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MTA Announces Installation of Mask Dispensers Inside Buses for Customers to Easily Access Masks When Boarding



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Installation Complete on 100 Buses on Six Routes in the Bronx, Queens and Staten Island

Pilot Will Expand to 400 Buses on 20 Routes in All Boroughs Next Month

[See Pictures of the Dispensers; View Video of Dispensers](#)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced it has launched a pilot program to mount dispensers of free surgical masks inside buses to further protect customers while on board. The MTA has already completed the installation of dispensers on 100 buses on six bus routes in three boroughs. Customers on the Bx12 SBS and Bx41 SBS routes in the Bronx, S53 Staten Island local route, and X63, X64 and X68 express routes in Queens can now easily access the free surgical masks from dispensers mounted at the rear doors of the SBS and local buses, and at the front door of express buses.

The MTA plans to roll out the pilot across every borough on more than 20 routes and 400 buses by the end of August. All customers and MTA employees are required to wear a mask while riding public transit.

“This is another important way we are coming up with solutions to ensure customers can conveniently obtain a mask if they have lost or forgotten their own when they board our buses,” said Craig Cipriano, President of the MTA Bus Company and Senior Vice President of Buses for MTA New York City Transit. “When you wear a face covering on public transit you’re doing so out of respect for your fellow passengers and the health and safety of our bus operators – plus it’s the law.”

Each plastic dispenser holds approximately 50 surgical masks. The dispensers are off-the-shelf plastic containers with modifications made by New York City Transit. Each container is properly secured to the stanchions of the bus and will be refilled daily.

Today’s announcement follows the launch of **“Operation Respect,”** a new MTA initiative consisting of a **“Mask Force”** of hundreds of volunteers to distribute masks directly to customers throughout the subway, bus and commuter rail system.

To further protect customers, the State of New York has provided the MTA with an additional million masks for distribution, on top of the previous two million masks that were donated by the State of New York and the City of New York earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic.

A survey conducted by the MTA of more than 15,000 bus riders between July 13 and July 16 found more than 95% of riders were wearing a face covering while riding on public transit. To further encourage and promote mask compliance, the MTA has deployed approximately 160 MTA Bridge and Tunnel Officers throughout the bus system to communicate with riders. The officers will also be conducting spot checks on board and instruct riders who are out of compliance to leave the system.

Bus riders can now use the brand-new capacity tracking feature on the MYmta app that will allow customers to track in real time the number of passengers on an arriving bus and how long the bus will take to get to their stop. The new feature covers 40% of the bus fleet and will allow customers to further plan their trip and maximize the ability to social distance while on a bus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employee safety remains a top priority for the MTA. The installation of innovative bus barriers across 4,800 local buses and 1,000 express buses continues to further enhance bus operator safety during the pandemic and beyond. Installation of a full-length vinyl curtain on express buses is expected to be complete by mid-August. On local buses, the installation of either a polycarbonate slider or a vinyl sheeting curtain to fully protect bus operators when passengers board is expected to be completed by the fall. Rear door boarding remains in effect on all buses. The MTA will be resuming front door boarding on buses in August.

The MTA continues with its most aggressive cleaning regimen in its history. Buses have gone through more than 380,000 cleaning cycles to date.

Across agencies, to date, the MTA has distributed 5.2 million masks, 7.3 million pairs of gloves, 50,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, 4.5 million individual sanitizing wipes, 145,000 gallons of cleaning solution and 10,000 face shields to its heroic frontline employees.