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Press Release

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NYC Transit

IMMEDIATE

MTA Announces Signal Modernization and Track Improvements on Queens Boulevard Line Requiring Changes to E and M Service in Queens and Manhattan

For Nine Days of Traditionally Low Ridership Between the Christmas and New Year Holidays, E trains Will Run via the F in Both Directions Between Roosevelt Av and West 4 St and There Will be No M Service Weekdays Between Forest Hills-71 Av in Queens and Essex St in Manhattan

Robust Alternate Service Options Available

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that for nine days of traditionally low ridership between the Christmas and New Year holidays, the 53rd Street Tunnel, which carries the E and M train lines between Queens and Manhattan, will be closed while crews advance the installation of a modern signaling system and undertake track maintenance work along the Queens Boulevard Line.

For nine consecutive days, starting at 5 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 26 and continuing through 5 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 4, E trains will run via the F in both directions between Roosevelt Av in Queens and West 4 St in Manhattan. In addition, on four consecutive weekdays, Monday, Dec. 28 through Thursday, Dec. 31, M trains will run between Chambers St in Manhattan and Metropolitan Av in Queens during the hours it normally operates between Forest Hills-71 Av in Queens and Essex St in Manhattan, 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The MTA is taking advantage of traditionally low ridership during the holiday period to provide track access in order to accelerate work and prevent future track outages while minimizing impact to customers. This signal work is one part of a host of other capital improvements to power, lighting, and pumping systems happening this fall and winter.

"Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the MTA remains committed to installing modern signaling throughout the system," said Janno Lieber, **President of MTA Construction & Development**. "We are taking advantage of the low ridership over the holiday period and during COVID to get more work done, and to complete it faster. Federal funding is crucial to ensuring projects like this can continue."

"The work to install modern signaling throughout our system may impact riders for a short time, but will lead to more trains, fewer delays and the improved accuracy of real-time information for decades to come," said Sarah Feinberg, **Interim President of NYC Transit**. "I'm grateful to the team at NYC Transit that has worked hard to ensure there are a multitude of travel alternatives and robust outreach and information for our riders."

As part of the work to install a modern signaling system along the Queens Boulevard Line, the section of tracks between Court Square-23 St in Queens and 50 St – 8th Ave. and 47 – 50 St Rockefeller Center stations in Manhattan, which run through the 53rd Street tunnel under the East River, will need to be taken out of service. This outage is necessary to advance critical track work and operational testing to ensure the system's performance – which cannot be conducted while the tracks are in service.





Upon completion of this project, Queens Boulevard Line customers (E, F, M and R) will benefit from a modern Communications Based Train Controlled (CBTC) signaling system from Union Turnpike in Queens to 50 St – 8 Av and 47 – 50 St Rockefeller Center stations in Manhattan. These enhancements will allow the MTA to run more trains closer together and more reliably, resulting in better throughput and less crowded stations and trains. Additionally, CBTC will allow for more accurate real-time train arrival information which will be available to Queens Boulevard Line customers on new in-station signage. The ability to add more trains, reduce crowding and improve train arrival information will enhance the overall customer experience.

During the holiday closure, which runs continuously from 5 a.m. on Dec. 26 to 5 a.m. on Jan. 4, the following service changes will be in effect:

- E trains will run via the F line between Roosevelt Av and West 4 St stations
- E trains will not stop at the following stations: Queens Plaza, Court Sq-23rd St, Lexington Av/53rd St, 5 Av/53rd St, 7 Av, 50 St, 42nd St/Port Authority, 34th St-Penn St, 23rd St or 14th St

Travel Alternatives:

- For Queens Plaza, take the R train (days/evenings) or use the nearby Queensboro Plaza 7 N train station. Transfer at 34 St-Herald Sq N R trains or Roosevelt Av-74 St 7 R trains
- For Court Sq-23 St, use the 7 or AC trains at Times Sq-42 St/Port Authority or via transfer to/from the E train at 74 St-Roosevelt Av
- For Lexington Av/53 St, use the 4 local or 6 train via transfer to/from the 7 train at Grand Central or the R train (days/evenings) at Lexington Av/59 St
- For 5 Av/53 St, use nearby F train stations at 47-50 Sts or 57th St
- For 7 Av, take the D train via transfer at 47-50 Sts

- For 50 St, 42 St, 34 St, 23 St and 14 St, take the  or  train via transfer at W 4 St or from the  or  trains at Times Sq-42 St/Port Authority, or use nearby  train stations along 6 Av

*NOTE: Overnight subway service remains suspended until further notice between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. every night to facilitate system disinfecting.

Additional dates in 2021 will be announced. All dates are subject to change.

Coordination with local elected officials, community boards and stakeholders will continue throughout the work.

The MTA will post print and digital signs in stations, along with announcements in stations and on trains, before the work begins. Customer service notifications will also be available on the [MTA website](#), the MYmta app and social media. Customers can also sign up for text and email alerts at www.myMTAalerts.com.