



Metro

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June 26, 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 26, on Metro's actions responding to COVID-19.

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.

This week, the Incident Management worked with Countywide Planning and Finance to finalize Metro's FEMA reimbursement package, for submission by July 1.

Operations

The most current ridership numbers indicate that Metro is carrying about 522,034 passengers/day. Operations continues to gather information about customers adhering to the mask requirement across the system and information is shared with Communications as they are distributing masks to customers for use while riding Metro bus and rail service.

Service & Service Recovery Efforts

As a part of the first phase of Metro's Service Recovery Plan, the following service adjustments were implemented this past Sunday, June 21, 2020, 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 to continue to operate on all trips/selected lines to the extent possible in support of social distancing
- All other bus lines and rail are retaining the modified Enhanced-Sunday schedule during the week (implemented back in April congruent with reduced ridership levels due to the Stay at Home Order)

Operations will monitor ridership and adjust service as necessary.

Strengthened Cleaning Regimes & 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. This includes the end-of-terminal cleaning pilots on the Red and Expo Lines and a UV light pilot scheduled for August/September. Metro continues to distribute and procure necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) as safety is our top priority.

CARES Act

I was pleased to announce at yesterday's Regular June Board Meeting, that the SCAG split letter was sent to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) this past Tuesday, June 23. Once the split letter is received and accepted by FTA, agencies are then able to prepare their CARES grant applications and submit them for review and approval.

Upon FTA approval of grant applications, all transit operators may begin drawing down the CARES Act funds up to their Board approved allocation amount as reimbursement for eligible expenses.

Communications

Media Coverage

The Agency and its staff members were mentioned in more than 19 print and electronic stories.

A few weeks ago, we informed you about the Metro Street Team who are out at some of our busiest stops and stations handing out the required face coverings to patrons who do not have one on. Check out this video submitted by Metro Public Relations to see them in action:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyPYIQzCgbQ&feature=youtu.be>

New Elevator Capacity

Elevator capacity in all Metro buildings has been raised to 4-people for elevators that do not allow for 6-foot physical distance during peak building entry and exit times. All elevator riders are required to wear cloth face coverings. Decals in elevators are being updated to reflect the new guidelines provided by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health.

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 26, 2020, 12 p.m., Metro has 127 Total Confirmed Cases:

- 36 Operators
- 18 Maintenance
- 14 Administrative
- 4 Security
- 55 Contractors/Vendors
- 2 Deaths (1 Contractor/Vendor; 1 Bus Operations)
- 20 Recovered

Workforce and Leave Policy

Well-Being Services continues to support 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 500 inquiries sent to our dedicated phone and email inboxes for COVID-related questions. Overall, the number of inquiries continues to decline.

There are approximately 575 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. While still above average, the number of non-occupational leaves of absence has held steady over the past few weeks.

Staff continues to coordinate the return-to-work process for employees who were exposed to or confirmed to have COVID-19. To date, we have returned 45 employees to work who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and 3 are currently pending clearance. In total, we have returned 277 employees to work who were off due to COVID-related reasons, including exposure or suspected/confirmed positive cases.

Metro Headquarters Re-opening Update

Metro is preparing for Phase Two of Our Path Forward, which includes a robust communication plan to orient headquarters staff to the changes being made in their physical workspace. Our Welcome Orientation will include recommended personal protective behaviors to help keep staff and their teams safe. Human Capital & Development is partnering with Communications to support this effort.

General Services continues to engage with managing departments to evaluate space needs and ensure social distancing guidelines are in place for each floor of the building. Metro remains committed to implementing an equitable approach as we gradually reintroduce staff back to our headquarters building.

Labor Management Meetings

Members of the Senior Leadership Team continue to meet with our Labor Leaders, twice a week. I attend the meetings on Fridays and provide the latest information.

Construction

Metro construction continues to move forward in a safe manner. There have been intermittent cases of COVID-19 from contractors. Effective contact tracing has identified these cases and notified anyone including Metro employees and consultants who may have been in contact so that appropriate precautions can be made. There continue to be sporadic reports of supply chain disruptions, but we are closely monitoring schedules and overall construction work continues to proceed close to normal.

The piling and decking at the Rodeo Station site on WPLE-2 in Beverly Hills was completed on June 15 – a major milestone. Other work in the City of Los Angeles has received peak hour exemptions and extended work areas due to low volumes of traffic.

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.