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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

# EXTREMELY LIMITED LIRR TRAIN SERVICE WEEKENDS OF OCTOBER 23-24 AND NOVEMBER 6-7

### Media Advisory:

### EXTREMELY LIMITED LIRR TRAIN SERVICE WEEKENDS OF OCTOBER 23-24 AND NOVEMBER 6-7

#### As LIRR Modernization Project Brings State of the Art Technology to Centralized Signaling and Switch Control at Jamaica

The MTA Long Island Rail Road is advising its customers that this weekend, October 23-24, and on the weekend of November 6-7, there will be extremely limited LIRR service, especially between Jamaica Station and Penn Station, as the LIRR cuts over to a modern signal and switching control system at Jamaica. During these weekends, the LIRR recommends customers use the LIRR for essential business travel only.

#### Limited Service Overview

The only branches with direct service to and from Penn Station during the two cutover weekends are the Port Washington Branch on the north shore, and the Babylon and Long Beach branches on the south shore. All other LIRR branches have significant changes that will require many customers to use the "E" subway service for travel between Jamaica and Penn stations. Customers on some branches – Huntington/Port Jefferson, Oyster Bay, Hempstead and Ronkonkoma (only during the overnight) will have to take buses for a portion of their trip. During these two weekends, there will be no LIRR train service between Jamaica and Atlantic Terminal. Customers traveling for recreational purposes during this period should consider alternate transportation.

#### Impact on LIRR Service

During the cutover, train movement through Jamaica Station will be limited to two tracks (one track east and one track west). Routes will be limited through Jamaica resulting in the ability to move three trains per hour in each direction from the south shore only. Normally, the LIRR operates 2 to 3 times more weekend trains through Jamaica from 10 of its 11 branches. As a result, buses and subway service will replace LIRR trains. Because of the route restrictions, train service will also bypass some LIRR stations.

The key customer travel info for both weekends includes:

- Recommend LIRR should be used for essential business travel only
- Port Washington branch is the only unaffected LIRR branch and extra trains are being added each weekend between 9 AM and 8 PM.
- Only three trains will operate each hour in each direction between Jamaica and Penn Station (about one-third regular weekend service level)
- Alternative subway service is available via NYC Transit's "E" subway line between Penn Station and Jamaica (the Archer/Sutphin stop on the "E")
- There will be no LIRR train service between Jamaica and Atlantic Terminal, Brooklyn
- Huntington/Port Jefferson, Ronkonkoma (overnight period only) and Oyster Bay Branch trains will terminate and originate at Mineola, and buses will operate between Mineola and Jamaica.
- Buses replace LIRR trains between Queens Village and Jamaica on the Hempstead Branch
- Babylon and Huntington weekend service will be reduced from half-hourly to hourly.
- Most Ronkonkoma trains will be re-routed along the Babylon Branch for a portion of the trip
- Customers should allow up to 70 minutes of additional travel time
- No LIRR train service will operate to/from Atlantic Terminal, Forest Hills, Kew Gardens, Hollis, Locust Manor, Laurelton, Rosedale, Merillon Avenue, New Hyde Park, St. Albans, Nostrand Avenue and East New York. These stations will be served by existing alternative public transportation (see attached branch by branch LIRR Cutover Service plan for detailed information).
- NYC Marathoners should use Babylon, Long Beach and Port Washington Branches for direct service to and from Penn Station
- Bicycles will not be permitted on buses or trains

For a detailed branch-by-branch description of how LIRR service will be impacted during the two weekends see the attached LIRR Jamaica Cutover Service Plan.

LIRR customers are strongly advised to pick up special weekend timetables dated October 23-24 and November 6-7 and familiarize themselves with the significant changes taking place these weekends.

Extra LIRR personnel will be on duty throughout the two weekends to assist customers and to make sure the project is completed on time.

### **Jamaica Signal & Switch Modernization**

The new signal system upgrade will bring state-of-the-art computerized microprocessor technology to Jamaica's critical switching area and centralizes the switching and signal control from three existing signal towers at Jamaica – including Hall Tower where the switching board was damaged by a major fire in August that disrupted service.

"This project will help us get ready for the future and continue our ongoing effort to modernize the LIRR's most critical signal and switching systems," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "The August fire at Jamaica underscored the need for this upgrade and we ask for customer's patience during these two weekends. The work will help ensure reliability of train service going forward."

The more than 1,000 tests of the new equipment during the cutover requires these weekend service reductions, including no train service between Mineola and Jamaica Station, no train service between Queens Village and Jamaica, and no train service between Jamaica Station and Atlantic Terminal. LIRR train service on all branches will be significantly affected, except for the Port Washington Branch where extra service will be added each weekend.

The Jamaica Signal cutover project consists of installing a new microprocessor technology signal system in the three interlockings (signal and switching areas) that control train movement through Jamaica. These three interlockings are called Jay, Dunton and Hall. Upon completion of the project – which requires two 48-hour weekend service disruptions – signals and switches will be controlled from one facility, Jamaica Central Control; instead of the three towers located in each of these interlockings.

