



Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel  
metro.net

**Metro**

**June 12, 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 12, 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.

We have hit an unfortunate milestone of 100 total confirmed COVID-19 cases and with great sadness we report 1 new death, a Metro Employee from our Bus Operations, Division 13.

Also, the Emergency Management team Completed two of three phases of the reimbursement strategy matrix for COVID-19 expenses. Emergency Management began phase 3, consisting of consolidating Metro's expenses to request reimbursement under FEMA.

### **Operations**

The most current ridership numbers indicate that Metro is carrying about 442,007 passengers/day. Overall ridership declines compared to last week are likely due to curfews throughout the County. Masks are required for both customers and Metro employees. Also, Operations continue to utilize rear-door boarding and barriers to maintain physical distancing to the extent possible.

#### *Service & Service Recovery Efforts*

For just under eight 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.

Metro's bus recovery plan is guided by sustainable resources and customer demand over the course of four phases, given available resources. The first phase is in effect now. As part of this 1<sup>st</sup> phase, 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, including:

- Service additions to 95 (over half) of the lines for social distancing
- Increased frequencies on select Tier 1 and 2 lines
- Adjusted running times based on faster current speeds
- Larger, articulated buses will continue to operate on all trips/selected lines to the extent possible in support of social distancing
- All other lines will retain the current (Enhanced-Sunday) schedule during the week

#### *Strengthened Cleaning Regimes, UV Lighting Pilot Project & 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 be piloting use of UV lights for added sanitation beginning in August/September 2020 on the B Line (Red). Metro will analyze results, with Corporate Safety's input on the efficacy of this pilot program. Metro will continue to monitor, distribute and procure necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) as safety is our top priority. As of today, PPE levels are stabilized with sufficient supplies available at our operating divisions and locations.

## **Communications**

### *Media Coverage*

The Agency and its staff members were mentioned in more than 15 print and electronic stories.

### *Cloth Mask Distribution*

Metro is now requiring the use of face coverings on board our system. To assist in making sure that the public is equipped to wear face coverings, the Metro Street Teams this week started going out to high-traffic bus and rail stops passing out cloth masks to patrons who don't have one. In addition they are providing some education around the efforts Metro is taking to keep everyone safe, such as the enhanced cleaning regimen it has undertaken since the start of COVID-19. And internally, all Metro employees were sent two reusable cloth masks last month and two additional reusable masks will be distributed over the next few weeks.

### *Town Hall Meeting with Metro CEO, Chief Civil Rights Officer and Executive Officer of Equity and Race*

Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington, Chief Civil Rights Officer Jonaura Wisdom and Executive Officer of Equity and Race KeAndra Cylear Dodds hosted the first ever virtual Metro Employee Town Hall where many employees participated by asking questions live from their various locations, in a chat box on the video stream and via email. The intent was to provide a forum whereby employees can engage in a conversation about the current events, namely the protests related to the killing of George Floyd a couple of weeks ago. Employees had an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments about how they felt both about the events and the decisions Metro, as an organization made during the weekend of May 30. It was a great exchange and set the table for future conversations.

### *Celebration of Life*

On Tuesday morning at 9am, Metro encouraged employees to take 8 minutes and 46 seconds of reflection to coincide with the beginning of the George Floyd Celebration of Life and Entombment in Houston, TX. Black Armbands were made available to Metro Operators and other field staff so that they had a meaningful way to commemorate the moment on the field. Those armbands were later swapped out to new one with the #NoMoreNames as an expression of support for the movement to not add any more names to the list of people killed at the hands of police brutality, gun violence and other similar type killings perpetrated against Black people and people of color.

### *A Gesture of Support*

Today, Friday, June 12, Metro Communications team in partnership with General Services will light Metro Headquarters with a sign of Love for the people of Los Angeles. This will be accomplished by creating a ten-story heart in the windows of Gateway with light and closing the blinds in the shape of a heart on floors 12 through 22. The rest of the building will be dark. Conceived by the Marketing Team, this symbol is meant to honor George Floyd, Black Lives Matter and the peaceful struggle for change.

### *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 12, 2020, 12 p.m., Metro has 100 Total Confirmed Cases:

- 28 Operators
- 16 Maintenance
- 9 Administrative
- 2 Security
- 45 Contractors/Vendors
- 2 Deaths (1 Contractor/Vendor; 1 Bus Operations)
- 20 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 475 inquiries sent to our dedicated phone and email inboxes for COVID-related questions. Overall, the number of inquiries continue to decline. There are approximately 590 employees on a continuous non-occupational 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 28 employees to work who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and 7 are currently pending clearance. In total, we have returned 228 employees to work who were off due to COVID-related reasons, including exposure or suspected/confirmed positive cases.

### *Metro Headquarters Re-opening Update*

The business needs assessment in phase one of Our Path Forward closed on Wednesday, June 3, 2020. 1,500 employees responded to our assessment, reflecting roughly 63% of total building occupancy (roughly 2,400 occupants) across 19 operating departments within USG.

Human Capital & Development will be hosting a webinar with all operating departments on Monday, June 15, 2020 to discuss the assessment findings and learn about which strategies each department will use to welcome employees back to their physical work spaces during phase two of the plan.

In summary, respondents reported that they are flexible and remain available to respond to unplanned situations remotely or onsite, as requested/directed by their management. Despite some challenges experienced during the initial transition to working remotely, respondents find that telecommuting allows them to complete focus work faster, and to actively collaborate with coworkers where onsite, in-person meetings could have delayed timelines.

#### *Labor Management Partnerships*

Metro's Labor Leaders attended this week's Virtual Town Hall with Phil Washington. In addition, members of the Senior Leadership Team met with Labor Leaders to continue hearing their concerns and building our relationships. Staff has begun meeting with our Labor Leaders to hear their thoughts around Hazard Pay. We will continue to meet twice a week.

#### **Construction**

Construction work continues on all projects. We continue to look for opportunities to access work sites at times that are normally unavailable.

Metro is hosting a forum on Monday, June 15 for Consultants and Contractors to learn more about the status of the Agency related to our financial position and plans for recovery. More to come on this next week.

#### **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.