New York University
School of Global
Public Health

PANDEMIC RESOURCE GUIDE FOR NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT WORKERS 2023

How to prepare and advocate for yourself as an essential worker in a future pandemic.

This resource is part of the New York University (NYU) Transit Worker Study. It was written by researchers at the NYU School of Global Public health who have no affiliation the the MTA.

This guide was created specifically for New York City Transit Workers. Preparing for and experiencing an infectious disease emergency is likely different for every transit worker based on the particular job and own unique health history.

Written based on post-pandemic scientific research as well as interviews with transit workers who worked during the first 100 days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the authors recognize that this was a very intense and difficult time where many transit workers lives were lost. All New Yorkers owe much to the NYC transit workers who continued to work through the pandemic.

When faced with a future pandemic, this guide is intended to offer resources for the transit workforce to understand their rights and advocate for safe and healthy working conditions. Further, this resource provides an overview of general information and recommendations to prepare for and reduce the spread of many contact, droplet and airborne infectious diseases.

This guide is not intended to provide medical guidance for a future outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic; those events require frequent and specific updates specific to the particular pathogen.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1. Click on the Table of Contents to be directed to the topic you are interested in. It will list the amount of time each section takes to read.
2. Once at the page, use underlined text that will bring you to other websites with additional information.
3. If you want to return to the Table of Contents, Click the "Return to Table of Contents" Link in the top left corner of most pages.
4. Note that active links will navigate towards sites with relevant and more current information as this resource ages.

It takes all of you **working together** to keep New York running and safe.

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Medical Terms: What does it mean?

- ***Airborne diseases***: Diseases that are transmitted through the air by respiratory droplets spread from the nose and mouth through coughing, sneezing, talking, or breathing.
- ***Asymptomatic infection***: A person not showing any signs or symptoms of a disease or illness, but tests positive and can spread it to other people.
- ***Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)***: The United States government service organization that protects and promotes the public's health.
- ***Community spread***: The spread of an illness in a particular location. (Ex: A neighborhood, a large apartment building, or gathering place.)
- ***COVID-19***: The disease caused by the coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. Symptoms can include cough, wheezing, fever, fatigue, headache, Long-Covid, or in severe cases, death.
- ***DOHMH***: The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (New York City health department).
- ***Epidemic***: A large occurrence of an infectious disease in a region or country during a specific time period.
- ***Immunity***: The body's ability to fight off or resist getting an infection.
- ***Immune system***: A system of cells in the body that reduce the likelihood of getting sick and contribute to fighting off infection.
- ***Incubation period***: The period of time between exposure to an infection and the beginning of symptoms. (Ex: May be asymptomatic but carrying the disease.)
- ***Infection***: The process where organisms enter the body and cause disease.

See another glossary *here*.

Medical Terms: What does it mean?

- ***Mitigation**:* The act of reducing the severity, seriousness, or painfulness of something (Ex: Trying to mitigate the spread of a disease.)
- ***MTA**:* The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (New York City).
- ***Outbreak**:* An unexpected, rapid increase of a particular illness in a small area, usually a town or community.
- ***Pandemic**:* A worldwide spread of disease, affecting many different people and countries.
- ***PPE**:* Personal Protective Equipment, such as masks, face barriers, or shields often used to reduce airborne disease spread.
- ***Quarantine**:* The time period when people who have been exposed or infected with disease isolate themselves from others to reduce the continued spread.
- ***Social distancing**:* Putting physical distance between yourself and other people in order to slow the spread of respiratory disease.
- ***Symptoms**:* A physical or mental condition that is an indicator of disease.
- ***Transmission**:* Disease or illness being transported from one person to another (or animal) that can occur in various ways.
- ***TWU**:* The Transport Workers Union (New York City).
- ***Vaccine**:* Usually, but not always, an injected shot, used to stimulate immunity in an individual from a specific disease. Vaccines go through various testing and trials to ensure accuracy and safety to use in various populations.
- ***Virus**:* A tiny infective agent that is able to multiply only within the living cells of a host, different from bacteria.
- ***WHO**:* The World Health Organization; an internationally recognized health agency.