### **Project Benefits**

The project brings state-of-the-art technology to this critical LIRR location by replacing the 1910's-era electro-mechanical Model 14 Interlocking Machines at the three towers with a modern microprocessor based system. The new more reliable system will increase operational flexibility for the large volume of trains that pass through this area, helping to reduce customer delays. The new system also will provide redundant signal control systems and will allow for quicker recovery time in the event of a power surge, or lightning storm or fire-related service disruption like the one experienced in August 2010 when high voltage power entered the signal system and damaged the wiring to the signal control board in Jamaica's Hall Tower.

The train directors, presently located in three towers, will be located at in a single office that provides them with the ability to communicate face to face in real time instead of by telephone. The overview board will allow all the train directors to see the train movements as they are being made in other parts of the complex – enabling them to plan for changes in real time. This will allow for improved planning and coordination of train movements in this very dynamic operation.

The cost of the project is approximately \$56-million. Funding is provided by the MTA Capital Program.

### **Right-of-Way (ROW) Clean-up:**

With the reduced train movement through Jamaica Station during the cutover weekends, the LIRR will also use this time to perform right-of-way (ROW) clean-up in the areas surrounding Hall Tower (to the east of Jamaica) and Jay Tower (to the west of Jamaica). This weekend, Saturday, October 23, specialize track equipment will be used to perform this clean-up of the Jamaica Station tracks and surrounding areas in Jamaica between 6 AM and 2 PM.

### **LIRR Jamaica Cutover Service Plan for Weekends of October 23-24 and November 6-7**

Below is a branch-by-branch description of how service will be impacted during the two Jamaica Cutover Project weekends.

#### **Port Washington Branch**

Since the Port Washington Branch is the LIRR's only branch that does not operate through Jamaica Station, regular hourly weekend service will be provided on these two weekends. Note: In addition to the regular weekend service, extra trains will be added between 9 AM and 8 PM each weekend.

The added service includes:

- Westbound: Four extra westbound trains will operate from Port Washington to Penn Station, providing half-hourly service from 9 AM to 1 PM. The extra trains will depart Port Washington at 9:10 AM, 10:10 AM, 11:10 AM and 12:10 PM.
- Eastbound: Four extra eastbound trains will operate from Penn Station to Port Washington, providing half-hourly service from 4 PM to 8 PM. The extra trains will depart Penn Station at 4:50 PM, 5:50 PM, 6:50 PM and 7:50 PM.

#### **City Terminal Zone**

##### Jamaica – Penn Station

Only three trains will operate each hour to/from Penn Station.

Alternative subway service is available via NYC Transit's "E" subway line operating between Penn and Jamaica (Archer/Sutphin stop on the "E").

##### Jamaica – Atlantic Terminal

There will be no LIRR train service between Jamaica and Atlantic Terminal, Brooklyn.

- Eastbound customers at Atlantic Terminal are advised to take NYC Transit subway service to Penn Station, and then take one of the three trains per hour leaving Penn to either Ronkonkoma, Babylon, or Long Beach. For travel to other eastern terminals customers at Penn should take NYC Transit's "E" subway line to Jamaica. Subway service between lower Manhattan, northern Brooklyn and Jamaica is also available via the "J" subway line.
- Westbound customers at Jamaica looking to travel to Atlantic Terminal should take NYC Transit's "E" subway line to Times Square or World Trade Center for transfers to the "2" or "3" subway lines to Atlantic Terminal.

#### **Babylon Branch**

Train service is reduced from half-hourly to hourly operating direct to/from Penn Station. Trains will make all local stops between Babylon and Rockville

Centre. Babylon Branch trains will also receive connections from Montauk trains at Babylon station.

#### **Montauk Branch**

Diesel service will not operate west of Babylon station.

All westbound Montauk Branch trains will terminate at Babylon.

All eastbound Montauk Branch trains will originate at Babylon.

Connections will be available at Babylon for local train service to and from Penn Station.

There are less Montauk Branch trains operating these weekends and stops have been added to other trains.

#### **Long Beach Branch**

Long Beach Branch trains will run hourly direct to/from Penn Station making local stops between Valley Stream and Long Beach. Long Beach trains will also connect with Far Rockaway trains at Valley Stream Station.

#### **Far Rockaway Branch**

Service is reduced from hourly to every two hours on the Far Rockaway Branch. Shuttle trains will operate between Far Rockaway and Valley Stream Station. Connections will be made at Valley Stream Station with Long Beach Branch trains for direct service to/from Penn Station.

#### **Port Jefferson Branch (west of Huntington)**

Service will run hourly instead of half-hourly between Huntington and Mineola.

- Westbound Huntington Branch customers will take trains to Mineola, where they will board buses for travel to Jamaica. At Jamaica, customers can transfer to NYC Transit's "E" subway line for service to Penn Station.
- Eastbound Huntington Branch customers will take NYC Transit's "E" subway line at Penn Station to Jamaica and transfer to buses bound for Mineola. At Mineola, customers will transfer to a train for the remainder of the trip to Huntington.

