



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

June 5, 2020

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Announces 13-Point Action Plan for A Safe Return As New York City Begins Phase 1 Reopening

Substantially Increased Service Across New York City Transit, Metro-North Railroad and Long Island Rail Road to Accommodate Additional Riders

Mask or Face Covering Required for All Employees and Customers While Riding Public Transit

MTA Reimagining Operations to Do Everything Possible to Ensure the Safety of All New Yorkers

Multipronged Plan Includes Hand Sanitizer Dispensers in Stations, Decals, Directional Arrows and New Signage Systemwide, MTA PD, Station Personnel and Cleaners Throughout the System to Ensure Employee and Customer Safety

View the MTA's 13-Point Action Plan for A Safe Return [Here](#)

View the MTA's Press Conference [Here](#)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today unveiled its 13-Point Action Plan for a Safe Return as New York City begins Phase 1 reopening on Monday, June 8. The MTA is the lifeblood of New York City – moving more than 8.3 million riders prior to the pandemic across New York City Transit, Metro-North and the Long Island Rail Road. Since dropping more than 90 percent systemwide – ridership has started to return in advance of Phase 1 with subways and buses now moving 1.5 million customers. To continue moving essential workers, welcome back additional riders and invest in the future of the system, the MTA is reimagining operations with one core mission: doing everything possible to ensure the safety of all New Yorkers.

The MTA's 13-Point Action Plan for A Safe Return includes:

- Increased Service
- Unprecedented Cleaning & Disinfecting
- Mandatory Face Coverings
- Enhanced Safety & Security
- Nation-Leading Employee Safety Initiatives
- Innovative Cleaning Solutions
- Hand Sanitizer
- Floor Markings, Directional Arrows and New Signage
- Staggered Business Hours
- 2 Million Mask Contribution from State & City
- Contactless Payments
- New Partnership & Technology to Make System Safer
- Data Dashboard

The MTA, a global leader among transportation agencies and the largest in North America, has acted expeditiously since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic's arrival in New York. To date, the agency has distributed 2.6 million masks, 5.1 million pairs of gloves, 35,000 gallons of hand sanitizer and

112,000 gallons of cleaning solutions to its heroic frontline employees and implemented an [unprecedented cleaning and disinfecting regimen](#) across subways, buses, commuter rails and stations.

"As more New Yorkers return to work, the MTA continues to lead the nation in customer and employee safety and we are doing everything possible to transform our system and operations for the future," **said Patrick J. Foye, Chairman and CEO of the MTA.** "This aggressive plan includes global best practices, input from the business and labor communities and public health officials, and is the product of months of work from the talented team at the MTA. We thank our frontline employees – the heroes moving heroes – whose dedication has been unwavering."

"We understand our critical duty to provide safe and reliable transportation to our customers and help the New York metropolitan region get back on its feet," **said Mario Peloquin, MTA Chief Operating Officer.** "A lot of planning and careful attention to detail went into figuring out how to strategically reopen the MTA for Phase 1, and our top priority remains the same: to continue to be the vehicle by which the entire region not only recovers, but thrives once again."

"Safety is our north star and will always be the top priority for all of us at the MTA," **said Sarah Feinberg, Interim President of New York City Transit.** "We're ramping up service as we head into Phase 1, and we'll be there every step of the way to ensure customer and employee safety going forward. We've been working closely with our partners in labor and I thank the incredible 54,000 men and women of NYC Transit for their unwavering dedication."

"Many of our customers from the Hudson Valley travel into New York City every day, Phase 1 for the Hudson Valley region began on May 26 and as service enhancements were implemented our priority remains the safety of each employee and customer," **said Catherine Rinaldi, President of Metro-North Railroad.** "We thank our employees for their hard work and remind riders our railroad is to be used by essential employees only."

"This next phase in reopening the metropolitan region means we remain laser focused on protecting employees and customers throughout the span of this pandemic and for the future as well," **said Philip Eng, President of the Long Island Rail Road.** "When Long Island started to reopen, the LIRR added cars to trains, increasing capacity by 15%. We remind riders as more of them use our system to wear a face covering and do their part to maintain social distancing as best they can."

"To our frontline heroes, our bus operators, and everyone behind the scenes who help to keep buses moving and New York City going, we thank you," **said Craig Cipriano, Acting Senior Vice President of the New York City Transit Department of Buses and Acting President of MTA Bus Company.** "We will continue to disinfect every bus daily and pay special attention to anything we can do to protect the health and safety of our customers and employees."

