

# Metro rail to bring national mobility card in six months

## Floats Tender, Looks For Bank For Digital Fare Collection

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**Chennai:** In another six months, Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) will be launching a national common mobility card (NCMC). The agency has floated tenders to look for a partner bank for digital fare collection and issuing the card.

The card could eventually

be used in other modes of public transport like MTC and suburban services when they introduce this ticketing service. The NCMC, conceived by the ministry of housing and urban affairs for seamless travel across all transport systems across the country, can be used for purchases in shops at metro stations and eventually at shops in bus terminuses and suburban stations which can accept them.

A CMRL official said the NCMC, when introduced, will be in addition to the existing smartcard now being used for metro train rides and for vehicle parking at stations. "These cards will be issued by banks and passengers can directly use them in our stations. We

will also have counters in stations for issuing the cards," he said. CMRL is launching the cards at a time when commuters are looking for contactless ticket options to avoid waiting in queues at ticket counters and also protect themselves from contracting Covid-19 infection.

Passengers can top up these cards either online or at stations. Scanners at stations will detect, read and deduct money from the card when tapped. "We are looking for a partner bank that will become the acquirer bank to enable fare collection," an official said. For operators, the NCMC will have common standards for implementation without vendor lock-in, savings on

closed-loop card lifecycle management cost and reduced operating cost. While it will also help in higher digital payment penetration, data insights may be used by operators for business intelligence leading to efficient operation.

"NCMC is a stored value card that allows it to work even offline. It can easily camouflage itself with all sectors of people for their daily needs which include all transit services as well as for retail & other digital payment services. The city should see this as a city-centric card to facilitate mobility," said Sivasubramanian Jayaraman, manager (transport system), Institute for Transportation and Development Policy.