



Santa Cruz METRO

Coronavirus Prevention Measures

Updated: May 5, 2020

METRO is serious about the safety of our employees and our customers. On March 3, 2020, METRO initiated a deeper cleaning of our bus and ParaCruz vehicles by cleaning all high-touch surfaces each night with a disinfectant. This includes seats, handrails, stanchions, hand straps and the bus operator's compartment.

In order to further protect the bus operators and customers, on March 23rd, METRO discontinued the collection of fares, until further notice. We also initiated deeper and more frequent cleaning of the transit centers, including the addition of hand sanitizer dispensers for the public, and we initiated rear door boarding and exiting on buses in which the bus operator is capable of actuating the rear door.

If you have traveled through the transit centers, you no doubt noticed that METRO has posted numerous flyers reflecting CDC and County Health Agency COVID-19 prevention tips and other helpful information, including Social Distancing.

For the protection of METRO customers and the bus operators, on March 30th METRO started enforcing Essential Travel only, as defined by the Santa Cruz County Health Agency Order.

<https://www.santacruzhealth.org/Portals/7/Pdfs/Coronavirus/PHO Order Extending SIP 20200331.pdf>

For METRO, this means that bus operators and security personnel will ask customers the purpose of their travel. If either or both deem the travel as non-essential, METRO will deny the trip. Some customers have questioned why METRO would deny the trip when the bus may still have capacity available when leaving the terminal or transit center. Please keep in mind that not all customers board METRO buses at the terminals or transit centers. Many board the buses at bus stops along the route. Therefore, any capacity remaining when the bus leaves a terminal or transit center is capacity needed for customers waiting at bus stops along the route who need the service for essential travel.

Please do not get upset at the bus operator or security personnel when they decline your trip or pass you by at a bus stop. They are not maliciously doing so.

On April 9th, for the protection of METRO customers and bus operators, METRO increased its commitment to Social Distancing by blocking numerous seats in all buses and reducing the ambulatory capacity of each bus to between five and twelve passengers, depending on the bus type. The unfortunate result of on-board social distancing is that we will not always be able to board everyone who wishes to board the bus, and, we will likely have to pass-up customers waiting at a bus stop. We apologize in advance for this unfortunate consequence and we



request that METRO customers honor the essential travel restriction so those who truly qualify for essential travel can do so.

In addition, customers are no longer allowed to stand while the bus is moving and ambulatory customers are not allowed in the ADA restricted area towards the front of the bus. For passengers with personal carry-on items, the bus operator and security personnel are strictly enforcing the carry-on limit to no more than one item that can be carried on one's lap. Eating or drinking on the bus is also disallowed until further notice.

In an effort to further protect customers and the bus operator, reduce joy riding*, and to enforce essential travel only, customers may only ride the bus to the end of the line and they may not re-board the same bus when it returns in the opposite direction. The bus operator, supervisor or security personnel will inquire of each passenger the purpose of their travel and disallow the ride if it is determined not to be essential travel.

** For the purpose of this section, METRO defines "joy riding" as anyone engaging in non-essential travel on the bus, including, but not limited to riding the bus with no essential destination in mind.*

Effective April 10, 2020, and until further notice, all METRO Board and Committee meetings are being held using video conferencing. All public participation will also be via video conferencing and no public participation will be allowed at the METRO offices. Information needed to access the video conference Board/Committee meetings will be made available on Board Agendas, posted as usual on the METRO website.

Finally, on April 25th, METRO started enforcing the new County Health Agency Order that all customers waiting at a bus stop, boarding a bus and riding the bus must wear face coverings at all times.

<https://www.santacruzhealth.org/Portals/7/Pdfs/Coronavirus/PHO%20Order%20Face%20Coverings%20April%202024.pdf?version=042320>

How can customers help?

- Don't ride METRO if you are sick
- Always wear a face mask/cloth, bandana or other CDC recommended face-wear
- Do not stand while the bus is in motion
- Please do not get upset at the bus operator if he/she has to pass you by due to temporary capacity restrictions or decline your ride because it is non-essential travel. This temporary policy is in place for your safety and the safety of the bus operator.
- Board AND exit through the rear door whenever possible
- Do not attempt to engage the bus operator in conversation and never dwell near the front of the bus when boarding or exiting the bus



- If you do not qualify for “Essential Travel,” please stay home. We need to preserve our limited capacity on the buses and ParaCruz for people who must travel for Essential Activities.
- While onboard a bus, always observe “social distancing” (at least 6’ between people). If there are too many people on the bus, consider taking the next bus.
- Never try to sit in a blocked seat.
- Do not stand near the bus operator or in the restricted ADA securement area
- Do not consume food or beverages while onboard the bus
- Consider adjusting your Essential Travel trips to off-peak periods (non-commute periods)
- Limit carry-on items. No personal items are allowed in the aisle, restricted areas, on the wheel well or empty seats, and all carry-on items must be carried on one’s lap.
- Be considerate and courteous to other riders and the bus operator
- Following the CDC COVID-19 Prevention tips posted on the buses and the CDC website
- Consider that on March 10, 2020, the California Department of Public Health stated in part, that high-risk individuals should “Avoid crowds, mass gatherings or large events, and public transit, and stay home as much as possible.”

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

<http://santacruzhealth.org/>

<https://www.scmtd.com/>

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