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Press Release

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MTA Headquarters

IMMEDIATE

ICYMI: Governor Cuomo Issues Executive Order Directing MTA to Develop Plan to Bolster Mask Compliance on Public Transit System

MTA Will Issue \$50 Fine for Riders Who Refuse to Wear a Mask on Public Transit

Emergency rule to take effect across New York City subways and buses, Metro-North and Long Island Rail Road Monday, September 14

Follows Gov. Cuomo's Executive Order Mandating All People Wear Masks on Public Transit

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today issued an executive order directing the MTA to develop a plan to bolster mask compliance across public transportation system's subways, buses and railroads.

In response to this directive, the MTA announced riders who refuse to wear a mask on public transit will be subject to a \$50 fine. This new measure - which will be effective Monday, September 14 - follows Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.18 issued on April 17 requiring all customers and employees to wear a face covering while riding on public transit.

MTA surveys show more than 90 percent of customers are using masks on subways, buses, the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North. The \$50 fine is the latest measure to drive mask compliance even higher. Mask compliance will be enforced by MTAPD, NYPD and Bridge and Tunnel Officers as all rules and regulations are. Heroic MTA frontline employees are not responsible for enforcement.

"While mask compliance in the MTA system remains very high, we want to make sure that people feel comfortable coming back to public transportation," **Governor Cuomo said.** "I have asked the MTA to come up with an enforcement regimen so people know that not only are the cars clean and the stations clean, but the riders will be acting appropriately. We have to be able to say to the riding public that everyone will be wearing masks - and if they refuse to wear a mask they will be penalized."

"Health experts agree that wearing a mask is the single best thing we can do to limit the spread of Covid-19," **said MTA Chairman and CEO Patrick J. Foye.** "The \$50 fine gives us another tool to help achieve our goal of universal mask usage on New York City Transit subways and buses, Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad."

"We know the vast majority of New Yorkers are already doing the right thing and wearing a mask while riding with us," **said Sarah Feinberg, Interim President of New York City Transit.** "The fine is a last resort measure for those who refuse to comply. It's critical that every customer does their part to keep our system safe."

The MTA has launched an aggressive public awareness campaign, "Operation Respect," as part of a multi-layered strategy to encourage riders to wear a face covering while on public transit. The agency has made available 4 million masks from the State of New York and City of New York available for free at station booths, across New York City Transit, Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad. Hundreds of volunteers with the MTA's "Mask Force" are distributing these masks to riders systemwide.

The MTA has also deployed vending machines at New York City Transit subway, Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North stations allowing customers to buy Covid-19 personal protective equipment (PPE). The machines, part of a pilot program, offer reusable face masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes. Additionally, the MTA has installed free surgical mask dispensers inside 360 buses across 15 routes to help further protect customers while on board.