Frequently Asked Questions

See → Links for More Information

- Do I need a vaccine if I have already had the disease?
- I am fully vaccinated, do I still have to wear a mask as work?
  - Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination
- Do I need a booster vaccination?
  - Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines
  - Understanding the Science behind Boosters
- If I have the disease, when can I return to work?
  - Stay Home When You Are Sick
- What should I do if I have been sick or think I have been in contact with someone who has been sick?
  - If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone
- Can my job require me to prove that I got vaccinated?
  - Can Your Employer Require That You Get Vaccinated? It Depends Where You Live
- I'm concerned about workplace violence associated with disease prevention policies. Are there any helpful resources?
  - Workplace Violence Prevention Resources
  - Guideline for Preventing Workplace Violence (for Healthcare and Social Service Workers)
  - Occupational Violence Training
- How can I cope with workplace stress?
  - Coping with Stress at Work
  - How to Handle Stress at Work
- What mental health resources do I have access to?
  - Headspace Meditation/Mindfulness Videos
  - 13 Mental Health Resources That Are Absolutely Free
- Who can I contact for additional support?
  - Find Help

Learn more *here*.

What is a pandemic?

A pandemic is when an epidemic (of an infectious disease) occurs worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries, and usually affecting a large number of people. (WHO)

What is an Infectious Disease?

An Infectious disease is a disease caused by a pathogenic organism (commonly thought of as a germ) which can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. (WHO)

How does a new disease like Covid-19 become a pandemic?

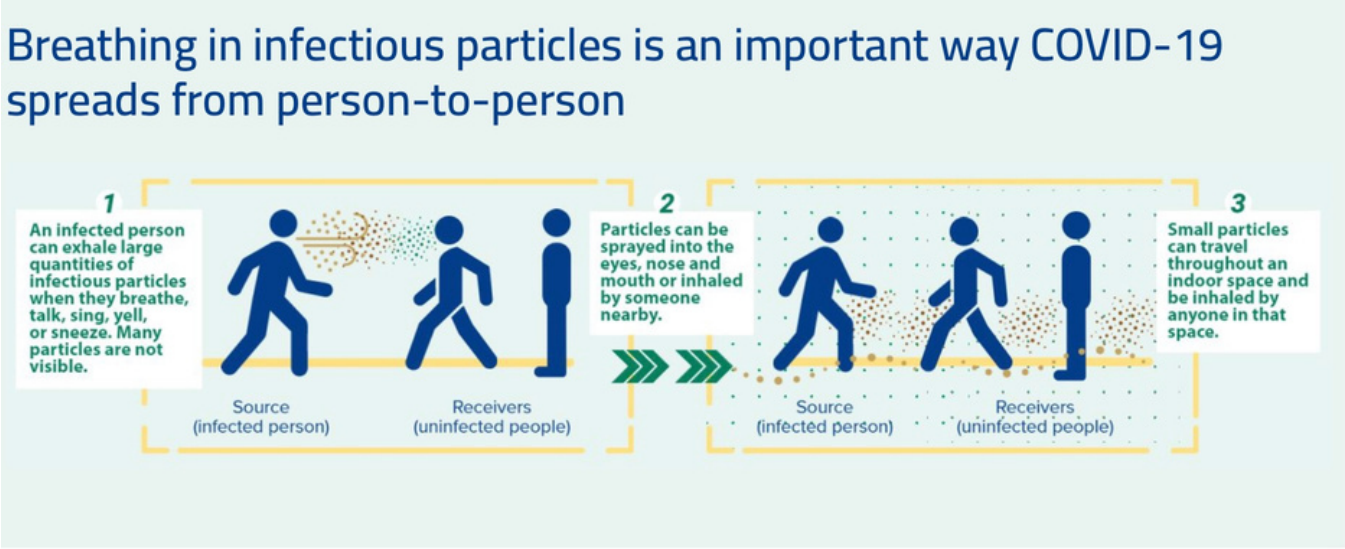
A new disease generally starts as an **outbreak**, which means many cases might appear suddenly within a local area like a neighborhood or town. If the outbreak cases grow, spreading throughout a larger region or country, it is called an **epidemic**, and when the disease has spread across the world affecting many people it is called a **pandemic**.

