



## MTA Press Releases

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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### ICYMI: Governor Cuomo Announces MTA to Launch Voluntary COVID-19 Screening Program for Frontline Employees

*Leaders of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and TWU Local 100 discussed the launch of voluntary COVID-19 screenings for frontline MTA employees at an event this afternoon at the Grand Avenue Bus Depot in Queens.*

See [video](#) and [photos](#) from today's MTA event. Governor Andrew Cuomo's announcement from earlier today appears below.

#### GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES MTA TO LAUNCH VOLUNTARY COVID-19 SCREENING PROGRAM FOR FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES

***Free COVID Testing to be Offered at Rotating Field Locations, Medical Assessment and Occupational Health Services Centers with Initial Phase Screening 2,000 Frontline NYC Transit, LIRR, Metro-North and Bridge and Tunnels Employees Per Week***

***New Program Complements Free Testing Already Available Through Northwell Health-GoHealth Urgent Care in New York Metropolitan Region***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the MTA will begin a voluntary COVID-19 screening program for frontline employees. Under this new initiative, free COVID testing will be offered at rotating field locations and medical assessment and occupational health services centers to frontline NYC Transit, LIRR, Metro-North and Bridge and Tunnels employees. Up to 2,000 frontline MTA employees will be screened per week under the initial phase of the program - the first transit worker screening initiative in the country.

"Our brave frontline transit workers risked their lives to provide New Yorkers an essential service every single day during this pandemic, and we must support them just as they have supported us," **Governor Cuomo said**. "This new voluntary screening program leverages New York's nation-leading COVID testing program to help keep our frontline workers safe during this unprecedented pandemic."

The new testing program begins with the initial phase targeting frontline employees through a three-pronged approach:

1. Field Sites: On-site testing will be provided on a rotating schedule at field locations, including bus depots and subway and railroad train yards, determined by MTA Occupational Health Services based on hot spot and cluster zone designations made by New York State.
2. Medical Assessment Centers (MACs) and Occupational Health Services (OHS) Facilities: Voluntary testing will also be offered to all employees scheduled to visit a MAC or OHS facility.
3. Existing Partnership with Northwell Health: Additionally, free diagnostic testing remains available to MTA workers at Northwell Health-GoHealth urgent care centers throughout the New York metropolitan region.

"The MTA continues to lead the nation in worker safety and the new COVID-19 screening program is just the latest example of this steadfast commitment to employee safety during this unprecedented public health emergency," **said Patrick J. Foye, MTA Chairman and CEO**. "Our workforce has been the backbone of New York since the virus arrived. It is a first-order priority to promote a safe work environment at all our facilities."

"I strongly urge all employees to take advantage of this critical new program as it will help us identify the virus and stop transmission in its tracks," **said Patrick Warren, MTA Chief Safety Officer**. "We know that asymptomatic spread is a very real concern with this virus and we all need to do our part to keep each other safe at work. I want to thank the hardworking MTA employees for keeping this city moving during our most difficult times."

"This is exactly the type of screening program we have been asking for and it's a huge step forward in terms of protecting TWU Local 100 members from a possible second wave," **TWU Local 100 President Tony Utano said**. "We will closely monitor its implementation but we're grateful our requests for testing and screening on such a scale have been heard."

**SMART General Chairman Anthony Simon said**, "This testing program is a necessary next step in our efforts to detect the virus, stop its spread and protect our hardworking brothers and sisters who have heroically served the region throughout the pandemic. SMART looks forward to working with the MTA on this critical initiative."

**Danny Cassella, President of ATU Local 726, said,** "I thank the Governor and the MTA for putting this program together. Any testing whether it's COVID screening or temperature taking is a plus for our members and for the public."

**IBT Secretary Treasurer F. Christophe Silvera said,** "The IBT fully supports the efforts of the MTA to make available free and voluntary COVID-19 tests for all MTA employees. We understand that the CDC, New York State and City health officials as well as public health experts recommend that frequent testing is most beneficial to employee health and welfare and their families. We are glad to partner with the MTA, and its vendors BioReference Laboratories and Quest Diagnostics who will be performing COVID-19 screening testing for our employees. It is a true team effort and we will recommend that our hard working railroad employees participate."

The MTA is partnering with BioReference Laboratories and Quest Diagnostics to perform testing. The initial phase of the program will include a goal of testing two thousand employees per week with priority focus on testing up to 15% of the frontline workforce. The COVID-19 Screening Program will begin at select field locations, MACs and OHS facilities and will be expanded to additional sites and scaled up in the coming weeks. Employees must register to come into a MAC or OHS site if they are not already scheduled for a visit.

"It is critically important to ensure that MTA employees are safe and healthy," **said Jon R. Cohen, M.D., Executive Chairman of BioReference Laboratories.** "A healthy workforce that is COVID-19 will help us continue to stop the spread of the virus and keep millions of New Yorkers safely moving forward."

"Quality COVID-19 testing is critical to helping our nation's frontline workers do their jobs as safely as possible," **said Wendi S. Mader, executive director of employer population health programs for Quest Diagnostics.** "NY's MTA workers are putting their health on the line every day to ensure the rest of us can get to where we need to go during the pandemic. As an organization with deep roots in the NY tri-state area, Quest Diagnostics couldn't be prouder to support the heroes of the NY MTA by providing them with insights from our COVID-19 testing at this critical time."

Testing will be RT-PCR and will take approximately five minutes for the nasal swab to be administered. The program is voluntary, but participation is strongly recommended. Turnaround time for results will be within 48 hours under normal circumstances and employees will receive their results in that timeframe.

The program will begin at the following locations now through November:

- East New York Bus Depot
- Flatbush Bus Depot
- Jackie Gleason Bus Depot
- Ulmer Park Bus Depot
- Baisley Park Bus Depot
- Casey Stengel Depot
- College Point Depot
- Far Rockaway Depot
- Jamaica Depot
- JFK Depot
- LaGuardia Depot
- Queens Village Depot
- Spring Creek Bus Depot
- Fresh Pond
- Grand Avenue
- Eastchester Depot
- Gun Hill Depot
- Kingsbridge Depot
- West Farms Depot
- Yonkers Depot
- Mother Clara Hale Depot
- Manhattanville Depot
- Michael J. Quill
- Tuskegee Airmen (100th St)
- Castleton Depot
- Charleston Depot
- Meredith Depot
- Yukon Depot
- Medical Assessment Center 1
- Medical Assessment Center 3
- Medical Assessment Center 5, Coney Island Yard
- OHS Greybar Facility (MNR)
- OHS Mineola Facility (LIRR)
- 207th Street Yard
- Hillside Yard (LIRR)
- Croton-Harmon (MNR)

Employees experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should immediately see their personal physician or get tested at a local test site.

Testing information can also be found at the New York State Department of Health, or by calling the NYS COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-364-3065.

