

UNITED STATES PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES OFFICE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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February 6, 2020

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Karen Almond
U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services
400 East 9th Street, Suite 4510
Kansas City, MO 64106

RE: Zero Fare

Robbie Makinen
Kansas City Area Transportation Authority
1200 E. 18th Street
Kansas City, MO 64108

Dear Mr. Makinen;

I'd like to take this opportunity to again thank you for extending us 100 – 90-day bus passes. I just wanted to give you a little insight into what our clients have been able to do with them. Because they are so prized, and we only have a limited number we are vetting clients who get them. We have documented the following uses:

- Job Search
- Getting to/from work
- Applied for disability/social security benefits
- Access community resources and supports
- Obtain ID to become employable
- Medical/dental/mental health appointments
- Substance abuse treatment and testing
- Sex offender treatment
- Children to day care so they can work
- Vocational Rehabilitation appointments
- Vocational Training and school
- Child support meetings/hearings
- NA/AA support meetings
- Grocery shopping/banking
- Ability to reconnect with friends and family

While I am sure there are many other things that are being accessed, these are things that I have documented or have been reported to me. From the stand point of our office lack of transportation is the number one barrier to gaining employment and the number one reason for job loss. If they don't have the money for bus fare, they can't get to the community resource that offers vouchers to pay for ID, or get to the DMV to get the ID. Without bus fare they can't get to the social security office to get a social security card and without a social security card they can't be hired to work. Without bus fare they can't access the library to make job applications. Without bus fare they can't get to FEC or Voc Rehab to gain needed assistance to get a job. Without bus fare they neglect medical, dental and mental health appointments. Without bus fare they can't get to the grocery store. Without bus fare they can't get to the bank, so they use check cashing services that charge them a fee. Once freed from the prison system it is imperative that they reconnect with family and develop a support system, but without bus fare that is not feasible.

I can tell you that every person who has received a bus pass was very grateful. It was very helpful for us to have access to the bus passes so that I wasn't having to send them someplace they can't get to, to get a bus pass.

Again, Thank You for allowing us this opportunity. In the short time and with the limited amount we were offered, I can assure you that little blue bus pass made a big impact on someone's life. Perhaps even their very existence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Almond".

Karen Almond, OWDS/GCDF
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