



Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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metro.net

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: PHILLIP A. WASHINGTON *PAW*
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**SUBJECT: REVISED BOARD BOX - METRO RESPONSE TO TSA
TRANSPORTATION MASK DIRECTIVE AND BOARD MOTION
52: FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED ON METRO BUSES AND
TRAINS**

ISSUE

This Board Box updates, and in consultation with County Counsel, adds specificity to and addresses outstanding questions from Metro staff's response of February 15, 2021 to the TSA Security Directive 1582/84-21-01: Security Measures – Face Mask Requirements and Board Motion 52: Face Coverings Required on Metro Buses and Trains by Directors Hahn, Butts, Mitchell, Barger, and Solis.

BACKGROUND

At the January 28, 2021 Board meeting, Directors Hahn, Butts, Mitchell, Barger, and Solis issued Motion 52 directing the Chief Executive Officer to:

- A. Reiterate for both the public and staff that face coverings are mandatory
- B. Report back in 14 days on the following:
 - a. Recommendations on how to strengthen efforts to ensure compliance with mandatory face coverings, including but not limited to fines
 - b. Recommendations for alternative transportation options for patrons instructed not to wear a face covering by a medical provider

On January 31, 2021, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) issued Security Directive (SD) 1582/84-21-01: Security Measures – Face Mask Requirements in response to the President's Executive Order of January 21, 2021 and the subsequent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Order on January 29, 2021 mandating masks while on conveyances and at transportation hubs.

The TSA SD requires that individuals wear masks on board public transportation or in public areas of transportation hubs or facilities, with a few exceptions (as applicable on transit) as follows:

1. When necessary for identity verification
2. While eating or drinking for brief periods
3. When the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication
4. If incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance
5. In private vehicles for personal use
6. Children under the age of 2
7. People with disabilities who cannot wear a mask safely as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act

The TSA has also directed agencies to establish procedures to manage situations with persons who refuse to comply with the requirement to wear a mask. At a minimum these procedures must ensure that, if an individual refuses to comply with an instruction given by the owner/operator with respect to wearing a mask, the owner/operator must:

1. Deny boarding, or
2. Make best efforts to disembark or remove the individual from the facility as soon as practicable.

DISCUSSION

To respond to the TSA SD and Motion 52, Metro has addressed messaging, procedures for unmasked passengers with and without medical exemptions, and alternative transportation options. Staff acknowledges the intent of the TSA SD and Motion 52. The TSA has explicitly directed that agencies are to make their best efforts to comply with the SD.

Metro has required masks from the beginning of the pandemic and has communicated such through signage and messaging aboard our buses, trains and on our digital assets, including digital signage and displays, website, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, printed timetables, street teams and audio announcements. We also actively participated in APTAs Commitment to Health & Safety Campaign, one of the recommendations of the APTA Recovery Task Force, chaired by Metro CEO. COVID-19 Communications on our system have taken priority and will continue to be the focus of agency wide communications. To date, we have achieved about 99% compliance on our system.

Staff are taking the following actions to comply with the TSA SD and Motion 52.

- Vehicle and station signage and messaging, as well as automated announcements, are currently being updated, fitted and installed on our system to again remind passengers of the mask requirement. Please note that new

signage (Attachment A) will use the images and messaging provided by the TSA that make it known that this mask requirement is now federal law and failure to comply may result in penalties. All digital assets will be updated by Friday, February 19 with these new images and messaging. Production of updated printed materials for our buses, trains and stations is in process with an expected completion within two weeks. In the meantime, Attachment B provides examples of current COVID-19 safety messages along with examples of where those signs/messages are placed on the system. The updated signs will be placed in similar locations over the next two weeks throughout the system.