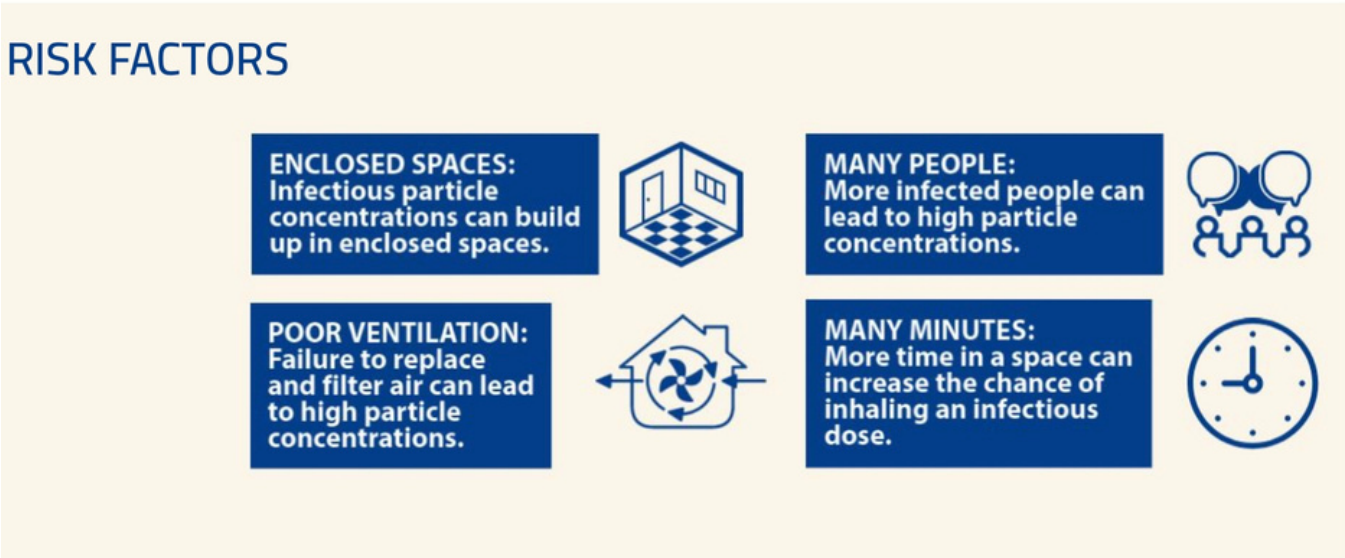
Why is it that an outbreak today is more likely to become a pandemic compared to 50 years ago?

There are a number of reasons why the chance of another pandemic occurring is increasing. Perhaps the primary reason is that because travel has increased so much in the last 50 years, it is no longer uncommon for people to fly to several continents within a short period of time. This means that an infected traveler could spread a disease to many people in several continents within just a few days. Climate change is another reason, as it creates conditions more favorable to the spread of many infectious diseases, and climate change has caused some animals to change their habitat, moving closer to dense urban areas.

Covid-19 Facts Page

- COVID-19 is a disease (infection) caused by a respiratory virus named SARS-CoV-2.
- Respiratory diseases affect the parts of the body involved with breathing, such as sinuses, throat, airways, or lungs.
- As of July, 2023, there have been over 750 million confirmed cases, and almost 7 Million deaths worldwide.





Learn more *here*.

6 Lessons We Learned From the Covid - 19 Pandemic

#1 Masks are effective

They provide a physical barrier that can stop droplets emitted from coughing, yelling, singing, sneezing, or laughing from spreading from an infected person to a non-infected person.

#2 Vaccines lesson your chance of dying from Covid -19

While the vaccines may not always prevent Covid-19, and may cause side effects, numerous studies show that in the United States, people who received the Covid-19 vaccine had a much lower death rate compared to those who didn't take the Covid-19 vaccine.

