrans Mobility Newsletter](#). And visit Cal-ITP’s CAMobilityMarketplace.org for a catalog of code-compliant products and services for public mobility providers, including contactless payment acceptance hardware and software.

CDT

The California Department of Technology (CDT) is committed to partnering with state, local government, and educational entities to deliver digital services, develop innovative and responsive solutions for business needs, and provide quality assurance for state government Information Technology (IT) projects and services. CDT is the guardian of public data, a leader in IT services and solutions, and has broad responsibility and authority over all aspects of technology in California state government, including: policy formation, inter-agency coordination, IT project oversight, information security, technology service delivery, and advocacy. It provides for the delivery of digital government services through the oversight of statewide IT strategic planning, project delivery, procurement, policy and standards, and enterprise architecture. The Director of CDT is also the State Chief Information Officer (CIO), and advises the Governor on the strategic management and direction of the state’s IT resources and policies. cdt.ca.gov

Login.gov

Login.gov is a secure sign-in service used by the public to sign in to participating government agencies. Participating agencies will ask you to create a Login.gov account to securely access your information on their website or application. You can use the same username and password to access any agency that partners with Login.gov. This streamlines your process and eliminates the need to remember multiple usernames and passwords. [Login.gov](#) is used to secure your account when you apply for:

- Federal jobs (USAJOBS — Office of Personnel Management)
- Global Entry (Trusted Traveler Programs — Department of Homeland Security)
- Small business loans and disaster assistance (Small Business Administration)
- Many other government benefits and services

MST

In May 2021, Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) paired with the California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP) to become the [first public transit agency in California to accept riders' contactless open-loop debit/credit cards and mobile wallets for fare payments](#) aboard its fleet of fixed-route buses, which serve a population of 440,000 across 154 square miles on California's Central Coast. Learn more about MST's launch of Cal-ITP Benefits in this [news release](#) and on [mst.org/benefits](#).

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