- The scripts for the updated audio announcement are provided in Attachment C. These updated automated announcements are being recorded and will be implemented within the next two weeks. The rail station announcements run approximately every 10 minutes. Announcements onboard rail vehicles run approximately every 3-4 stations, every trip. Onboard bus announcements play every time the Stop Requested button is pressed by a passenger.
- Attachment D depicts updated messaging that will be shown on bus and rail car destination signs.
- Attachment E provides examples of other communications platforms that will be updated to convey the new mask requirement messages.
 - Printed schedules now include the mask mandate on the cover
 - Metro website includes the mask mandate on homepage and throughout the site
 - Blogs (Source and El Pasajero), Facebook, Twitter and InstaGram all include mask mandate language
 - Transit App is also messaging mask mandate language
- To increase mask availability, Communications will redeploy Street Teams beginning February 22 and plans to distribute 50,000 packages containing masks, travel tips and hand sanitizer.
- Operations has begun the procurement process and will install mask dispensers on the bus and rail car fleet and in rail stations to increase availability of masks for passengers. Installation will commence upon receipt of materials and continue to completion. The installation duration is estimated to be four to five weeks.

Operations and Security Procedures for Unmasked Passengers

Staff have been directed to use the following procedures when encountering unmasked passengers on the system:

- Operators will allow boarding of all passengers at bus stops and stations.
- Any unmasked passenger will be requested to wear a mask.
- If an unmasked passenger does not voluntarily comply with the mask requirement, the operator will notify the Bus or Rail Operations Center to request a security response.
- Security officers will seek voluntary compliance and offer a mask to an unmasked passenger.
- If a passenger does not comply, officers may take steps to remove the passenger using existing protocols for violations. More detail on this process is provided below.

Unmasked passengers who have not voluntarily offered a medical exemption should expect the following process when approached by an officer:

1. The officer will offer a mask to the passenger, advise them of the TSA SD, and request the passenger to voluntarily comply with the mask requirement.
2. If there is no voluntary compliance, the officer will issue a warning.
3. If the passenger does not comply after a warning, the officer will request that the individual exit the conveyance. If the passenger fails to comply, the officer then has the legal authority to escort the passenger off the vehicle to issue a Code of Conduct citation that carries a \$75 fine (\$40 for minors).

An example of the Operations General Notice 21-003 informing staff of updated procedures related to the TSA SD is shown in Attachment F.

Operations has confirmed that the mask requirement for contract service providers conforms to the Operations General Notice.

MicroTransit's mask requirement is in line with the new directive.

- Sticker indicating mask required is prominently displayed in the interior of all vehicles
- Masks are supplied in all vehicles
- MicroTransit is updating user terms to incorporate the federal mandate. Hard copies will be available in all vehicles and push notification in app.

Unmasked Passengers with Medical Exemption

The ADA does not require Metro to provide service to an individual who represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others.. On the other hand, the TSA SD provides for an exemption from the mask requirement for those with disabilities that prevent the wearing of masks.

Unless an unmasked passenger voluntarily offers proof of a medical exemption, operators have no way of knowing if the passenger qualifies for exemption under the TSA SD. Also, due to the private nature of medical conditions, asking a passenger to

disclose his/her/their medical condition to qualify for an exemption imposes a disproportionate burden on that individual. For this reason, operators have been directed not to ask an unmasked passenger for proof of medical exemption, and further, operators are also instructed to allow boarding of all passengers and to follow the enforcement procedures described above.

Please note that an unmasked passenger who voluntarily offers a medical exemption will not be cited, fined, or removed.

Alternative Transportation Options for Unmasked Passengers with Medical Exemption

Per Motion 52, Metro has researched potential options to provide alternative transportation for unmasked passengers with medical exemptions. In order to provide alternatives, such options must be practical for passengers, relative to taking Metro buses or trains.

Metro's research indicates that potential alternative transportation options, such as transportation network companies or taxis, also require passengers to wear masks while on board. It is unclear whether unmasked passengers with medical exemptions are allowed to ride with the transportation network companies or taxis.

Based on the research, there are no viable transportation options available that do not follow the same requirements as Metro. Therefore, Metro will not be able to provide alternative transportation options for unmasked passengers with medical exemptions. It should again be noted that the TSA SD, which was issued after the passage of Motion 52, allows Metro to carry unmasked passengers with medical exemptions and thus negates the need to provide alternative transportation options.

