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Metro

OCTOBER 23, 2020

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SUBJECT: BI-WEEKLY UPDATE ON RESPONSE TO COVID-19

ISSUE

This memo is the bi-weekly update to the Board, for the Week ending October 23, on Metro's actions responding to COVID-19.

BACKGROUND

Due to the ever-changing crisis regarding COVID-19, staff will issue bi-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.

Metro continues to send out daily COVID-19 briefs using our emergency alert system to all field staff and maintains a 24-hour duty-officer to receive COVID-19 related calls from staff.

Staff is currently planning EOC activations for the last World Series Dodger game and for the Nov 2nd Election Day activities.

Union Station

Recent COVID-19 cases relative to Amtrak are not related to personnel on board any Amtrak trains. These instances have been limited to specific departments inside the Amtrak offices. Union Station in cooperation with Amtrak immediately performed a deep cleaning and sanitization of the areas in question. Amtrak also provided excellent leadership to the balance of their employees by initiating COVID-19 procedures, precautionary quarantines, and other safety measures. The County of Los Angeles Health Department was invited to perform thorough review with minor suggestions which were immediately followed.

Los Angeles Union Station continues with a spotless record and rigorous routine of cleaning and sanitizations. Free COVID-19 testing continues to be available in the South Patio with walk-up and appointment service. Many have reported a quick and convenient testing process with results received within 24 hrs. For those with an iPhone a QR Code is available to make an appointment. For others, go to Curative.com and select Union Station Kiosk to make an appointment.

On another front, Traxx Restaurant is open for lunch and dinner. They have a new owner and a wonderful new chef who has developed a great menu. There is outdoor patio service, music and a safe and relaxing atmosphere. To-go orders are also available by calling 323-470-7094.

Operations

The current ridership numbers indicate that Metro is carrying about 624,778 boardings/weekday. Field observations continue to show that the majority of customers (99% or greater) are wearing face masks/coverings when riding on our system. Operations is actively enforcing that the front of buses are no longer roped off to allow for additional capacity in support of social distancing for customers. For this week, only 7% of buses observed had the front of the bus roped off.

Service

As part of Metro's Service Recovery Plan, several bus service adjustments have been made over the past several months in support of social distancing and to even out loads for those making essential trips. Rail service will continue with an enhanced modified Sunday schedule and use of weekday rail-car consists to the extent possible. Operations will continue to monitor ridership and adjust service as necessary as we prepare for ridership to change as schools reopen and as restrictions are gradually

lifted. Lastly, our regularly scheduled bi-annual service changes will be outlined in an upcoming Nov/Dec board report.

The new Cesar Chavez Transit Pavilion next to Union Station has opened. The Pavilion will serve several Metro bus lines, including Lines 68, 70, 71, 78, 79, and 770.

Tomorrow, Saturday, October 24, 2020, the Regional Connector Transit Project will begin a service interruption on the L Line (Gold) at the Little Tokyo/Arts District Station for a period of 22-months to connect the A (Blue), E (Expo) and L (Gold) Lines. The L Line (Gold) bus shuttle will mirror the service of the L Line (Gold) linking Union Station, Little Tokyo/Arts District, Pico/Aliso Stations. In addition, pre-closure announcements, signage and personnel will be available at all three impacted stations. Metro will continue to notify customers during the service interruption on alternative services.

Strengthened Cleaning Regimes, PPE & UV-C Light Pilot Update

Metro continues to practice strengthened cleaning regimes in response to COVID-19 on all vehicles, stations and terminals with EPA-approved disinfectants. The necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) continues to be distributed and procured as safety is our top priority. Efforts to improve disinfection and sanitation on our system include testing of both the UV-C escalator devices at Union Station East Portal and the UV-C portable light pilot program on B Line (Red) vehicles. A path forward on the specific devices will be based on final efficacy results expected within the next few months.

Communications

Media Coverage

The Agency and its staff members were mentioned in only 1 print and electronic stories through Thursday, October 22, 2020.

Workforce Communications

We are continuing to individually package the masks received from the FTA

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 October 23, 2020, 12 p.m., Metro has 407 Total (23 active) Confirmed Cases :

- 114 Operators
- 89 Maintenance
- 49 Administrative
- 12 Security
- 143 Contractors/Vendors
- 3 Deaths (1 Contractor/Vendor; 2 Bus Operations)

- 241 Recovered

Metro Headquarters Re-Opening Update

Metro continues with the implementation of a hybrid model for telecommuting; during this period, Metro headquarters building remained at 38% capacity. The identified COVID-19 internal and external conditions are being monitored as the agency stays committed to creating a healthy, safe and secure workplace for all Metro employees.

Risk, Safety and Asset Management has developed a new Digital COVID-19 Case Reporting System for supervisors and managers to easily report any new COVID-19 cases. This new reporting system streamlines the intake process and will be the primary repository for reporting and tracking cases at LA Metro. A self-guided training on how to use the new system has been made available. As our understanding and information around COVID-19 continues to evolve, we will continue to update resources to help leadership teams navigate through this process. Metro remains committed to providing support and guidance in our response to the pandemic.

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 875 inquiries sent to our dedicated phone and email inboxes for COVID-related questions.

Currently, there are approximately 661 employees on a continuous non-occupational medical leave of absence (less than one year), from an average of anywhere from 450-500. In addition, there are 74 employees off work using continuous Emergency Family/Medical Leave (EFML) under the FFCRA, or who were advised to self-quarantine due to their age and who required leave beyond the provisions of the FFCRA. This brings the total number of employees off due to non-occupational reasons to approximately 735. Additionally, we have approximately 156 employees in our Long-Term Disability process (both occupational and non-occupational conditions), but at this time, none of these employees are off work due to COVID-related reasons. In sum, Well-Being Services is managing files for approximately 891 employees on leave, both COVID-related and unrelated, which is an increase from the last report. These are the highest non-occupational leave numbers we have seen in recent years.

Medical Services 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 241 employees to work who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and 4 are currently pending clearance. Since April, in total we have returned 1,201 employees to work who were off due to COVID-related reasons, including exposure or suspected/confirmed positive cases.

Labor-Management Partnership

Metro continues to meet weekly with our senior leaders and our 5 labor unions to discuss the impacts of the pandemic on our workforce.

Construction

Construction continues across all projects with emphasis on proper safety protocols - social distancing, masks, cleaning, contact tracing, etc. We continue to identify opportunities for expanded work areas and hours with lower impacts to the communities.

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.