Increased Service

New York City Transit

Since May 1, NYC Transit has seen gradual increases in ridership, which has grown to more than 700,000 weekday subway riders and 700,000 bus riders to date. To accommodate those riders, subways will return to regular weekday service (except for the continuing closure of the system between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. for cleaning), buses will return to regular weekday/closed school service in Brooklyn, The Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island and buses will go to 75 percent service in Manhattan on Monday, June 8. Express bus service will be restored.

This increase to regular service is possible because of nearly 10,000 heroic MTA employees who have returned to work.

Long Island Rail Road

With New York City reopening, the LIRR is introducing new timetables on June 8 that increase service to 90% of normal weekday service. Service details can also be found on the MYmta and LIRR Train Time apps, and via MTA.info. Off-peak fares will remain in effect at all times.

To accommodate an increase in riders as part of the [Phase 1 reopening on Long Island](#), MTA Long Island Rail Road announced essential service plan enhancements on May 26. 105 cars were added, adding 15% capacity and lengthening trains, bringing the daily in-service car total to more than 800 cars.

Ticket windows at Penn Station, Jamaica Station and Atlantic Terminal will reopen 6 a.m. on June 8. The policy of no cash sales on board trains will also continue to minimize customer and employee contact, and ticket windows at suburban stations will remain closed until further notice. The LIRR Lost and Found facility at Penn Station will reopen.

The South Fork Commuter Connection service remains suspended.

Metro-North Railroad

As the Mid-Hudson Valley entered [Phase 1 reopening on May 26](#), Metro-North Railroad began increasing service to accommodate the additional customers expected to travel to and from New York City. Metro-North increased service capacity during the AM and PM peak by 26%, adding 19 trains, including three on the Harlem line, two on the Hudson line and three on the New Haven line.

Beginning June 15, Metro-North will return to approximately 61% of the normal weekday service with a new schedule supporting supplement peak inbound and reverse peak service, while still maintaining hourly service during off-peak hours. The schedule will bring Metro-North to 50 trains arriving at Grand Central Terminal during the AM peak and 68 trains departing during the PM peak. This marks a 115% capacity increase from the current schedule, which sees 24 trains in the morning peak and 24 in the evening peak. Off-peak fares will continue to apply at all times.

Additional trains and crews will be available in all yard locations to add trains into service should the demand warrant.

This schedule will require the opening of the lower dining concourse at Grand Central Terminal. All retail and food tenants at Grand Central Terminal, and

outlying stations, are required to adhere to New York State social distancing guidelines when reopening.

Grand Central Terminal, Stamford and White Plains ticket windows will reopen for ticket sales, with limited hours of operation.

Unprecedented Cleaning & Disinfecting

On May 6, the subway system began to shut down from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. for the first time in its 115-year history for the most aggressive cleaning and disinfecting regimen in its history. To date, all 472 subway stations have been cleaned over 71,000 times and the rolling fleet of subway cars have been cleaned over 220,000 times. Access-A-Ride vehicles have been cleaned more than 111,000 times. Buses have gone through more than 184,000 cleaning cycles.

Daily cleaning and disinfecting will continue across train cars and at stations. All train cars will be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day and all stations at least twice daily. In a recent customer survey, 70% of customers say they have noticed cleaner trains.

Long Island Rail Road stations have been cleaned more than 7,400 times since May 1 and LIRR train cars have been cleaned more than 27,300 times during that time. Daily disinfecting and cleaning will continue with all LIRR train cars being sanitized at least once a day and stations at least twice daily.

Daily disinfecting and cleaning will continue with all Metro-North train cars being sanitized at least once a day and stations at least twice daily. To date, Metro-North stations have been cleaned more than 7,100 times, while the full fleet of train cars has been cleaned more than 11,800 times.

Mandatory Face Coverings

All employees and customers are required to wear a mask or face covering. Public health guidance is that six feet of distance is advised, and a mask or face covering should be worn if that is not possible. Given that social distancing may not always be possible on subways and buses, vigilance is required and that's why the MTA has launched a multi-layered approach, including [requiring](#) all customers and employees to wear masks at all times.

Face coverings also continue to be mandatory for all LIRR and Metro-North employees and riders.

Vending machines where riders can purchase masks will be available in select high ridership stations on an expedited basis.