NEXT STEPS

Staff continues the production and installation of signs and messaging across the system, including both physical and digital assets and updated audio announcements. It is important to note that the messages are continuously refreshed so that the messages don't get lost in space. Staff also continues to acquire and install mask dispensers for the bus and rail fleet.

In addition to responding to the TSA SD, Metro is assisting the LA County in expanding access to vaccinations through the following activities:

- Staff are exploring the possibility of offering Metro park-and-ride locations as vaccination sites.
- Staff are also exploring the logistics and costs to transport people to vaccination sites per Board Motion 11.1, Part F (see attached), approved at the January 28, 2021 Board meeting.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact me directly at 213.922.7555 or our Chief of Staff, Nadine Lee, at 213-922-7950.

- Attachment A – New TSA Directive Signage
- Attachment B – Current Safety Messages and Sign Placement
- Attachment C – Automated Audio Announcement Scripts
- Attachment D – Updated Bus and Rail Car Destination Signs
- Attachment E – Additional Mask Messaging Images
- Attachment F – Operations General Notice 21-003

Face masks required.

Se requiere el uso de mascarillas.



TSA requires the proper wearing of face masks at all times, per federal law. Failure to comply may result in penalties.

El TSA requiere el uso adecuado de una mascarilla en todo momento, según la ley federal. No cumplir puede resultar en sanciones.



Stay Healthy. Stay Secure.
Manténgase sano. Manténgase seguro.
tsa.gov/coronavirus

