

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** (April 7, 2020) - Port Authority of Allegheny County today launched a campaign to remind customers that they should be staying home unless they are essential workers or traveling for life-sustaining reasons.

Riders who must leave home for essential trips like going grocery shopping or picking up prescription medication should consider traveling between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. when fewer people are using public transit.

Riders will soon see signs throughout the Authority's system and on social media reinforcing these messages.

"We want our customers to know we're here for them if they truly need us, but we need to save room for those trips that are absolutely essential," said Port Authority CEO Katharine Kelleman.

Despite a 25 percent reduction in service and an 80 percent drop in weekday ridership, certain trips on a handful of routes remain busy to the point where riders are unable to practice safe physical distancing.

Port Authority has instated several measures over the last month attempting to limit spread of the virus, including reducing service and hours to limit exposure, cleaning and disinfecting vehicles daily, and having riders board and exit from the rear doors. The Authority is also redeploying 60-foot articulated buses on busier trips.

As the virus continues to spread, Port Authority anticipates that an increasing number of its employees will be out of work for COVID-19-related reasons. Port Authority anticipates additional service reductions may also be required.

"We have an obligation to make sure our employees remain safe and healthy," Kelleman said. "But we need to balance that with ensuring that we're able to connect the residents of Allegheny County to essential services during this difficult time."

In addition to decreased ridership, the global pandemic has also posed a substantial threat to the Authority's finances. Port Authority currently projects a \$30 million impact through the end of June due to lower passenger and

advertising revenue, and increased costs. The Authority is working to determine the impact on state and local subsidies, which could more than double the \$30 million estimate.

Port Authority is eligible for \$141.75 million in federal funding that has been made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act signed into law by President Trump on March 27. The Authority is reviewing the CARES Act to determine allowable uses.

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