News Release

Metra Media Relations 312-322-6776

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metra outlines plans as Chicago area begins to reopen

CHICAGO (May 28, 2020) – As Illinois and the Chicago region move toward establishing a "new normal" in the time of COVID-19, Metra is providing more details about the steps it is taking to ensure passengers will feel safe using its system.

"We know more than ever that passengers need to feel safe and confident using our service," said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski. "We know more than ever the importance of providing a clean, hygienic experience on the platforms and on the trains. And we know more than ever the need to promote safe and healthy practices, such as social distancing and wearing face coverings."

Social distancing/train schedules

Metra will provide an opportunity for responsible physical distancing on its trains as much as and as long as possible. In general, Metra will aim for trains that are no more than about half full: one passenger per two-seater on the lower level and one passenger per every other seat on the upper level. (There will be exceptions for families or others travelling together.)

Metra will continue to use the current alternate weekday schedules (see them at *metrarail.com*) at the start of June but is adding cars to trains to make sure there is plenty of room for passengers to spread out. It will add more cars as needed. If Metra suspects there is potential for a train to become more crowded, it will try to operate an unscheduled train behind that one to aid with serving awaiting passengers, or it will start to add more scheduled trains to the line. Metra will continue to add cars and trains as ridership and travel patterns dictate.

On weekends, it will continue to operate Sunday schedules on Saturdays and Sundays. Saturday trains on the SouthWest Service will remain suspended until further notice.

Metra is asking for all passengers to cooperate and take responsibility for their own actions – we are all in this together. That includes practicing responsible physical distancing, wearing a face covering while riding the train and staying in their seat and not crowding the aisles or vestibules when the train is approaching their destination. Metra will provide plenty of time to safely exit the train. We have posted signs in stations and on trains and will be making announcements reminding customers to wear face coverings and physically distance themselves from others.

Accepting cash fares/$10 All-Day Pass

While Metra will resume accepting cash as payment for fares at ticket windows and on trains on June 1, it strongly encourages passengers to buy their tickets with the Ventra app to limit interactions between crews and passengers. Buying Metra's new $10 All-Day Pass starting June 1 in the app will give passengers a "Touch Less, Pay Less" option to ride trains safely and

affordably. The pass can be purchased with cash, but if you boarded at a station where an agent was available, the conductor will charge an additional $5 fee for buying it on the train. Also, starting immediately, Metra will no longer accept checks on its trains.

Metra will also continue to support doctors, nurses, EMTs, paramedics and other medical personnel by allowing them to ride free on Metra trains at least through June.

Daily cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting of cars

Metra has spent the last few months deep cleaning its more than 1,000 railcars. It also has been studying best practices and experimenting with new cleaning methods, new cleaning solutions and new cleaning machines in a still-evolving effort to identify the most efficient and effective way to ensure cars are as safe as possible.

Current guidelines recommend that transit agencies establish and implement policies and procedures for routine cleaning and disinfection of surfaces frequently touched by employees and passengers to reduce the risk of COVID-19 among employees and passengers. To that end, Metra is cleaning and disinfecting all high-touch areas (such as seats, seat handles, armrests, door handles, handrails, vestibule posts and handholds) as frequently as possible, at least once a day. It also will continue to thoroughly clean and disinfect toilets and toilet areas at least once a day.

Crews will be required to fill out cleaning and sanitation log sheets to document that they have performed all daily tasks. They are also required to report any damage to the car interior that requires repairs, such as vandalism or torn upholstery. Metra's intention is to vigorously inspect cars and maintain the cleanliness it has achieved by deep cleaning, and it wants to exceed industry standards for sanitation.

As the supply becomes available, Metra will be installing additional hand sanitizer dispensers on all cars. There are already dispensers in the toilet areas.

Cleaning and disinfecting stations

Metra continues to clean and disinfect Metra-maintained stations multiple times a week. It will maintain this schedule and will pay special attention to disinfecting high-touch surfaces. Metra is also using extra crews to increase the cleaning and disinfecting of downtown stations. It has asked the municipalities or other entities that maintain the stations in their communities to do the same.

"We will continue to monitor and adapt our cleaning protocols as necessary, always looking for the best way to provide the safest, healthiest ride possible to our passengers," Derwinski said. "Safety always has been and always will be our top priority."

###

About Metra

Metra is one of the largest and most complex commuter rail systems in North America, serving Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake, Kane and McHenry counties in northeastern Illinois. The agency provides service to and from downtown Chicago with 242 stations over 11 routes totaling nearly 500 route miles and approximately 1,200 miles of track. Metra operates nearly 700 trains and provides nearly 281,000 passenger trips each weekday.

Connect with Metra: Facebook | Twitter | YouTube | Instagram | LinkedIn | metrarail.com