1 **A** Downtown LA 3 min

2 **A** Long Beach 5 min

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tsa.gov/coronavirus

Maps



Arrivals

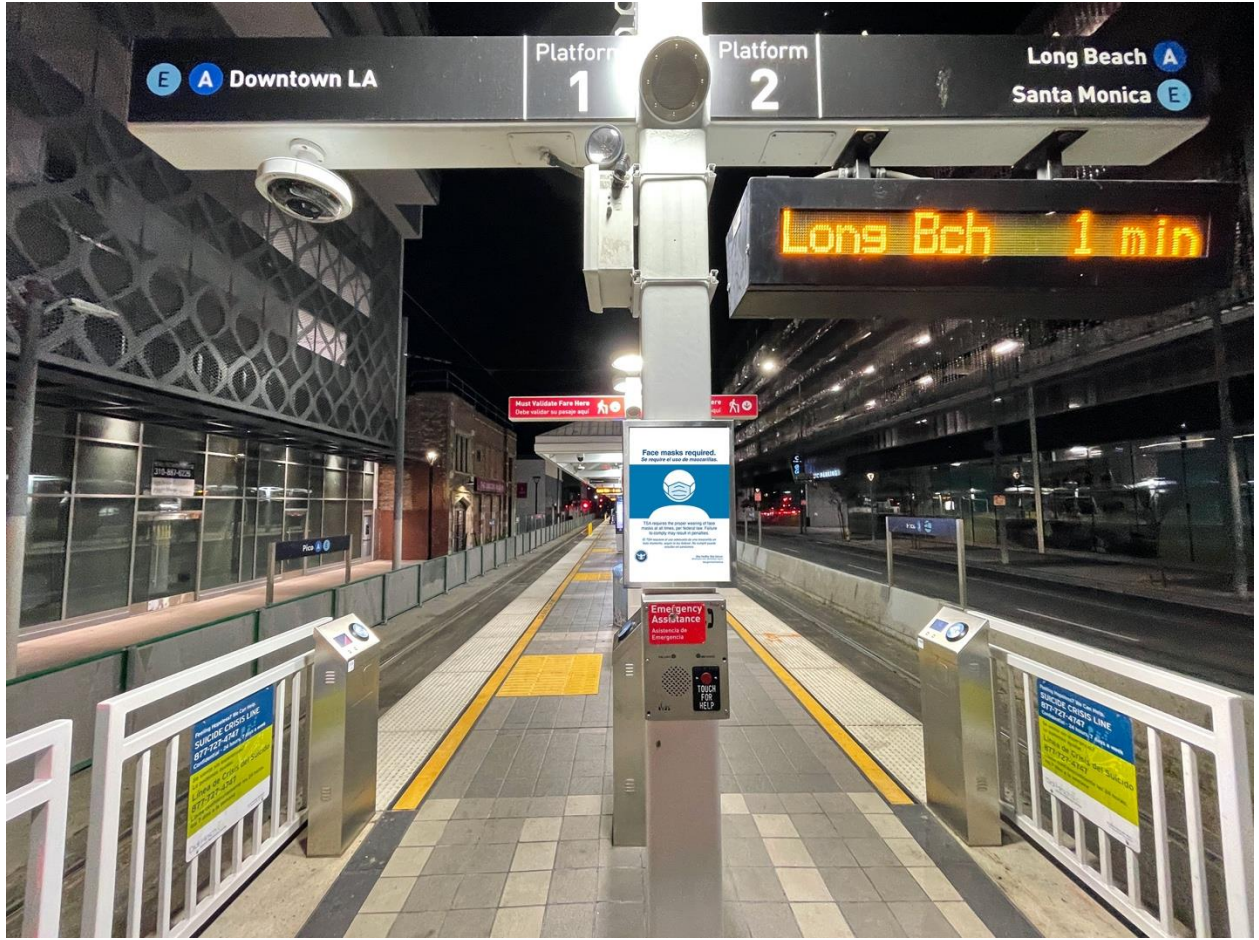


Alerts



Intersection





Attachment B – Current Safety Messages and Sign Placement

Culture of Safety Creative



Bus Car Card



TPIS

TRAVEL SAFE

> A face covering is required over your nose and mouth during your entire ride.

> Practice physical distancing where possible.



Stay informed at metro.net.

Digital Kiosk

TRAVEL SAFE



> A face covering is required over your nose and mouth during your entire ride.



> Practice physical distancing where possible.



Stay informed at metro.net.



Our Commitments To Health & Safety

Our system has joined public transit agencies across this country in committing to making every ride safer — and we need your help.





New "Face Coverings Decals" are being installed on the front and rear doors of buses.

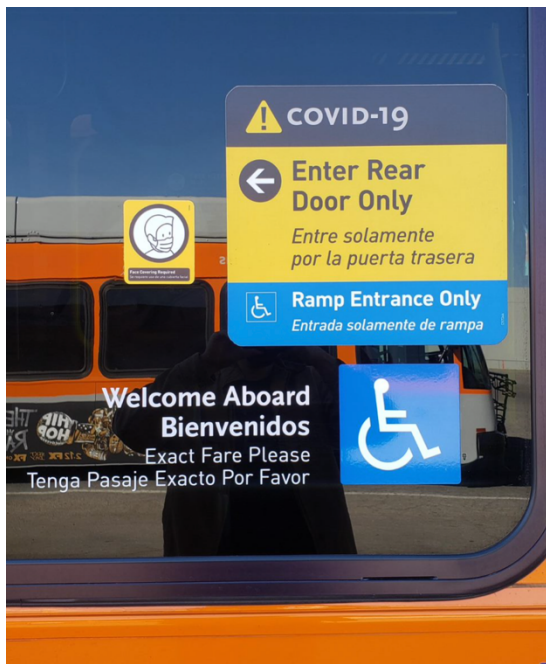


Sign on MicroTransit



Current Face Covering Required signage on bus and rail vehicles.









