

Connecticut Department of Transportation

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06/17/2020

CTDOT Reminds Travelers to Wear Masks - Be Aware of Social Distancing and Stay Safe

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) today announced a number of steps it has taken to prioritize safety for all users of the transportation system as the state enters Phase 2 of its return to pre-COVID operations.

Train and bus service is gradually being augmented to provide service to additional travelers who are beginning to travel again for work and other purposes.

First and most importantly, public transportation users can help protect themselves, fellow riders, and transit workers by wearing face coverings and not riding public transportation when they are sick. This is the most effective way to promote public safety. The Department has also directed service providers to continue intensive daily cleaning of buses and rail cars until further

notice. On the bus system, riders will continue to board through the rear door on buses so equipped. Some buses already feature clear plastic dividers between the bus driver and the general public and CTtransit is moving forward with the procurement and installation of additional driver barriers on other buses. These barriers are expected to be installed before Labor Day 2020.

As the weather has improved and traffic volumes were depressed, the state saw a larger number of individuals walking and biking in many cities and towns. CTDOT is encouraging pedestrians to “Stop the Spread, Bump the Button” at pedestrian crosswalks. Pedestrians are advised – in [English](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DOT/documents/dcommunications/Press_Release/Bump-the-Button-English.png?sc_lang=en&hash=6FE1DE5E2B2B3F0B8FA61E5DA12802EC) ([/web/20200814104219/https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DOT/documents/dcommunications/Press_Release/Bump-the-Button-English.png?sc_lang=en&hash=6FE1DE5E2B2B3F0B8FA61E5DA12802EC](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DOT/documents/dcommunications/Press_Release/Bump-the-Button-English.png?sc_lang=en&hash=6FE1DE5E2B2B3F0B8FA61E5DA12802EC)) and [Spanish](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DOT/documents/dcommunications/Press_Release/Bump-the-Button-Espanol.png?sc_lang=en&hash=8804D6DC4B03C61412459AE4F3ADFF33) ([/web/20200814104219/https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DOT/documents/dcommunications/Press_Release/Bump-the-Button-Espanol.png?sc_lang=en&hash=8804D6DC4B03C61412459AE4F3ADFF33](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DOT/documents/dcommunications/Press_Release/Bump-the-Button-Espanol.png?sc_lang=en&hash=8804D6DC4B03C61412459AE4F3ADFF33)) – to use their elbow or arm, rather than their hands, to push the button for a walk signal. CTDOT has adhered “Bump the Button” decals to call buttons along state roadways and begun to replace agency-managed pedestrian crosswalk call buttons in several large cities, including Hartford and New Haven, with modern, larger call buttons for “bumping.” Additional cities will be considered for these call button upgrades as funding permits.

“In the months since the coronavirus pandemic began, we have worked hard to prepare for a return to something approaching pre-COVID ‘normalcy,’” said CTDOT Commissioner Joseph J. Giulietti. “Travel on buses and trains was restricted to essential travel only. Now, with people re-engaging with our economy, we want to reassure the safety for all users on our trains, buses, roadways and sidewalks. I want to thank our customers and citizens for their patience and understanding, and our operators for their continued support and commitment to the safety of the public.”

Rail service on the New Haven Line, Hartford Line and Shore Line East continues to operate on a limited schedule. Although ridership, once down by more than 90 percent, is gradually beginning to build, there is substantial capacity for returning riders. Danbury Line and Waterbury Line service remains suspended to accelerate ongoing capital projects, while ridership levels remain at historic lows. Bus service continues to operate on regular weekday and weekend schedules, providing service to countless essential workers who have continued to ride throughout the public health emergency. Bus ridership saw reductions of approximately 50 percent during the early weeks of the public health emergency. Ridership has begun to increase modestly following the Phase 1 reopening.

The pandemic also had the effect of dramatically reducing highway traffic volumes while, at the same time, causing a sharp uptick in speeding. CTDOT joined with the Connecticut State Police in a program urging motorists to slow down and “Help Our Heroes” – with electronic message boards along highways promoting the effort. As Connecticut enters Phase 2 of the recovery, CTDOT is continuing to stress dangers posed by speeding and encouraging travelers to observe speed limits, slow down, and watch out for crews in highway work zones.

CTDOT also reminded travelers that the 23 service plazas on I-95, Route 15 and I-395 are fully open for food, fuel, restrooms and other amenities and travel conveniences. Enhanced cleaning services have been implemented. The seven rest areas along I-84, I-91 and I-95 have also returned to normal operations and staffing, with enhanced and more frequent cleaning in common areas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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