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Press Release

August 30, 2020

[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

Front-Door Boarding on MTA Buses Resumes Aug. 31, Adding Up to 40% More Space for Social Distancing

MTA Retrofitting More than 5,800 Buses with Innovative Protective Barriers to Ensure Customer and Employee Safety

Customers Reminded to Fill MetroCards as Fare Collection Resumes; All Customers Must Wear a Mask on Public Transit – It's the Law

MTA Launches New Front-Door Boarding Public Awareness Campaign

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is reminding customers that front-door boarding on buses resumes on Monday, Aug. 31, opening up to 40% more space on buses for enhanced social distancing and allowing for the resumption of fare collection during the worst fiscal crisis in MTA history. Innovative new barriers, including polycarbonate sliders and vinyl curtains, are being installed to fully protect bus operators and allow more distance between the operator and customers. The MTA is continuing to equip its more than 5,800 buses with these protective barriers.

Additionally, the MTA announced it is also enhancing employee safety by moving back the white line on the bus floor, behind which riders are expected to stand providing more social distancing for the operator. Customers are reminded to refill their MetroCards as fare collection resumes. MTA Bridge and Tunnel Officers and EAGLE teams are being deployed throughout the bus system to help remind customers they must pay the fare and are required to wear a mask while on public transit.

"As we prepare for Monday, we want customers and employees to know we are doing everything we can to keep them safe – from disinfecting our buses to mandating masks to installing protective barriers for our operators," said **Sarah Feinberg, Interim President of New York City Transit**. "We honor and respect our heroic frontline employees for everything they continue to do for our city. We are resuming fare collection at a time when we are facing the worst financial crisis in MTA history and we need the federal government to step up and deliver \$12 billion in urgently needed funding now."

"We are working tirelessly to implement these new features across all of our buses and we want our operators and customers to know we are constantly talking about new and creative ways to keep them safe," said **Craig Cipriano, President of MTA Bus Company and Senior Vice President of NYC Transit's Department of Buses**. "As customers take advantage of the increased social distancing on buses they should make sure to stand behind the white line to respect our operators and wear a mask. Our incredible workforce has been working day in and day out to retrofit our buses. As more customers ride our buses, we remind them they must pay the fare and we welcome them in joining us as we thank all of our heroic employees who move this city."

The MTA is also launching an aggressive customer communications campaign to raise awareness of the resumption of front-door boarding. The multichannel campaign includes new signage that will be posted across the entire bus fleet reminding customers to pay the fare, board through the front-door of the bus and stand behind the relocated white line to increase social distancing from the bus operator. The signage will also be posted at the 50 busiest bus stops across the five boroughs. Additionally, once customers are on-board an announcement will play detailing the new measures in place. To view the new signage, [click here](#).

The MTA continues to work around the clock to retrofit all 5,800 buses in its fleet with the new barriers. Buses may have temporary barriers in place while permanent solutions continue to be implemented.

The MTA also continues to undertake the most aggressive cleaning and disinfecting regimen in its 115-year history. To date, buses have been cleaned and disinfected 490,000 times.

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the MTA acted quickly to implement rear-door boarding on March 23 to protect frontline employees from the spread of the virus. The MTA, leading the way among transit agencies, served as a national example on employee and customer safety. Regular fare policy remained in effect wherever on-board payment boxes and SBS off-board machines continued to be accessible.

As ridership continues to increase, riders can use the MTA's new capacity tracking feature on the MYmta app, to track in real time how many passengers are on each bus. The tool allows customers to carefully plan their trip and maximize social distancing, with 40% of the bus fleet already activated.

The MTA has equipped 360 buses on 15 routes across all five boroughs with mask dispensers. This allows customers to pull a surgical mask from the dispenser on board the bus if they have forgotten or lost their mask. Customers can find the mask dispensers on the Bx12 SBS and Bx41 SBS routes in the Bronx, the S53 local route in Staten Island, the X63, X64, and X68 express routes and the Q110, Q112 and Q64 local routes in Queens, the M15SBS

in Manhattan and the X27, X28, X37, and X38 express routes and B38 local route in Brooklyn. Each dispenser holds approximately 50 surgical masks and is refilled daily.

The distribution of personal protective equipment to heroic frontline employees continues across agencies. To date, the MTA has distributed 6.7 million masks, 8.7 pairs of gloves, 59,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, 6.3 million individual sanitizing cleaning wipes, 160,000 gallons of cleaning solutions and 12,000 face shields.

The MTA is facing the worst financial crisis in its history as subways, buses, Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North ridership experiences greater declines than in the aftermath of the Great Depression. The MTA is urgently asking the U.S. Senate to act quickly to authorize \$12 billion in MTA emergency relief funding to cover operations for 2020 and 2021. In absence of Federal action, the MTA has detailed potential options the agency would have to undertake, including an up to 40% reduction in service across subways and buses and Staten Island Railway, an up to 50% reduction in service across commuter railroads, fare and toll increases above the 4% planned in 2021 and 2023, and gutting critical 2020-2024 capital projects like the Second Avenue Subway Phase II, Metro-North Railroad Penn Station Access, additional ADA upgrades and CBTC signal modernization projects. A workforce reduction of up to 8,410 positions could occur if service cuts must be implemented. Even with these combined devastating measures, the MTA cannot close its yawning COVID-era deficits without federal aid and any further inaction from Congress could send the agency into a virtual death-spiral.