Face Covering Signage

A Line (Blue)

Pico



Grand



Washington



Vernon

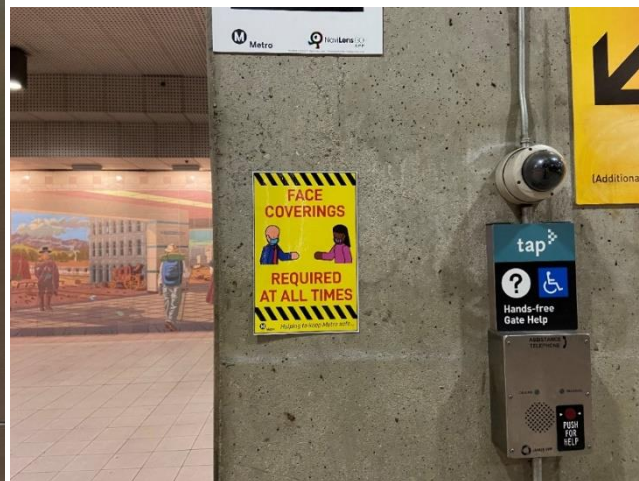


B/D Lines (Red/Purple)

Hollywood/Vine Station



Union Station



L Line (Gold)

Lake Station



Memorial Park



Highland Park



South Pasadena



Attachment C – Automated Audio Announcement Script

Updated Mask Mandate Announcement Script

Station Announcement (25 seconds)

In response to COVID-19, we have strengthened our cleaning regimens to keep you and our employees safe. Per Federal Law, all passengers must wear a face mask to ride Metro. Please keep your mask over your nose and mouth at all times, keep a physical distance from others when possible, and do NOT travel if you are sick. Visit Metro dot net for the latest updates.

En respuesta al coronavirus, hemos fortalecido nuestros regímenes de limpieza para mantenerlo seguro a usted y a nuestros empleados. Según la ley federal, se requiere el uso de una mascarilla para viajar en Metro. Mantenga su máscara sobre su nariz y boca, mantenga una distancia física siempre que sea posible y no viaje si está enfermo. Visite metro punto.net para obtener las últimas actualizaciones.

On Board Announcement (15 seconds)

Per Federal Law, all passengers must wear a face mask to ride Metro. Please keep a physical distance from others when possible, and do NOT travel if you are sick. Visit Metro dot net for updates.

Según la ley federal, se requiere el uso de una mascarilla para viajar en Metro. Haga su parte y mantenga una distancia física cuando sea posible y no viaje si está enfermo. Visite metro.net para información actualizada.

On Board Announcement (6 seconds) (option for vehicles with limitations)

Per Federal Law, all passengers must wear a face mask to ride Metro. Please keep a physical distance when possible.

Según la ley federal, se requiere el uso de una mascarilla para viajar en Metro. Por favor mantenga una distancia física cuando sea posible.

Attachment D – Updated Bus and Rail Car Destination Signs

Updated Mask Mandate Bus and Rail Car Destination Signs



Attachment E – Additional Mask Messaging Images

Fleet signs (2,000+ vehicles across LA County)