#3 We need to take Mental Health More Seriously

Mental Health problems surged during the pandemic as people had to struggle with issues like depression, isolation, losing a loved one to Covid-19, and day-to-day juggling of work and children.

#4 Poor indoor ventilation increases chances of getting Covid-19

Proper indoor ventilation is key to reducing risk of Covid-19. Numerous studies reveal that the transmission risk is much lower if the indoor space is well ventilated.

#5 Physical distancing and avoiding crowds reduces the spread of Covid-19

Because some people are infected with Covid-19, yet don't have any symptoms (asymptomatic), its impossible to know who around you has COVID. Keeping your distance lessens the chance of being infected with Covid-19.

#6 Covid-19 rarely spreads through touching surfaces

In the beginning of the pandemic it was thought that Covid-19 spread by touching surfaces (fomites). But scientists soon learned that the chance of transmission through surfaces is very small. Covid-19 is primarily spread through respiratory droplets and aerosols when an infected person breathes, coughs, sneezes, sings, shouts, or talks.

GET YOUR INFORMATION FROM A TRUSTED SOURCE

It is important that we are looking to the experts for our most recent health information. In the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw mass amounts of misinformation that was fueled by social media. Remember, anyone can say anything on the internet, so check your sources and do your research before believing everything that you read. Here are a few examples of organizations that share their information based on the most recent scientific evidence

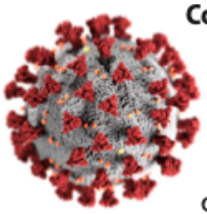
Nationally-Trusted Health Sources		
Agency	**Role**	**How it Relates to Transportation**
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Acts as the nation's health protection agency to increase health security including infectious diseases.	Like transit, the CDC is fast-paced and can provide status updates through disease tracking.
World Health Organization (WHO)	WHO works worldwide to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable.	The WHO will update country offices with disease threats. This will come down to alert transit of possible upcoming threats.
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	Mission to help people before, during and after disasters.	FEMA has resources to support local workers through emergencies.

Attached below are CDC guidelines, as an example from our most current pandemic on workers during the pandemic. You can always get updates from these trusted sources as you seek information before and during a pandemic or infectious disease breakout.

What Transit Workers Need to Know about COVID-19

RAIL TRANSIT OPERATORS

Accessible version: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/rail-transit-operator.html



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2. Symptoms often include a fever, cough, or shortness of breath. Our understanding of how the virus spreads is evolving as we learn more about it, so check the **CDC website** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html) for the latest information.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:

Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).

Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

Recent studies indicate that the virus can be spread by people before they develop symptoms (pre-symptomatic) or who never develop symptoms (asymptomatic). It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at **higher risk for more serious complications** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html) from COVID-19.

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html) in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. Cloth face coverings may prevent people who don't know they have the virus from transmitting it to others. These face coverings are not surgical masks or respirators and are not appropriate substitutes for them in workplaces where masks or respirators are recommended or required.

As a rail transit operator, how can I protect myself?

For rail transit operators, potential sources of exposure include having close contact with a passenger with COVID-19, by contacting surfaces touched or handled by a person with COVID-19, or by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

- Limit close contact with others by maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet, when possible.
- Avoid touching surfaces often touched by transit passengers.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, including those in the train cockpit commonly touched by the operator, following the directions on the cleaning product's label.
- Use gloves if required to touch surfaces contaminated by body fluids.
- Proper **hand hygiene** (https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html) is an important infection control measure. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Key times to clean hands include:
  - » Before, during, and after preparing food
  - » Before eating food
  - » After using the toilet
  - » After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Additional workplace-specific times to clean hands include:
  - » Before and after work shifts
  - » Before and after work breaks
  - » After touching frequently touched surfaces, such as fareboxes and handrails
  - » After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

cdc.gov/coronavirus

CS 316403-C 04/23/2020

Learn more *here*.

What steps should my employer take?

