

2017 FARE PROPOSAL

IMPLEMENTATION DATES

OCTOBER 1, 2017

OCTOBER 1, 2018



Washington State
Transportation Commission

PROPOSAL FOR REGULATORY LANGUAGE TO PROHIBIT COMMERCIAL WAVE2GO RESALE

There is currently no language in the WAC that prohibits commercial resale of Wave2Go. The Commission would like to close this loophole while retaining some flexibility to regular customers in how they can use the frequent rider discounted products. Toward this end, a narrow modification to the WAC language is proposed.

Proposed WAC Language

Underlined language represents new text or additions to existing text, and strikeouts represent language proposed to be removed from the WAC.

WAC 468-300-010 and WAC 468-300-020 MULTIRIDE MEDIA - Shall be valid only for 90 days from date of purchase after which time the tickets shall not be accepted for passage. Remaining value will not be eligible for refund or exchange. There shall be no commercial resale of this fare media. For mail order deliveries, WSF may add additional days to allow for delivery times.

BACKGROUND

When WSF implemented the current point of sale system (Wave2Go), frequent user products changed from a book of individual discounted tickets to a single card with a unique bar code. With the new product, the system would keep track of the number of trips that had been used. Once all trips were consumed, customers would have the option of “reloading” their card or purchasing a new one.

At that time, WSF recognized that the frequent rider coupon books allowed for informal sharing of tickets among family members and other regular riders. To maintain some of this flexibility, the rules for how the new bar code cards could be used allowed for the continuation of these informal sharing practices, with some limited exceptions.

In June 2016, a website was launched to take advantage of this “loophole” in the frequent rider product and commercialize the process of “informal sharing”. The site, since taken down, sold unused rides on multi-ride cards. This practice clearly violated the original intent of the policy that was designed to relax certain rules to allow for the practice of informal sharing of rides.

The website provided buyers the 22-digit code on the multi-ride tickets for 65% of the value of the full fare single ride ticket. Buyers were then able to travel at the frequent user discount rate (80% of the full fare ticket). This process circumvents the policy rationale for the frequent user discount cards, by allowing non-frequent users to enjoy the benefits offered to frequent users, while simultaneously creating a profit opportunity for a commercial enterprise.

