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Press Release

September 7, 2018

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

Service Advisory: LIRR Double Track in Final Weeks of Testing, Signal Cutovers, Leading to Increased Reliability, Service on Ronkonkoma Branch

Buses to Substitute For Trains Between Ronkonkoma and Hicksville on Two September Weekends; Some Early AM Monday Trains Also Affected

As Long Island Rail Road crews continue around-the-clock work on the Double Track Project in Suffolk County, bus service will substitute for trains between Hicksville and Ronkonkoma during the next two weekends, September 8-9 and 15-16, 2018.

As an alternative to busing, the LIRR is encouraging customers to use the Babylon, Montauk or Huntington/Port Jefferson Branches on these weekends to avoid delays.

This weekend, crews will perform a cutover on a new signal system, as well as testing on the new second track from Farmingdale to Deer Park. Finishing touches will also be made at Pinelawn and Wyandanch stations, which have both undergone significant construction and revitalization over the past several months.

Next weekend, further signal cutover work and testing is scheduled to be performed.

The highly anticipated Double Track Project, a crucial component to expanding LIRR service in Suffolk County while bolstering the region's economy, will improve service and reliability on the LIRR's Ronkonkoma Branch, as well as improved connectivity to Long Island MacArthur Airport. Over the past 25 years, ridership on the Ronkonkoma Branch has doubled -- growing in popularity since the line was electrified in 1988 -- indicating the need for expansion.

The project, expected to be completed by the end of summer, will also aid in reducing delays in the event of a service disruption, as the majority of the 18-mile stretch between Ronkonkoma and Farmingdale currently only has one track available to both directions of train traffic. When an issue arises with a train, this stalls all other east and westbound trains because there is currently no way to circumnavigate the stalled train.

Details on the Ronkonkoma Branch busing program are as follows:

Saturday-Sunday, September 8-9, 15-16, 2018: View special timetable [here](#).

Westbound

- Customers at stations Ronkonkoma through Bethpage will board buses up to 45 minutes *earlier* than normal train times. At Hicksville, customers will transfer to westbound trains.
- Customers at stations Greenport through Medford will board buses at Ronkonkoma and ride to Hicksville, where train service will resume. Customers will arrive at western terminals approximately 1 hour later than normal.

Eastbound

- Customers traveling to stations Bethpage through Ronkonkoma will transfer to buses at Hicksville. Please plan for up to 46 minutes of added travel time.

Greenport

- Departure times for trains that provide connecting service to Greenport have been adjusted: The connecting trains from Penn Station that normally depart at 8:12 AM and 1:12 PM **will instead depart Penn Station 1 hour earlier than normal on Saturday and Sunday, at 7:12 AM and 12:12 PM.** Customers will take these earlier trains to Hicksville, then transfer to buses that will make all local stops to Ronkonkoma, where train service will resume.
- Customers who take the 4:19 AM connecting train from Ronkonkoma to Greenport will board the 2:53 AM train from Penn Station to Hicksville, then transfer to a bus that will make all local stops to Greenport. Passengers should expect up to 1 hour and 40 minutes additional travel time.

- Customers who take the 6:50 PM train from Ronkonkoma to Greenport will board the 5:12 PM train from Penn Station to Hicksville, then transfer to buses that will make all local stops to Ronkonkoma, where train service will resume.

Monday Mornings, September 10 and 17, 2018

Eastbound

- Customers who normally take the 12:14 AM and 1:11 AM trains from Penn Station to Ronkonkoma will transfer to buses at Hicksville. Please plan for up to 46 minutes of added travel time.

Westbound

- Customers who normally take the 12:44 AM and 1:45 AM trains from Penn to Ronkonkoma will board buses departing up to 45 minutes *earlier* than normal train times, then connect with westbound trains at Hicksville.

Many Channels for Services Updates

Information about the service changes noted in this press release and all planned service changes is available through the LIRR's real-time service information sources:

Email and text message service updates – Customers are urged to sign up to receive the alerts by visiting [MyMTAAlerts.com](https://mymtaalerts.com). To avoid unwanted messages, a user can tailor the messages to the specific branch, and the specific times of day.

MYmta app – Customers who use the new, comprehensive MYmta app will see real-time travel information for LIRR and connecting services all in one place. As a caution, trains that start out their trips on time may experience delays en route. The LIRR Train Time app also remains available for customers to access LIRR train information.

MTA.info – The rail tab of the "Service Status" box at the left side of [www.MTA.info](https://www.mta.info) is always the definitive source for the latest status for each branch, updated every minute. In addition, customers can visit www.mta.info/lirr to see special service notices in the upper center of the page.

@LIRR on Twitter – Twitter users can follow @LIRR to receive updates of a similar nature to the email and text alerts, shortened to fit Twitter's format.

The above communications channels can be accessed while at home or on the go. For customers who are located at stations, the LIRR will post the latest service updates on **digital signs** at station platforms and will make **audio announcements** over public address systems, and **on-board announcements** made by train crews.

For those who prefer the **telephone**, information is available from the LIRR's Customer Service Center by calling 511, the New York State Travel Information Line, and saying: "Long Island Rail Road" Those who are deaf or hard of hearing can use their preferred service provider for the free 711 relay to reach the LIRR at 511.