



Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 and riding public transit

Is it safe to ride public transit?

Riding public transit is safe. Valley Metro has strengthened cleaning procedures on bus, light rail and Paratransit vehicles and continues to monitor guidelines from Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We have implemented rear-door boarding while working on plastic health barriers for our operators. We also encourage riders to social distance by providing signage on the vehicles. The face covering requirement is also an additional measure to keep riders and operators safe.

What can riders do to prevent spreading COVID-19?

- If you feel sick, stay home.
- All riders are required to wear face coverings on all public transit services: bus, light rail, paratransit, Dial-a-Ride and vanpools. This includes onboard vehicles and at stops, stations and transit centers.
 - From the CDC, [cloth face coverings](#) are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.
- Valley Metro encourages all riders to continue to practice social distancing of 6 feet while waiting and onboard public transit.
 - Consider skipping a row of seats between yourself and other riders if possible.
 - Look for social distancing instructions or physical guides.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before traveling and again when you reach your destination.
- Avoid contact with high-touch areas when possible.
 - Wash or sanitize your hands after contact with high-touch areas.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Try to use buses and trains when it is not as busy. Leave earlier or later for work if possible.

What are you doing to clean vehicles?

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Valley Metro has implemented several new cleaning techniques and increased sanitization frequency to help slow the spread. We are now utilizing fogging on both buses and light rail vehicles as one of our new cleaning techniques. Fogging is an anti-viral/anti-bacterial vapor misting system that disinfects large spaces by leaving a longer, residual clean.

- Buses are now being fogged three times a week. On the other days of the week, all high-touch areas are cleaned with an anti-viral cleaning solution.
- Light rail vehicles are fogged once a month with a two-step process that lasts longer. The high-touch areas are cleaned every day with an anti-viral cleaning solution.
- Paratransit vehicles are cleaning with a broad-spectrum disinfectant nightly. Drivers are also wiping down high-touch areas with disinfectant throughout the day.

What should riders do if they have concerns or see a vehicle that needs attention?

Riders with concerns or seeing a transit vehicle that needs attention, please contact Customer Service at either (602)253-5000 or csr@valleymetro.org. Additionally, if you are on light rail, you can use our safety and security app, AlertVM, to receive an immediate response. The response team can send out cleaning crews or additional resources to address the issue.

What are you doing to protect operators? Sometimes they aren't wearing PPE.

Our operators have ample supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to use. Operators are required to wear face coverings when entering and exiting the vehicles or interacting with passengers. When inside the cabin or behind a health barrier, operators are allowed to remove their face covering.

Will you shut down service?

Valley Metro will not shut down service unless directed from state or local officials. Service levels may be cut in some areas in response to ridership, funding and other circumstances surrounding COVID-19. Our goal is continuing serving the community at the highest levels with the resources that are available.

When will the service levels return to normal?

Early morning and late-night service levels were reduced on May 4 in a decision made by the Phoenix City Council. In order for these trips to return to pre-COVID service levels, the Phoenix City Council must vote to reinstate service levels. For more information on the Phoenix City Council decision visit phoenix.gov/newsroom/public-transit/1161.

Has there been a decline in ridership since COVID-19?

Since the closing of our state in April and more people working from home, there has been a decline in ridership. For the time being, this is a good thing as riders have more space to social distance.

When are the passenger limits being expanded or changed?

The passenger limits onboard buses that began on April 13 was a decision made by the Phoenix City Council. Passenger space on buses is limited for the

safety of the operators and riders. If the rider capacity is reached, bus operators may not allow boardings until additional capacity is available. In order to return to pre-COVID passenger levels, the Phoenix City Council must vote to remove the passenger limitations. For more information on the Phoenix City Council decision visit phoenix.gov/newsroom/public-transit/1078.

When will we be allowed to board through the front doors again?

There has not been a date to reinstate front door boarding. We anticipate it will be this fall. In the near future and throughout 2021, we will be installing operator doors to help provide protection for riders and operators.

Do I have to pay a fare?

Riders are expected to have fare onboard. Bus riders should hold up their pass as they enter to show they have fare. Rail riders should be prepared to show their pass to fare inspectors when on a train or platform.

Where can I buy fare?

All Valley Metro light rail stations have fare vending machines to purchase passes for light rail. A one-ride pass is not eligible to be used on the bus. All other pass types are accepted on the bus. There are additional retail locations where bus and light rail fares may be purchased. To find a retail location near you visit valleymetro.org/where-to-buy.

Are transit centers open?

All transit centers are open for bus and rail service. Select transit center windows are closed to purchase a pass but are providing face coverings. For more information on specific transit centers visit valleymetro.org/COVID19.

Will any projects under construction or in planning be impacted due to COVID-19?

As of right now, construction is continuing on schedule. With how frequently things are changing, it's difficult to predict how/if the COVID-19 pandemic could impact the construction schedule. The project pages will continue to be updated with progress and any delays due to COVID-19.

Where do I get on-going COVID-19 information from Valley Metro?

Valley Metro has created a dedicated webpage to all things relating to COVID-19 at valleymetro.org/COVID19. This webpage has the latest information on service updates, traveling during COVID-19 and any additional changes to Valley Metro due to the pandemic.