#### **Port Jefferson Branch (east of Huntington)**

Service will operate every two-hours instead of every 90 minutes.

Westbound diesel trains will terminate at Huntington.

Eastbound diesel trains will originate at Huntington.

Local electric train service will operate between Huntington and Mineola. Customers will board buses for travel between Mineola and Jamaica; and transfer to/from NYC Transit's "E" subway line at Jamaica for service between Jamaica and Penn Station.

#### **Ronkonkoma Branch**

##### **From 7 AM to 11 PM:**

Service will operate hourly between Ronkonkoma and Farmingdale stations to Penn Station using Dual-Mode diesel trains from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM. These dual mode trains will operate along the Babylon Branch for a portion of its route and will require extra travel time.

Bethpage customers can take a bus to Farmingdale for train service to Penn Station via the south shore.

#### **Ronkonkoma Branch**

##### **Overnight:**

During overnight periods, trains will operate between Ronkonkoma and Mineola.

- Westbound Ronkonkoma Branch customers will take trains to Mineola, where they will board buses for travel to Jamaica. At Jamaica, customers will transfer to NYC Transit's "E" subway line for service to Penn Station.
- Eastbound Ronkonkoma Branch customers will take NYC Transit's "E" subway line at Penn Station to Jamaica and transfer to buses bound for Mineola. At Mineola, customers will transfer to a train for the remainder of the trip to Ronkonkoma.

#### **Oyster Bay Branch**

Train service will operate every two hours between Oyster Bay and Mineola on the Oyster Bay Branch.

- Westbound Oyster Bay Branch customers will take trains to Mineola, where they will board buses for travel to Jamaica. At Jamaica, customers will transfer to NYC Transit's "E" subway line for service to Penn Station.
- Eastbound Oyster Bay Branch customers will take NYC Transit's "E" subway line at Penn Station to Jamaica and transfer to buses bound for Mineola. At Mineola, customers will transfer to a train for the remainder of the trip to Oyster Bay.

#### **Hempstead Branch**

Train service will be provided every two hours, instead of hourly, on the Hempstead Branch between Hempstead and Queens Village.

- Westbound Hempstead Branch customers will take trains to Queens Village where they will board buses for travel to Jamaica. At Jamaica, customers will transfer to NYC Transit's "E" subway line for service to Penn Station.

- Eastbound Hempstead Branch customers will take NYC Transit's "E" subway line at Penn Station to Jamaica and transfer to buses bound for Queens Village. At Queens Village, customers will transfer to a train for the remainder of the trip to Hempstead.

**Stations without LIRR train service:**

During the two Jamaica Cutover weekends, the following LIRR stations will not have LIRR train service: Atlantic Terminal, Nostrand Avenue, East New York, Locust Manor, Laurelton, Rosedale, St. Albans, New Hyde Park, Merillon Avenue, Hollis, Kew Gardens, and Forest Hills.

Customers at these stations will have alternate public transportation as detailed below:

Atlantic Terminal: 2, 3, 4, 5, B, D, M, N, Q, and R Subway Service; B41, B45, B63, B65 and B67 Bus Service. Also see City Terminal Zone information above.

Nostrand Avenue: A and C Subway Service; B25, B44, B65 Bus Service

East New York: A, C, J, L and Z Subway Service; B12, B20, B25, B83, Q24 and Q56 Bus Service

Locust Manor: Q3 and Q85 Bus Service

Laurelton: Q85 Bus Service

Rosedale: Q5 and Q85 Bus Service

St. Albans: Q4 Bus Service

New Hyde Park: N24 and N25 Bus Service at Jericho Turnpike

Merillon Avenue: LIRR Train or LIRR Bus Service at Mineola Station; or N24 and N25 Bus Service at Jericho Turnpike

Hollis: Q2 and Q3 Bus Service

Kew Gardens: E and F Subway Service; Q10 Bus Service

Forest Hills: E, F, G, R, and V Subway Service; Q23 and Q65A Bus Service

**Project/Service Information**

The LIRR is providing information to the public and to its employees on this major project using various media including the MTA/LIRR website at [www.mta.info/lirr](http://www.mta.info/lirr), customer e-mails, on-train brochures, letters to elected officials, highway Inform signs, station posters, electronic message boards at Jamaica, Penn Station, and Atlantic Terminal, public address system announcements, radio and newspaper advertisements, on-train announcements, and an internally produced instructional video that is posted on the LIRR website and on Penn Station and Jamaica monitors.

Project and service information will also be available on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/mtalirr?ref=nf> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/lirralerts>.

Customers should pick up copies of the Jamaica Cutover Brochure and the special October 23-24 and November 6-7 Jamaica Cutover weekend timetable for their branches at terminals or their local stations. For additional information, customers can contact the LIRR's Travel Information Center, in Suffolk County at 631-231-LIRR, in Nassau County at 516-822-LIRR or in New York City at 718-217-LIRR. The Travel Information Center's TDD telephone number for the hearing impaired is 718-558-3022.