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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### MTA Announces Distribution of 75,000 Masks to Heroic Frontline Workforce

#### *Agency Secures Tens of Thousands of Masks in Partnership with State Health Authorities to Distribute Across MTA*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced the agency has secured 75,000 masks to be distributed to its workforce. The supply, which will be distributed to New York City Transit, MTA Bus Company, Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North Railroad, and MTA Bridges and Tunnels, is expected to increase allowing weekly replenishment. The plan for distribution of masks is being finalized in coming days. Medical guidance continues to be that masks are not recommended as protection against COVID-19, however, masks will be made available to employees who choose to wear them.

Personal protective equipment, including masks, continues to be mandatory for certain positions and duties across the agency and will continue to be provided in these instances. For other employees, this equipment will be distributed to employees as it is made available at this time and in accordance with the plans to be developed by the agencies, as there is a nationwide shortage of masks.

"Obtaining a large number of masks for our incredible MTA workforce is great news and I know comes as a relief to many," said **Patrick J. Foye, MTA Chairman and CEO**. "Medical guidance on this issue remains the same -- masks offer protection only for those who are ill, and only in prevention of their spreading of the virus. That said, I know wearing a mask at this uncertain time offers additional comfort to many of our employees, and I am grateful we are able to provide that. We are hopeful we can continue to make some number of masks available to our workers, but are acutely aware of the ongoing global mask shortage and the critical need in the healthcare industry for these supplies. The men and women of the MTA are absolute heroes for the work they continue to do day in and day out during this crisis."

"We've been working very hard to try and secure masks for transit workers during what has been widely reported as a global shortage of supplies," **Transport Workers Union Local 100 President Tony Utano** said. "This has been a very traumatic time for my members and I hope these masks will give them some peace of mind as they continue providing essential bus and subway service to New York, especially for our nurses, EMS personnel, firefighters and police."

The MTA is taking every measure to protect its frontline workers against the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Over the past few weeks, the MTA has implemented rear-door boarding to protect bus operators and limited cash transactions at subway station booths to protect station agents.

This week, every agency launched their NY Essential Service Plans, modified schedules to reduce the number of work crews. This measure provides critical flexibility in scheduling that allows for a reduction in needed crews. The MTA continues to direct employees who feel sick to stay home, and is using extreme caution in ensuring that workers who came into close contact with potential cases self-quarantine, while immediately disinfecting their work spaces. The MTA's top priority during this public health crisis is the safety of its 74,000 employees.