Onboard

Posted onboard 2,000+ vehicles across LA County



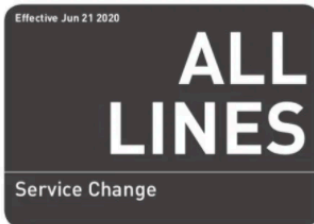
Stations

Posted at stations



Schedules/Timetables

Included on front of schedules/timetables



EFFECTIVE JUNE 21, 2020

**METRO WILL MAKE
BUS SERVICE CHANGES
TO ADD CAPACITY FOR
ESSENTIAL TRAVEL**



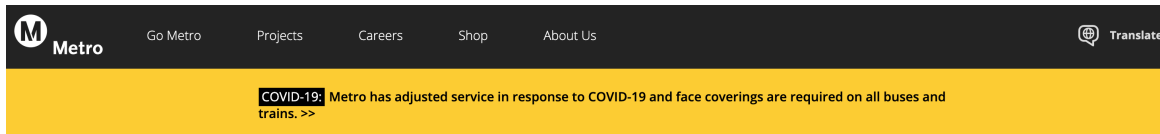
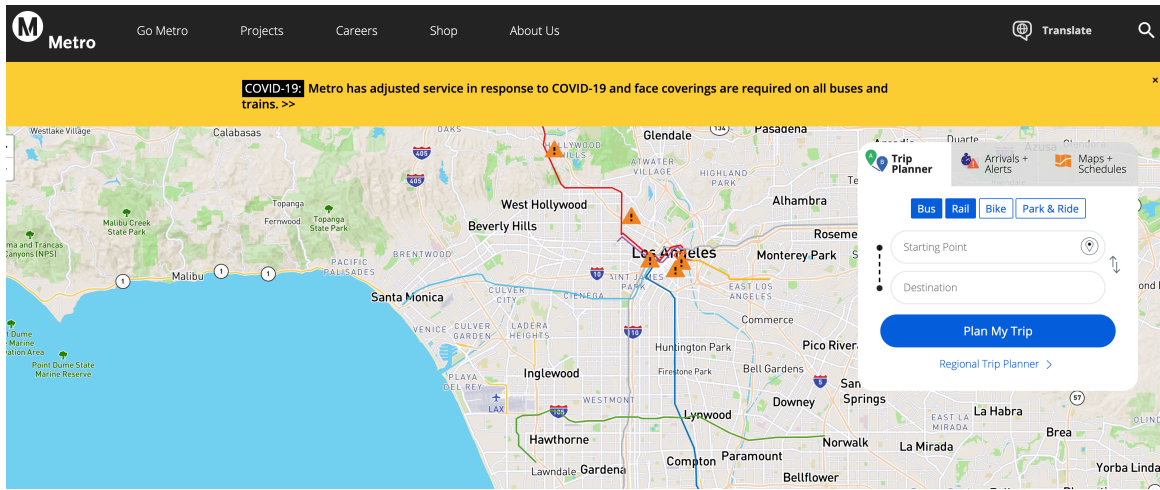
	metro.net
Metro Telephone Information	323.GG.METRO
Travel Information	511
Accessible Service	800.421.7828
California Relay Service	711

Subject to change without notice
Sujeto a cambios sin previo aviso



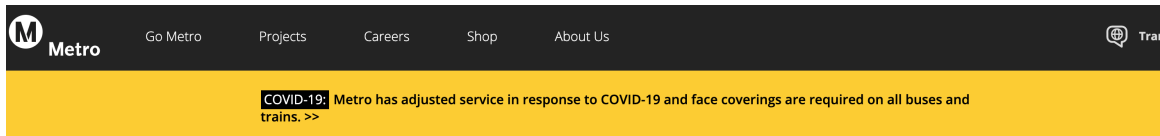
Website

Homepage and throughout Metro.net (daily viewership: xxx)



Metro Rider's Guide

Whether you are visiting Los Angeles for the first time or making lifestyle changes to your daily routine, use this guide to get started on your car-free adventures around the city.



Alerts + Advisories

Rail or Bus Line #

Metro Rail

B Metro B Line (Red)

L Metro L Line (Gold)

D Metro D Line (Purple)

Metro Bus

Blogs

Source/Pasajero (viewership:)

Frequent references to face covering requirement

THE SOURCE

About This

COVID-19 update and Metro News Now: Feb. 17, 2021

BY STEVE HYMON , FEBRUARY 17, 2021

•On the COVID-19 front, Metro continues to provide service for essential riders. Both Metro and the federal government are requiring **face** coverings to ride unless you have a medical excuse.

ELpasajero

NOVEDADES DE TRANSPORTE

Acerca de El Pasajero Política

Actualización de COVID y noticias de Metro febrero 17 del 2021

BY JOSE UBALDO , FEBRUARY 17, 2021

- En el frente COVID, metro continúa prestando servicios para usuarios esenciales. Metro y el gobierno federal están requiriendo cobertura facial a los usuarios a menos que tengan una excusa médica.