We ask our riders to follow all public health guidance, including washing hands, not touching faces and coughing into elbows. Although service is returning to pre-pandemic levels, public transit is still for essential and Phase 1 workers.

Enhanced Safety & Security

NYC Transit employees, NYPD, MTA Police and contract security will be stationed on platforms to assist with crowd control, but we need help from our riders. That includes waiting for the next train or bus if one is too crowded, or walking to a different car.

MTA will continue rear-door boarding on buses until further notice, and has eliminated cash transactions at railroads to prevent person-to-person contact to ensure the safety of operating employees.

Customers will continue to be limited to no more than one hour in a station, must leave the train and station at the end of the line. Shopping carts are not permitted in stations or on trains.

Customer service personnel will continue to monitor crowding and respond promptly.

The LIRR will conduct platform and terminal oversight to control crowding, and increased personnel at key locations on platforms and in terminals will monitor ridership, assist with loading, and provide customer information.

Metro-North will continue its no-in-person-cash sales policy, with cash sales available only at ticket vending machines.

Nation-Leading Employee Safety Initiatives

The MTA has implemented numerous nation-leading employee safety initiatives – which keep both employees and the general public safe – including:

Making the [unprecedented decision](#) to close the subway system from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. in order to further enhance disinfection of all MTA rolling stock through around-the-clock disinfecting, including poles, seating, floor, ceiling, doors and walls.

[Distributing 2.6 million masks and 5.1 million pairs of gloves to the MTA's heroic workforce](#), as well as more than 27,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, 110,000 small (7 oz and 2 oz) bottles, 2.4 million sanitizing wipes and 105,000 gallons of cleaning solution since March 1. Many employees have a daily supply of fresh masks.

Deploying a "Temperature Brigade" to protect workers since early March and significantly expanding the locations where employee [temperatures are being checked](#) to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Employees at many facilities are subject to mandatory temperature testing.

Installing [plexiglass barriers](#) in employee work spaces and plastic sheeting on buses.

Partnering with Northwell Health and BioReference Laboratories to [expand antibody testing](#) for MTA employees at lab sites and work locations:

Protecting bus drivers and customers by moving to [rear-door boarding](#) and blocking off the front rows of buses which are closest to drivers, since March 20. Vinyl shields have also been put in place on buses and more robust shields are being explored.

Protecting station agents and customers by [eliminating most person-to-person transactions](#) (most cash transactions at booths), since March 23.

Hand Sanitizer

Hand sanitizer dispensers are being placed in stations across the system to encourage cleanliness. MTA will also have gallon dispensers and will be distributing mini bottles.

Floor Markings, Directional Arrows and New Signage

[Decals](#) with directional cues to encourage social distancing will be in subway, LIRR and Metro-North stations.

Floor markers will be placed throughout the system to support social distancing efforts at windows and Ticket Vending Machines. Entrances and exits will also be marked to control the flow of customers.

Staggered Business Hours

The MTA [has requested](#) that the employers and members of the public consider adjusting commuting times.

Those who can travel outside of peak hours, after 9 a.m. and before 3 p.m., are asked to travel at those times. The MTA is urging the business community during Phase 1 to continue remote work, stagger hours, and create alternative schedules to help prevent crowding.

2 Million Mask Contribution from State & City

The MTA will distribute 2 million masks that were contributed by the State and the City.

Contactless Payments

Metro-North is supplementing existing passenger counting efforts at Grand Central Terminal and is moving towards 100% scanning of e-Tickets to monitor travel patterns and ridership.

MTA has also accelerated OMNY installations, which are on schedule, to make up for lost time due to COVID-19 precautions early on in the pandemic, and to advance the installation of OMNY readers on buses throughout the city.

Innovative Cleaning Solutions & Technology to Make System Safer

Exploring innovative cleaning solutions, including a first of its kind pilot that uses proven [UV light technology](#) to kill the virus that causes COVID-19, antimicrobials and electrostatic and atomized sprayers.

NYC Transit is launching a 30-day pilot to test innovative new air filters on several car classes to examine if they effectively kill microbes. NYC Transit has already increased the frequency of subway air filter replacements to every 36 days, from every 72 days.

In addition to its '[Essential Connector](#)' app, NYC Transit is also exploring the possibility of new and innovative technological solutions including real-time system conditions displays and providing "station dashboards" online.

Data Dashboard

The MTA is launching a new data dashboard that will put information directly in the hands of riders so they can make the best decisions for themselves about how and when to travel.