



Discounted Cellular Data Plans Now Available for U.S. Public Transportation Providers

Caltrans' Cal-ITP negotiates below-market rates for wider coverage areas and offers grant-based subsidies to state transit agencies via California Mobility Marketplace

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 3, 2022, Sacramento, CA — Whether accepting customers' mobile wallets for fare payments or sharing the live location of a bus, public transportation providers are using more technology and internet-connected devices to improve the rider experience. To match this need for cellular data, Caltrans' California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP) negotiated below-market rates for data-only plans that can be tapped by transit agencies—in California and throughout the U.S. California transit agencies can also access even lower payments through state subsidies by reaching out to Cal-ITP for technical support.

Increased coverage at lower monthly rates

These specialized plans run on [FirstNet](#), the U.S. government's dedicated first-responder network, with connectivity provided by AT&T. FirstNet receives federal funding to provide coverage not only in areas of customer demand but also in remote locations where emergency services may need to operate. In California, this means covering rural areas that often lack a commercial cellular network. Coverage can be viewed on [FirstNet's website](#).

“Cal-ITP worked directly with FirstNet to ensure that contracting is as easy as possible, lowering barriers and price points for all U.S. transit agencies,” said Gillian Gillett, who leads [Cal-ITP](#), which aims to make riding by bus and rail simpler and more cost-effective by standardizing trip-planning information and modernizing fare collection systems. “We’re excited about helping rural agencies gain access to cell service in areas where commercial plans don’t offer coverage and about being able to subsidize the plan pricing when California agencies reach out to Cal-ITP for technical support.”

The FirstNet plans are available via Cal-ITP’s [California Mobility Marketplace](#) and are tiered in three cellular data levels to accommodate transit providers’ varying needs:

- 1GB: will support General Transit Feed Specification Realtime (GTFS-RT)—the global standard for providing up-to-date transit information.
- 3GB: will support GTFS-RT and two contactless fare payment validators.
- Unlimited: will support any cellular data–connected devices* used in transit operations. With this plan, transit agencies will be able to afford the data plans necessary to continue bringing the best service to their riders into the future.

*(*None of these plans includes customer WiFi, as only transit operational needs qualify for the first-responder network. If customer-facing WiFi is desired, commercial plans through CALNET are also available on the [California Mobility Marketplace](#).)*

The monthly pricing for each of these FirstNet plans is based on which data level an agency selects as well as the cumulative total number of SIMs (subscriber identity modules, the smart cards that store identification information to pinpoint a device to a specific mobile network) purchased via FirstNet nationwide:

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Tier 1</u>	<u>Tier 2</u>	<u>Tier 3</u>
# of SIMs	(< 2,999 SIMs)	(3,000 – 9,999 SIMs)	(> 10,000 SIMs)
1GB Plan <i>(monthly cost per SIM)</i>	\$10.00	\$7.50	\$4.99

3GB Plan <i>(monthly cost per SIM)</i>	\$25.00	\$20.00	\$14.99
Unlimited Plan <i>(monthly cost per SIM)</i>	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$29.99

Subsidized pricing for a limited time

To make it even more cost effective for California transit agencies to climb aboard a FirstNet contract, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA)—as the fiscal sponsor of Cal-ITP—is using state funding to support subsidies to the lowest-tier FirstNet price. Cal-ITP plans to subsidize the first 2,999 SIM purchases to Tier 3 pricing, through at least June 30, 2023.

With a cellular data plan, transit agencies can operate technology such as:

- Router
- CAD/AVL (Computer-Aided Dispatch / Automatic Vehicle Location)
- Camera feeds
- GTFS devices
- Fare payment validators
- ... and more!

An agency's technology can be connected through multiple SIMs (one per device) or a single SIM (one in a router):

- Multiple SIMs: Each device could be powered by a SIM that connects to the network. These SIMs would have smaller data plans.
- Single SIM: A single router could provide connectivity to multiple devices. The router's SIM would need a larger data plan.

Tap these rates—and Cal-ITP's free technical support

To access these rates and potentially apply Cal-ITP's funding, email hello@calitp.org to

get started. The Cal-ITP team is happy to answer questions and provide free technical support through the process.

If you have additional questions about FirstNet coverage or its SIM management platform, please connect with Ryley Krausen at AT&T Advanced Mobility Solutions: rk091r@att.com

More about 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](#)). Over the past year, Cal-ITP successfully led contactless open-loop payment implementations in California on Monterey-Salinas and Santa Barbara buses; Sacramento light rail; on-demand transit vans in San Diego; and LAX's FlyAway bus, which connects airport passengers to commuter rail.

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. Agencies that would like to tap Cal-ITP's technical assistance can indicate interest via this [Cal-ITP Support Request Form](#) or by reaching out to hello@calitp.org.

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