



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

213.922.2000 Tel
metro.net

Metro

JULY 10, 2020

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON
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 July 10, 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.

Operations

The most current ridership numbers indicate that Metro is carrying about 553,035 boardings/day and that ridership continues to grow. Field observations show that the majority of customers (about 95%) are wearing face masks/coverings when riding on our system. Operations continues to work with Communications to distribute masks to customers for use while riding Metro bus and rail service.

Service & Service Recovery Efforts

As part of Metro's Service Recovery Plan, bus service adjustments implemented just under three weeks ago (Sunday, June 21, 2020) included service additions to 95 lines, increased frequencies on selected lines, adjusted running times, and the use of larger articulated buses, to the extent possible, in support of social distancing. To date, there have been 8 trips added to Line 734 (between Sylmar and West LA) to accommodate ridership. The latest service changes have been mostly positively received by customers. All other bus and rail lines have retained the modified Enhanced-Sunday schedule (implemented Sunday, April 19, 2020) congruent with ridership levels due to the Stay at Home Order. Operations will continue to monitor ridership and adjust service as necessary.

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. 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.

Communications

Media Coverage

The Agency and its staff members were mentioned in more than 12 print and electronic stories.

Workforce Communications

Work continues on messaging for reentry to the Gateway building. New signage was created and is being installed that reflect the new realities as outline by the Public Health Department.

Our Street Teams have expanded their mask distribution project to include all Metro riders throughout the County. Beginning Monday, July 6 through Friday, August 28, eleven teams of two will fan out over the entire system to distribute reusable masks to all riders. The teams will ride light rail and subways once a week, and various bus lines the rest of the time.

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 July 10, 2020, 12 p.m., Metro has 171 Total Confirmed Cases:

- 46 Operators
- 35 Maintenance
- 20 Administrative
- 4 Security
- 66 Contractors/Vendors
- 2 Deaths (1 Contractor/Vendor; 1 Bus Operations)
- 28 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 520 inquiries sent to our dedicated phone and email inboxes for COVID-related questions. Overall, the number of inquiries now averages about 10 inquiries per week.

Currently, 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.

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 57 employees to work who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and 6 are currently pending clearance. In total, we have returned 356 employees to work who were off due to COVID-related reasons, including exposure or suspected/confirmed positive cases. Due to the large volume of employees seeking to return to work after quarantine, there is a significant delay in getting exams scheduled at our contracted medical clinics. In the last 2 weeks alone, we have cleared 79 employees. Staff is working diligently to process and return employees to work as expeditiously as possible, while also adhering to Corporate Safety's guidance on required quarantine due to COVID exposure. We also continue to work through issues surrounding pay while on Metro-directed quarantine.

Metro Headquarters Re-opening Update

On July 1, 2020, LA Metro transitioned into Phase Two of Our Path Forward; the plan continues to align with federal, state and local guidance. In this phase, we will gradually integrate staff into the headquarters building with considerations made based on health risk, business needs, and staffing options. Departments are closely monitoring staffing levels to ensure overall occupancy does not exceed 50% of the building's total capacity.

General Services continues to engage with each department to create appropriate physical work spaces that accommodate social distancing guidelines for teams with specific business needs that require members to be present in the building. In addition,

departments are adopting a hybrid model for intermittent telecommuting (where possible) through the end of 2020.

During Phase Two a Welcome Orientation and Supervisor/Manager Learning Tools were provided to staff. These resources cover various aspects around personal protective behaviors and other important safety measures within the headquarters building. The priority remains in maintaining a low-risk workplace at LA Metro.

Labor Management Partnerships

Metro continues to engage the leadership of our 5 Labor Unions and members of our Senior Leadership Team, twice a week. We have discussed the patterns of positive COVID cases with the organization, the availability of PPE and leave practices.

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 or employee absence 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.