Employers of rail transit operators should develop a COVID-19 health and safety plan to protect employees according to **CDC Business Guidance** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html). This plan should be shared with you and your coworkers. Your employer should:

- **Take steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if an employee is sick** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html). Actively encourage sick employees to stay home. Sick employees should not return to work until **the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html), in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Provide information on who to contact if employees become sick.
- Implement flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices. Consider drafting non-punitive emergency sick leave policies if sick leave is not offered to some or all employees.
- Designate someone to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Provide employees with correct information about COVID-19, how it spreads, and risk of exposure.
- Provide employees training on proper **hand washing** (https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html) practices and other routine infection control precautions. This will help prevent the spread of many diseases, including COVID-19.
- Provide employees access to soap, clean running water, and drying materials, or alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol at their worksite.
- Provide employees with appropriate gloves when necessary and provide training on properly using them.
- Provide disposable disinfectant wipes so that surfaces commonly touched by the rail transit operator can be wiped down. To disinfect, use **products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2** (https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2), diluted household bleach solutions, or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and are appropriate for the surface. Provide employees training on manufacturer's directions for use.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.
- Place posters that encourage **staying home when sick** (https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/tools-resources/educational-materials.html), **covering coughs and sneezes** (https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html) and **washing hands often** (https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html) at the entrance to the workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
- Reach out to local public health officials to establish ongoing communications to facilitate access to relevant information before and during a local outbreak.
- Follow all applicable federal regulations and public health agency guidelines.

Where can I get more information?

Stay informed. Talk to your employer, supervisor, union representative, or agency personnel who are responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. See these sources for more information on worker exposures to COVID-19:

CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

NIOSH Workplace Safety and Health Topic website: www.cdc.gov/niosh/emres/2019_ncov.html

CDC COVID-19 website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/

OSHA COVID-19 website: www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html

CDCINFO: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) | TTY: 1-888-232-6348 | website: https://wwwn.cdc.gov/dcs/ContactUs/Form

COVID-19 Best Practice Information: Public Transportation Distancing

Background

- Public transportation is one of the essential services operating during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and is vital to Opening America Up Again. This document describes strategies that public transit agencies may take to protect the health and safety of transit customers and frontline employees as we continue to battle the pandemic and progress into recovery.
- The following is a list of key findings and considerations for jurisdictions and communities regarding ongoing COVID-19 operations across the country. These are best practices for consideration and do not constitute and should not be considered as guidance in any way.

Key Considerations

- Individuals should only use public transit for essential travel. This includes travel for essential personnel including, but not limited to, first responders, hospital staff, critical government employees, grocery, and pharmacy workers and others who must work during the public health emergency.[1]
- Individuals should avoid using public transportation if they are feeling ill. Instead, they should call their doctor before leaving home to determine if using public transportation is wise.[2]
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed factsheets to aid bus transit operators, rail transit operators, transit maintenance workers, and transit station workers during COVID-19. The factsheets can be found here.[3]

Lessons Learned Related to COVID-19 and Public Transportation

Adjusting Operations

- **Potential Best Practice:** Major cities are requiring passengers to use the rear door when boarding and exiting local buses to protect employees and riders. Many transit providers are suspending fare collection during

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[1] 2020 WMATA, Weekend: Metro to again run limited bus, rail service for essential travel only, https://www.wmata.com/about/news/Weekend-Service-April-4-5.cfm
[2] 2020 CDC, Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html
[3] 2020 CDC, Transportation and Delivery: Plan, prepare, and respond to coronavirus disease 2019, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/transportation/index.html

FEMA

Learn more *here*.

this time to allow for rear door boarding and to limit the exposure between drivers and passengers. Passengers with accessibility/mobility needs may request to use the front door to access the ramp.[4]

