



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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WeGo reinforces Metro mask mandate onboard public transit *Agency encouraging, providing face masks and hand sanitizer to promote good health*

NASHVILLE – WeGo Public Transit echoes Metro Nashville Mayor John Cooper’s order on face coverings, making them mandatory on all public transit services. The agency wants to see all its customers consistently wear facial coverings when riding transit.

In July, Mayor Cooper and the Metro Public Health Department mandated the wearing of face coverings in Davidson County as part of the city’s ongoing efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19, with other Middle Tennessee counties following suit with similar orders. To keep pace with the region’s mandates, WeGo instituted a policy where WeGo employees, contractors, visitors, and customers are required to wear face coverings when interacting with WeGo staff, visiting all WeGo facilities, or riding buses and trains.

"While ridership currently lags behind pre-COVID norms, we are still providing around 12,000 rides each weekday," WeGo Public Transit CEO Steve Bland said. "When schools and universities return to on-campus learning, we are anticipating that those numbers will return to near normal as students return to school and various parts of the economy begin to reopen. This makes increasing mask use on transit all the more critical a goal to protect the communities we serve each day."

To offset the challenges of properly social distancing with the inevitable increase in ridership, WeGo is stressing the importance of wearing a face covering while riding public transit.

"We have been monitoring health practices onboard our services throughout the summer and estimate that around 85 percent of our customers are wearing some sort of face covering," WeGo Senior Safety Program Manager Nicholas Oldham said. "We know that taking responsible actions, such as wearing a mask while riding a bus or train, ensures your daily commute is safe. WeGo is happy to support Metro’s efforts by helping our customers understand the importance of this simple but impactful action."

During the week of August 10, agency staff will begin riding buses to encourage mask use and to hand out masks if a customer is in need. Both masks and individual hand sanitizers continue to be available while supplies last, free of charge, at the Customer Information Window at WeGo Central.

Since the first case appeared in Middle Tennessee in early March, WeGo has worked alongside Metro Public Health to ensure the agency’s cleaning and operation practices would help minimize the spread of COVID-19. Since then, the agency has continued to pursue additional measures to keep public transit safe to use throughout the pandemic by installing plastic barriers for bus operators, investigating various technologies such as UV air filtration systems and antibacterial surface coverings, and making additional buses available on an on-call basis to support social distancing efforts.

Members of the public are encouraged to sign up for WeGo’s newsletter, follow them on social media, and visit WeGoTransit.com for continuous updates.

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Editor’s Note: To request this info in an alternative format, call 615-862-5950 for the ADA Coordinator.