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MTA Reminds Returning Riders That Masks Are Still Required on Public Transit

MTA

Updated September 7, 2021 5:30 p.m.

Authority Ramping Up Mask Education and Distribution Efforts as More Riders Expected to Return to the Office and School Post-Labor Day

Robust Outreach Includes Digital Messaging and Public Service Announcements in Stations and Onboard Buses, Subways and Commuter Rails

Free Masks Available at Subway Station Booths, Onboard Commuter Rail Trains

With more New Yorkers returning to the office and school following Labor Day, and taking public transit to get there, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is reminding customers that masks continue to be required when riding. Over the next several weeks the MTA will embark on a blitz of mask distribution, ramping up mask compliance messaging and distribution efforts across the system to ensure the transit system remains safe from COVID-19.

MTA staff and police officers will be strategically stationed at subway and railroad hubs, and bus terminals to distribute free masks to unmasked riders.

“The COVID-19 Delta variant must be taken seriously, and with more customers expected to be in the system it is vital to remind everyone of the importance of getting vaccinated and wearing a mask,” **said Patrick Warren, MTA Chief Safety Officer**. “The science is clear, face coverings help reduce the spread of germs and viruses, and over the next several weeks we will be out across our operating region, reinforcing that message. Regardless of your vaccination status, you must wear a mask when riding. It keeps our workforce safe; it keeps your fellow commuter safe, and it keeps you safe.”

“The MTA is doing our part to supply masks to everyone who needs one. And we are once again asking riders to do their part—to keep a mask on while riding with us,” **said Sarah Meyer, MTA Chief Customer Officer**. “Masks are available at every station booth and on board the commuter railroads. Thank you for doing your part to keep New York healthy.”

The goal is to reach the near universal compliance levels seen in the transit system at the height of the pandemic in 2020. Mask compliance throughout the system at that time exceeded 98%. [Latest surveys](#) show that mask compliance onboard buses is around 93% and 86% on subways. Distribution efforts will be complemented with digital messaging and announcements will run in stations, onboard subways, buses and commuter rails.

To date that MTA has made 10.3 million masks available for customers. Through the Authority’s trailblazing Mask Force, which [launched in July 2020](#), more than 800,000 free masks have been distributed to customers. Additionally, MTAPD, MTA Bridge and Tunnel Officers and NYC Transit Security Agents have distributed over 25,000 free masks.

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