



UPTOSPEED

BUSINESSANDCOMMUNITY



Ready. Safe. Go!

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, CTA's bus and rail services have remained an essential service, to ensure hard-working essential workers from around the City of Chicago and 35 suburbs get to and from their destinations. Our dedicated workforce of bus and rail operators, maintenance staff, rail station personnel and other essential employees reported for duty each day to keep healthcare workers, grocery store staff, drug store personnel and other frontline workers moving when much of the city stood still.

Those same transit employees stand ready to serve you now. In fact, we never left. At its height, the COVID-19 pandemic decreased our bus and rail systemwide ridership by 80 percent, but we still served a core group of customers that was on par with the what the Pittsburgh metropolitan transit system provided daily before the pandemic. Today, we are now providing more than 500,000 riders per weekday, which is one-third of our pre-COVID ridership levels.



Returning to CTA

As you return, please know that we have taken important action to expand our cleaning protocols, enforce capacity standards and mask compliance, and continue with good ventilation and air circulation. We never cut bus or rail service during the pandemic. In fact, along some bus routes, we actually increased service to help our customers engage in social distancing. On every bus and at every rail station, we are providing free, disposable face mask dispensers. At some stations, we also introduced hand-sanitizing stations. We continue to provide all of these services today and will for the foreseeable future. **This is just a snapshot of everything CTA has done. To learn more, visit transitchicago.com/coronavirus/.**

Public transit and the spread of COVID-19

We know you have a lot of questions about the safety of public transit and public transportation's relationship with the spread of COVID-19. The great news is that there are multiple national and international studies tracking the spread of COVID-19 and studying whether public transit was a transmitter of the virus. **Study after study has determined that public transportation was not a significant contributor to the spread of the COVID-19 virus.** This is mainly due to consistent opening of vehicle doors which brings in outside air, the relatively short duration riders spend on a vehicle, strong mask compliance and relatively little talking (or other activities that spread respiratory droplets) by riders. Here are just a few studies and news articles on transit safety during COVID:

- A recent study by the **American Public Transportation Association** (Schwartz, 2020) determined that “no direct correlation has been found between use of urban public transit and transmission of COVID-19.”
- An article in **The New York Times** (Goldbaum, 2020) stated “new studies in Europe and Asia suggest that riding public transportation is not a major source of transmission for the coronavirus.”
- **Scientific American** (Joselow, 2020) – the nation’s premier science magazine -- wrote that “There Is Little Evidence That Mass Transit Poses a Risk of Coronavirus Outbreaks.”
- A study by New York University and published in **PLOS ONE** medical journal found “no evidence of city-level transit ridership and the high spread of contagious respiratory diseases.” (Howland, 2020)
- **Bloomberg CityLab** (O’Sullivan, 2020) noted that “no coronavirus clusters have been found on subways, trains and buses in [Japan and France]”

At the CTA, we understand that we have an important responsibility: to provide the healthiest, most comfortable travel environment for all our customers and employees. Every day, we take that responsibility very seriously—doing everything we can to provide the essential transit services on which our region relies. We never stopped running since the start of this pandemic, and we will continue to be here for all Chicagoans' travel needs in the future.

Our message to our riders – current and future – is a simple one:
When you're ready, we're ready.



Sources

Goldbaum, C. (2020, August 2). Is the Subway Risky? It May Be Safer Than You Think. Retrieved from nytimes.com: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/02/nyregion/nyc-subway-coronavirus-safety.html>

Howland, R. E. (2020, December 3). Public Transit in Cities Not Huge Contributor in Spread of Respiratory Diseases: Study. Retrieved from nbcnewyork.com: <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/coronavirus/public-transit-in-cities-not-huge-contributor-in-spread-of-respiratory-diseases-study-finds/2759012/>

Joselow, M. (2020, July 28). There Is Little Evidence That Mass Transit Poses a Risk of Coronavirus Outbreaks. Retrieved from scientificamerican.com: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/there-is-little-evidence-that-mass-transit-poses-a-risk-of-coronavirus-outbreaks/>

O'Sullivan, F. (2020, June 9). In Japan and France, Riding Transit Looks Surprisingly Safe. Retrieved from bloomberg.com: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-06-09/japan-and-france-find-public-transit-seems-safe>

Schwartz, S. (2020, September 29). Public Transit a Safe Way to Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Retrieved from apta.com: <https://www.apta.com/research-technical-resources/research-reports/public-transit-and-covid-19-pandemic-global-research-and-best-practices/>



For more information, please visit [CTA's COVID-19 response website](#) and the [dedicated business toolkit](#) where employers can find infographics and brochures to share with their employees.