Twitter

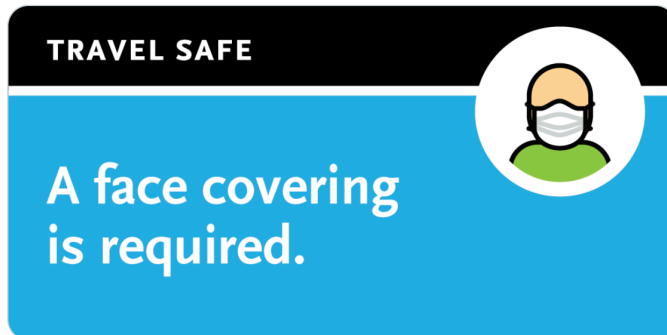
Frequent references to face covering requirement

← Tweet



LA Metro @metrolosangeles · Jun 22, 2020

Face coverings on transit are required! They are for your protection and ours, so please mask up before you go!



9

30

79




Facebook

Frequent references to face covering requirement

M Metro Los Angeles · Follow
August 24, 2020 · 🌐

Wear a Mask LA
A mask or face covering is required on public transit! It's the best way to protect y... See More



Media

Several media outlets (TV, radio, print, social) have covered face covering requirement (viewership estimate?)



Video contest

Get ready for the #WearAMaskLA Video
PSA Contest!

BY LEXI HINTON | JUNE 15, 2020



Calling all Angelenos!

Participate in the Wear A Mask LA video PSA contest to show all Los Angeles County residents why it's important to wear a face covering or mask while riding on transit or in public.

OPERATIONS GENERAL NOTICE

OPS # 21-003

February 19, 2021

TO REMAIN POSTED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE/MAY 2021

SUBJECT: REVISED TSA TRANSPORTATION MASK REQUIREMENT/DIRECTIVE

Effective immediately, and continuing until May 11, 2021, Metro is implementing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) directive requiring travelers to wear face masks when they are in airports, bus and rail stations, as well as while on passenger aircraft, public transportation, passenger railroads, and over-the-road buses operating on scheduled fixed-routes.

In May 2020, Metro began requiring face coverings for all front-line employees, including Bus and Rail Operators and Transit Operations Supervisors whose duties involve public contact, for example those assigned to Vehicle Operations or Instructors performing line rides. Additionally, Metro required customers traveling on the bus and rail systems to wear face coverings.

Per the TSA's directive, we are implementing the following:

Communications

- Vehicle and transfer center signage is being updated to remind passengers of the mask requirement
- Automated announcements on vehicles and in transfer centers remind passengers of mask requirement on a regular basis

Operations

- Operators will continue to allow boarding of all passengers at bus stops
- Any unmasked passenger (above 2 years of age) will be requested to wear a mask



Metro[®]

- If a passenger does not comply, the operator will notify Bus Operations Center (BOC) or Rail Operations Center (ROC) to request a security response, however Operators are to continue in service
- If the unmasked passenger alights, Operator is to immediately notify BOC/ROC
- Operations is preparing for the installation of mask dispensers on buses, light and heavy rail trains, and subway stations (scheduled for next week)

Medical Exemptions

- If a medical exemption is voluntarily offered, operators are not required to notify the BOC or ROC
- Operators shall not ask for medical exemption proof
- A verbal statement from passengers shall suffice for a medical exemption

Security & Law Enforcement

- Will respond to BOC/ROC calls in real-time
- Officers will seek voluntary compliance and offer a mask to an unmasked passenger
- If the passenger does not comply after a warning, the officer will request that the individual exit the conveyance. If the passenger fails to comply, the officer then has the legal authority to escort the passenger off the vehicle to issue a Code of Conduct citation that carries a \$75 fine (\$40 for minors)
- Metro's preference is to avoid physical removal of an unmasked passenger

Please note that Bus and Rail Operators are still not required to enforce the face mask requirement; enforcement will be the responsibility of law enforcement officers. For their personal safety, Operators are advised to avoid confrontation with anyone who boards without a mask. Operators should not make any comments that go beyond a polite, one-time reminder of the mask requirement. Operators should continue to make every effort to avoid passing up customers, even those without masks.

Please contact the Instruction Department if you need clarification of any part of these instructions. Your cooperation in maintaining excellent customer service during this difficult time is greatly appreciated.

Sample mask dispenser:



Diane Frazier
Interim Senior Executive Officer,
Transportation

Bernard Jackson
Senior Executive Officer, Rail Operations