

USC Lyft Program FAQ's – Spring 2023 Semester

The following are responses to frequently asked questions USC Transportation has received in relation to the Lyft program this semester. Questions or concerns should be submitted via email to auxtrans@usc.edu.

Why did the USC Lyft program change from Standard mode to Shared mode?

This semester the program mode reverted to the style of student transportation that has been in place, in one iteration or another since Campus Cruisers debuted at USC in 1978. Since the Lyft program started in 2016, most of the completed rides have been in the shared-ride mode. During the pandemic, in accordance with public health guidelines, we temporarily amended the program to carry single riders. The decision to change back to the Shared ride mode draws from an established history of how we have provided this service.

COVID isn't over (and may never be) – how is sharing a ride with others considered safe?

The changes in the USC Lyft program reflect overall public health changes. The most severe impacts of COVID infection can currently be mitigated by vaccination (including the current bivalent booster). A majority of the USC campus community is above the 95% threshold for being vaccinated. USC follows LACDPH guidelines and still recommends that all passengers wear masks on public transit and rideshare programs. Lyft publishes their own [safety guidelines online](#), which encourage riders not to participate in the program if they have tested positive for COVID. While it's impossible to completely avoid the risk of contracting COVID, we are convinced that following these safety measures will significantly limit the risk to program participants.

Many people don't follow those guidelines. I'm not getting in a car if other people aren't wearing masks, I just don't feel safe.

If you decide that the other occupants of your assigned Lyft vehicle pose a risk and change your mind about taking the ride, you have the option of canceling. This will automatically incur a \$5 cancellation fee, but Lyft has agreed to waive cancellation charges if the cancellation is requested through their customer service portal in the app, and it is indicated that the ride was canceled because you did not feel safe.

If you are still concerned and no longer want to participate in the program, there are other USC transportation options available. The primary alternate option is the free USC "C" Route bus, which is in service every 30 minutes from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays in the north University Park area at UPC (following [this route](#)). Another alternative is to use Uber or Lyft in Standard mode, with the understanding that the Standard mode is no longer free, and you will be charged for the ride.

Lyft wait times for Standard rides were much less than Shared rides. What are you and/or Lyft doing about the longer wait times and driver cancellations we've been experiencing?

There is no denying that wait times have increased this semester, and we're working with Lyft management directly to address these concerns. USC and Lyft are engaged partners in this program, and we are working together to review data and make changes that should improve wait times in the future.

If the wait time is longer than 15 minutes, should I just cancel the ride and try again?

According to Lyft, canceling a ride while waiting interferes with the ride-pairing algorithm and makes wait times even longer. If you experience a wait time longer than 15 minutes, we encourage you to voice your concern directly to Lyft using the customer service feature in the app, or by [submitting a ticket to Lyft Business support](#) online.

I'm still being charged for rides/have not yet received an invite to the Spring program. What do I do?

Invitations were sent via email to registrants on January 6. If you need an invitation to the Spring program, please fill out [this form](#). If you have already submitted the form for Spring, please try the following:

- Go to the Payment section of your app
- Click on ADD LYFT PASS
- Enter USCUPCRIDES (If you need access to HSC as well, repeat the steps using USCHSCRIDES)

If that does not correct the problem, please send a screenshot of the Payment section of your app, along with the phone number associated with your Lyft account, to auxtrans@usc.edu.