



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

Metro

June 5, 2020

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON *PAW*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY UPDATE ON RESPONSE TO COVID-19

ISSUE

This memo is the weekly update to the Board, for the Week ending June 5, on Metro's actions responding to COVID-19 and the civil unrest.

BACKGROUND

Due to the ever-changing crisis regarding COVID-19, staff will issue weekly updates to the Metro Board of Directors on the latest actions to respond to federal, state, and local directives during this national emergency.

DISCUSSION

Incident Management

Metro's Incident Management Team (IMT), in coordination with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and several departments, continues to respond to public health and safety updates and intelligence briefs, deploy best practices in emergency management, communicate and share information with City, County, State, and Federal partners, and plan for needs related to logistics/supplies for staff, such as gloves and masks, the impact of ridership reductions, the financial analysis associated with grant reimbursement opportunities and other emergency response activities. The ICS will remain activated during the continued declarations of emergencies and is linked to the EOC on a 24-hour basis for emergency updates and response. Metro staff receives regular updates and guidance on how to respond to cases of positive tests for COVID-19 and to take prescriptive actions related to quarantine directives from LA County Public Health.

Response to Demonstrations and Civil Unrest

On Saturday, May 29 at 1500 hours, the Metro EOC was activated to a level one due to the multiple demonstrations throughout Metro's Service area. I previously issued a Board Box on June 3 describing actions taken on May 30 to respond to demonstrations across LA County. The Board Box also describes the extent of the damage sustained to Metro's equipment and property. We are already working to repair the damaged property.

Operations

The most current ridership numbers indicate that Metro is carrying about 440,000 passengers/day. Rail numbers are growing slower than bus. Ridership will continue to be closely monitored.

Field observations continue to show that the majority of customers are wearing face masks/coverings when riding on our system. Bus Operators are still required to utilize rear-door boarding, barriers, and maintain physical distancing to the extent possible.

Service & Service Recovery Efforts

For just under seven weeks now, Metro has provided a modified Enhanced-Sunday schedule in response to reduced ridership levels due to COVID-19. Service delivery includes the use of weekday consists and 60-foot buses to allow for physical distancing and added capacity, to the extent possible. To date, Operations has added trips on 19 bus lines and articulated buses on 5 lines. Service and customer feedback are actively monitored so appropriate adjustments can be made in real-time.

Metro's bus recovery plan is guided by sustainable resources and customer demand over the course of four phases. The first phase (May – June 2020) is in effect now. On Sunday, June 21, 2020, additional service adjustments are planned to go into effect in conjunction with Metro's regularly scheduled bi-annual shake-up. As discussed at the May 2020 Board meeting, this phase proactively adjusts service levels throughout the network based on current and anticipated passenger loads, and begins to increase service in the core network for the first wave of non-essential workers.

Strengthened Cleaning Regimes, Consideration of Additional Cleaning Activities & PPE

Metro continues to practice strengthened cleaning regimes in addition to regular cleaning activities in response to COVID-19 on all vehicles, stations and terminals. Additionally, Metro will continue to explore additional cleaning efforts during revenue service and augmented sanitation tools and technologies. Metro will continue to monitor, distribute and procure necessary personal protective equipment as safety is our top priority.

Impacts from Demonstrations and Civil Unrest

Since Sunday morning, Metro continues to operate on the regular schedule, adjusting routes as needed to avoid areas blocked by demonstrations. It may take several weeks to have credible data on ridership due to the changes and detours over the last week.

Communications

Media Coverage

The Agency and its staff members were mentioned in more than 59 print and electronic stories.

Workforce Communications

Work continues on messaging for reentry to the Gateway building.

COVID-19 Confirmed Cases

Metro continues to post a list of confirmed cases of COVID-19 among Metro employees, contractors and vendors. The list is available [via this link](#) on the Metro website and will be updated by 6 p.m. daily.

As of June 5, 2020, 12 p.m., Metro has 89 Total Confirmed Cases:

- 25 Operators
- 15 Maintenance
- 7 Administrative
- 2 Security
- 40 Contractors/Vendors
- 1 Death (Contractor/Vendor)
- 17 Recovered

Workforce and Leave Policy

We continue to support employees navigating the COVID-19 leave of absence process that aligns with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Since April 1, we have resolved more than 455 inquiries sent to our dedicated phone and email inboxes for COVID-related questions. Overall, the number of inquiries continue to decline.

Additionally, although FFCRA leave usage continues to decrease, non-occupational leave numbers are up to approximately 600 employees on a continuous leave of absence, from an average of anywhere from 450-500. Note that this number does not account for employees using continuous Emergency Family/Medical Leave (EFML) under the FFCRA, nor does it include those who were advised to self-quarantine due to their age or underlying condition and who required leave beyond the provisions of the FFCRA. We are also examining intermittent EFML usage and continue to analyze data to better understand the current leave usage patterns.

Staff continues to work through the new return-to-work process for employees who were exposed to or confirmed to have COVID-19. To date, we have returned 21 employees to work who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and 7 are currently pending clearance. In total, we have returned 204 employees to work who were off due to COVID-related reasons, including exposure or suspected/confirmed positive cases.

Metro Headquarters Re-opening Update

This week, Human Capital & Development led a collaborative webinar to kick off phase one of Our Path Forward for Metro Headquarters. 34 stakeholders, representing every

managing department at LA Metro virtually gathered on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, to begin the business needs assessment of the plan.

Each department received a Phase One Toolkit containing survey materials, staggered scheduling examples, individualized floor plans and department rosters to assist in engaging employees about their schedule and space needs in the coming months.

Our Path Forward will continue to evolve as public health guidelines are updated. Human Capital & Development will partner with stakeholders in assessing individual department needs as we gradually integrate staff back to Metro's Headquarters Building during phase two of the plan.

Bi-weekly Labor Meetings

Members of the Senior Leadership Team continue to meet with leaders from our 5 Bargaining Units on every Tuesday and Friday. I join the Friday meeting and provide a briefing of activities across the organization. Labor has requested to meet and confer regarding potential Hazard Pay. We will begin these meetings by mid-June.

Construction

Construction work continues on all projects. We continue to look for opportunities to access work sites at times that are normally unavailable. Metro construction sites sustained no damage from the civil unrest.

NEXT STEPS

Metro continues to monitor and adapt to the evolving situation. As the crisis continues, we will stay in close contact with the Board to keep everyone informed.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact me directly at 213-922-7555 or our Chief of Staff, Nadine Lee, at 213-922-7950.