

# Proposed Reduction or Elimination of Station Booth Service, including Elimination of Station Booth Lunch Relief



**James Compton**, EVP, Customer Environment & Facilities

## **Service Issue**

Currently, each subway station or station complex (also referred to herein as a station) has at least one booth that is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.<sup>1</sup> Certain stations have one or more additional booths that are staffed full or part-time.

Historically, services provided from station booths included the sale or replenishment of fare media, but that service was discontinued during the COVID pandemic and will not be resumed. As a result, services currently provided from booths by station agents are limited to providing customer information, such as about how to use the transit system, and to provide assistance to customers who are not able to use the turnstiles or the AutoGate. Presently, Station Agents are limited in the services they can provide, because they can only provide services from booths.

The proposal that will be the subject of the public hearing for which board authorization is sought is the reduction or elimination of station booth service throughout the subway system, including the elimination of station booth lunch relief. The services that are currently provided from station booths would instead be provided by station agents working in the station but outside of the booths. Further, moving station agents outside of the booths would enable them to provide a broader range of customer service functions throughout the station, such as providing assistance at turnstiles, at MetroCard and OMNY vending machines, and on platforms. Station agents would return to the fare array area as necessary to provide assistance to customers who are not able to use the turnstiles or the AutoGate.

Each station in which booth service is reduced or eliminated shall continue to be staffed by a minimum of one station agent per day 24 hours per day, 7 days per week (1), except during the period of the station agent's lunch break. The proposal to reduce or eliminate of station booth service includes the elimination of the practice of providing a "lunch relief" station agent. Information would be provided in stations about obtaining assistance during that period, such as by using a Help Point intercom.

The reduction or elimination of station booth service is proposed to begin in early 2023.

## **Recommendation**

Authorize a public hearing for the proposed reduction or elimination of station booth service, including the elimination of station booth lunch relief.

## **Budget Impact**

The elimination of lunch reliefs is expected to reduce costs by \$10.5 million annually, partially offset by a cost increase of \$5.1 million from changes to Station Agent pay rates.

## **Proposed Implementation Date**

The public hearing for which authorization is sought would be noticed and held in early 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> Five stations on the 5 Line in the Bronx (Eastchester-Dyre Av, Baychester Av, Gun Hill Rd, Pelham Pkwy, and Morris Park) are currently staffed 16 hours per day, and will continue to be staffed on that schedule.

# Staff Summary



<b>Subject:</b>	Authorization for a Public Hearing for Proposed Reduction or Elimination of Station Booth Service Throughout the Subway System, including Elimination of Station Booth Lunch Relief.
<b>Department</b>	Subways
<b>Department Head Name</b>	Demetrius Crichlow
<b>Department Head Signature</b>	
<b>Project Manager Name</b>	James Compton

<b>Date:</b>	December 15, 2022
<b>Vendor Name</b>	N/A
<b>Contract Number</b>	N/A
<b>Contract Manager Name</b>	N/A
<b>Table of Contents Ref #</b>	N/A

Board Action					
Order	To	Date	Approval	Info	Other
1	President		X		
2	Chairman		X		
3	NYCT Comm		X		
4	Board		X		

Internal Approvals			
Order	Approval	Order	Approval
8	President	4	VP, General Counsel
7	Chief Operating Officer	3	Director OMB
6	SVP, Subways	2	Director, GCR
5	Chief, St & Cust Exp	1	Chief, OP

## Purpose

To obtain Board authorization for a public hearing for the proposed reduction or elimination of station booth service throughout the subway system, including the elimination of station booth lunch relief.

Currently, each subway station or station complex (also referred to herein as a station) has at least one booth that is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.<sup>1</sup> Certain stations have one or more additional booths that are staffed full or part-time.

Historically, services provided from station booths included the sale or replenishment of fare media, but that service was discontinued during the COVID pandemic and will not be resumed. As a result, services currently provided from booths by station agents are limited to providing customer information, such as about how to use the transit system, and to provide assistance to customers who are not able to use the turnstiles or the AutoGate. Presently, Station Agents are limited in the services they can provide, because they can only provide services from booths.

The proposal that will be the subject of the public hearing for which board authorization is sought is the reduction or elimination of station booth service throughout the subway system, including the elimination of station booth lunch relief. The services that are currently provided from station booths would instead be provided by station agents working in the station but outside of the booths. Further, moving station agents outside of the booths would enable them to provide a broader range of customer service functions throughout the station, such as providing assistance at turnstiles, at MetroCard and OMNY vending machines, and on platforms. Station agents would return to the fare array area as necessary to provide assistance to customers who are not able to use the turnstiles or the AutoGate.

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# Staff Summary



Each station in which booth service is reduced or eliminated shall continue to be staffed by a minimum of one station agent per day 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, except during the period of the station agent's lunch break. The proposal to reduce or eliminate of station booth service includes the elimination of the practice of providing a "lunch relief" station agent. Information would be provided in stations about obtaining assistance during that period, such as by using a Help Point intercom.

## **Recommendation**

Authorize a public hearing for the proposed reduction or elimination of station booth service, including the elimination of station booth lunch relief.

## **Alternatives**

1. No change. Not advancing the proposal that will be the subject of the public hearing for which authorization is sought will prevent station agents from providing a comprehensive range of customer services that can only be delivered outside of the booths.
2. Maintain 24/7 station agent booth service throughout the system and add another station agent at each station to provide service outside of the booths. This would nearly double the station agent staffing costs.
3. Advance a proposal for the reduction or elimination of station booth service throughout the subway system, but without a commitment to provide a minimum of one station agent at each station outside of the booths on a 24/7 (except lunch relief) basis. This would be less costly than the proposal being advanced, but would not enable us to provide customer service at all stations on a 24/7 basis.

## **Budget Impact**

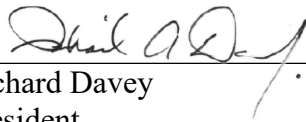
The elimination of lunch reliefs is expected to reduce costs by \$10.5 million annually, partially offset by a cost increase of \$5.1 million from changes to Station Agent pay rates.

## **Implementation Date**

The public hearing for which authorization is sought would be noticed and held in early 2023.

The reduction or elimination of station booth service is proposed to begin in early 2023.

Approved:

  
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Richard Davey  
President