



# COVID-19 UPDATES

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On Monday I visited the bus maintenance facilities at IAD and KMD. I am so gratified by the positive attitude of our drivers, mechanics and cleaning crews. Today, I visited with Trolley and Security employees. I found the same attitude: our people are fiercely loyal to MTS and our riders. Our people are not so worried about health risks; they care about their jobs. I cannot thank you for enough for your dedication to MTS and our riders.

I am most concerned about everyone's job and health. It is almost impossible to predict what lies ahead, but MTS employees are at the heart of every consideration we make. And keeping your loyalty and trust depends on me and your supervisors communicating often and openly.

For the time being, MTS decided to keep service at its current levels through the end of March. All routes will operate on normal Weekday, Saturday and Sunday schedules. We're doing this for two reasons: to keep our valuable operators and mechanics fully employed and to allow our riders adequate space for social distancing.

Currently, ridership is down about 27% for Trolley and ranging from about 25% to more than 90% on bus routes. Those routes serving UCSD were hit the hardest and represent about 23% of the total ridership decline. We will continue to closely monitor ridership and reevaluate at the end of March. If service cuts are necessary; our first priority will be to protect the jobs of our employees.

I really want everyone to focus on staying healthy. Be diligent in all the personal hygiene best practices. Stay home if you get sick. And if you get sick, don't worry about running out of sick leave. We will find a way to take care of you. MTS has strong budget reserves.

There are also several other resources becoming available to help people. Today, the U.S. Senate passed a relief package that includes sick leave, unemployment benefits, free coronavirus test and food and medical aid to people impacted by the pandemic. A separate stimulus package being considered is a \$500 billion proposal that would provide money directly to every household in the U.S.

Every level of government is working hard to minimize the impact of this pandemic and to get through it as quickly as possible. While the day-to-day dynamics of the COVID-19 virus can't be ignored, I want everyone to think positively. Over my lifetime, I have seen many instances in which people and organizations are much stronger after facing down adversity. I strongly believe that we will bounce back from this. Our business fundamentals are strong. We provide needed and reliable service. And we have the best and smartest people working for us.

As we go forward, keeping people informed will continue to be one of our top priorities.

For our entire organization, we are launching dedicated web pages and a texting alert system. This will enable all MTS employees the ability to stay up to date with national, statewide, county and MTS news. On the web pages you will find previous updates, policy memos and links to COVID-19 resources. If you have suggestions for additional content, please let Brendan Shannon know ([Brendan.shannon@sdmts.com](mailto:Brendan.shannon@sdmts.com)).

Today is Transit Driver Appreciation Day and our riders responded to our social media posts with many positive comments about our drivers and our commitment to service during these difficult times. Since I cannot say thank you enough, I'll say it again: Thank you!

Stay healthy everyone!