



Metro

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JULY 17, 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 July 17, 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.

Union Station

Union Station passenger counts were increasing moderately as we were winding our way through COVID-19. However, following the latest announcements and directives from the State, ridership has fallen off but not quite to the previous level. The restaurant restrictions have been particularly hard on Imperial Western Brewery, Café Crepe and Traxx in requiring their closure. We are working with all our tenants on business plans going forward. Some good news is the Metro Real Estate team is responding to new potential lessees on proposals for the former T&Y Bakery and Tentara Coffee locations. An added feature of clauses for pandemic considerations is a new aspect they are negotiating.

The typical roster of summer events at Union Station has been curtailed for social distancing. We did enjoy a successful four event “virtual” presentation of close up magic, hip hop competition, comedians and a local popular singer with a total viewership of over 104,000 bringing Union Station and Metro into their homes.

Operations

The most current ridership numbers indicate that Metro is carrying about 561,947 boardings/day. Field observations show that the majority of customers (about 99%) are wearing face masks/coverings when riding on the system.

Service & Service Recovery Efforts

As part of Metro’s Service Recovery Plan, bus service adjustments implemented just under four weeks ago 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, no additional trips have been added with the exception of one line (734) to accommodate ridership demand. All other bus and rail lines have retained the modified Enhanced-Sunday schedule. For rail service, we are continuing 12-minute service throughout the day and using weekday rail-car consists to the extent possible to allow for social distancing. 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 with EPA-approved disinfectants. A UV light pilot is scheduled for August/September on the Red Line. Operations will continue to explore the feasibility and efficacy of disinfection alternatives for bus and rail vehicles. 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 18 print and electronic stories.

Workforce Communications

Work continues on messaging for reentry to the Gateway building. New signage has been installed and employees are reminded daily to wear face coverings.

Our Street Teams continue to fan out over the entire system to distribute reusable masks to all riders. More than 40,000 masks have been distributed.

Face Shields Available

Masks or other face coverings are required for all employees while on Metro property. We recognize that all employees cannot wear traditional masks that cover noses and mouths. For those employees who cannot wear that type of face covering, we will issue face shields. Any employees that fall into that category are asked to contact Metro Risk Management Office who will evaluate the request and authorize issuance. We are committed to keeping everyone safe and healthy.

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 202 Total Confirmed Cases:

- 51 Operators
- 49 Maintenance
- 23 Administrative
- 6 Security
- 73 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 525 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 600 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.

Medical Services Coordination 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 67 employees to work who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and 13 are

currently pending clearance. In total, we have returned 420 employees to work who were off due to COVID-related reasons, including exposure or suspected/confirmed positive cases. Medical Services Coordination has cleared 64 employees in just the last week alone. 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. 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

Phase Two of Our Path Forward continues to align with state and local guidelines and is centered on maintaining a low-risk workplace. In this phase, departments are adopting a hybrid model for intermittent telecommuting (where possible) through the end of 2020. In light of the most recent COVID-19 numbers in Los Angeles County, I have asked the Task Force to slow down our reentry into Gateway during Phase 2 even further and pause the reintegration of our senior leadership and management teams back to the Gateway Building. We will take a wait and see approach and revisit this at the end of August. Where feasible, staff should continue telecommuting.

We are also aware that many of the local school districts will return to instruction mid-August, mostly through remote education. If employees are able to telecommute, we encourage them to work through their management to continue doing so. We are looking for federal guidance on how to handle this for those members of our workforce unable to telecommute and will report back to staff as more information is available, prior to the start of the school year.

Additionally during Phase Two, learning tools were provided to staff: a Welcome Orientation e-learning and Supervisor/Manager Tools. The Welcome Orientation is intended to create awareness around personal protective behaviors and other important safety measures within the headquarters building. Supervisor/Manager Tools are meant to provide best practices for leading teams within the hybrid environment. These tools focus on maximizing virtual technology and meeting tools to meaningfully engage with others. To date, approximately 300 employees have accessed and utilized these learning tools.

Labor Management Partnerships

The twice weekly meetings continue with representatives of the Senior Leadership Team and leaders from our 5 unions. During this past week, we provided an additional meeting to share some recent updates to the COVID-related Leave Practices. Mr. Washington briefed Labor on the status of the HEROS Act legislation and Metro's advocacy for this potential relief for the industry.

Construction

Metro construction continues to move forward in a safe manner. There have been intermittent cases of COVID-19 from contractors, consultants and one Metro employee.

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 reports of supply chain or employee absence disruptions, and we are closely monitoring schedules and overall construction work continues to proceed close to normal.

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.