- **Area for Improvement**: Some bus operators are not able to automatically open rear doors. Commuters may have to manually open rear doors, which could further expose them to COVID-19.[5]
  - **Mitigating Action/Resource:** Transit services are cleaning all vehicles daily and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces multiple times a day.[6] Additional cleaning and disinfecting guidance from the CDC, can be found here.[7]
- **Potential Best Practice:** Numerous transit systems have reduced services to increase safety for operators while discouraging nonessential trips to decrease the risk to those who have to use public transportation.[8]

Managing Overcrowding

- **Potential Best Practice**: METRO in Harris County, Texas, has reduced seating by 50 percent by tagging seats as unavailable in order to adhere to social distancing measures. Once buses have reached capacity, digital signs advise individuals to wait for next bus.[9]
- **Potential Best Practice:** Transit systems have placed passenger limits on fixed-route services. Once a bus is full, the driver will contact a dispatcher to send another vehicle for remaining passengers. [10]
- **Potential Best Practice:** Transit providers can install a transparent protective barrier to create a partition between drivers and passengers.[11]
- **Potential Best Practice:** To facilitate social distancing on all Pittsburgh Port Authority vehicles, priority seating areas will be kept in the upright position.[12]
- **Potential Best Practice:** Mark aisle seats and seats in every other row as unavailable.[13]

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[4] 2020 ATU, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Alert, https://www.atu.org/coronavirusresources/STRAT_COVID19Leaflet2.pdf
[5] 2020 Chicago Office of the Mayor, Mayor Lightfoot Announces CTA To Provide Rear Door Boarding, New System to Reduce Crowding on All Buses, https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2020/april/BusRearDoorEntry.html
[6] 2020 Chicago Office of the Mayor, Mayor Lightfoot Announces CTA To Provide Rear Door Boarding, New System to Reduce Crowding on All Buses, https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2020/april/BusRearDoorEntry.html
[7] 2020 CDC, Interim Recommendations for U.S. Community Facilities with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html
[8] 2020 Mass Transit, CA: Metrolink to reduce service by 30% amid coronavirus outbreak, https://www.masstransitmag.com/rail/news/21131434/ca-metrolink-to-reduce-service-by-30-amid-coronavirus-outbreak
[9] 2020 Ride Metro, METRO Service Modifications and Safety Measures in Response to COVID-19, https://www.ridemetro.org/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx
[10] 2020 Danville VA, Danville Transit Places Fixed-Route Passenger Limit, http://www.danvilleva.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=4306
[11] 2020 Connecticut Department of Transportation, CTDOT Announces Immediate Changes to Bus Operations, https://portal.ct.gov/DOT/News-from-the-Connecticut-Department-of-Transportation/2020/CTDOT-ANNOUNCES-IMMEDIATE-CHANGES-TO-BUS-OPERATIONS
[12] 2020 Port Authority, Press Release, https://www.portauthority.org/siteassets/inside-the-pa/media-center/press-releases/2020/socialdistancing.pdf
[13] 2020 BG Daily News, More Public transit changes coming to aid social distancing, https://www.bgdailynews.com/news/more-public-transit-changes-coming-to-aid-social-distancing/article_141f8ee6-ccf3-5518-88ac-06e55857df4a.html

Are You Worried You Have Long Covid?

Long COVID may not affect everyone the same way. People with Long COVID may experience health problems from different types and combinations of symptoms. Though most patients' symptoms slowly improve with time, **speaking with your healthcare provider** about the symptoms you are experiencing after having COVID-19 could help determine if you might have Long COVID and give you treatment suggestions.

General symptoms

- Tiredness or fatigue that interferes with daily life
- Symptoms that get worse after physical or mental effort
- Fever

Respiratory and heart symptoms

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Cough
- Chest pain
- Fast-beating or pounding heart (also known as heart palpitations)

Neurological symptoms

- Difficulty thinking or concentrating (sometimes referred to as "brain fog")
- Headache
- Sleep problems
- Dizziness when you stand up (lightheadedness)
- Pins-and-needles feelings
- Change in smell or taste
- Depression or anxiety

Digestive symptoms

- Diarrhea
- Stomach pain

Other symptoms

- Joint or muscle pain
- Rash
- Changes in menstrual cycles

CDC Long COVID page

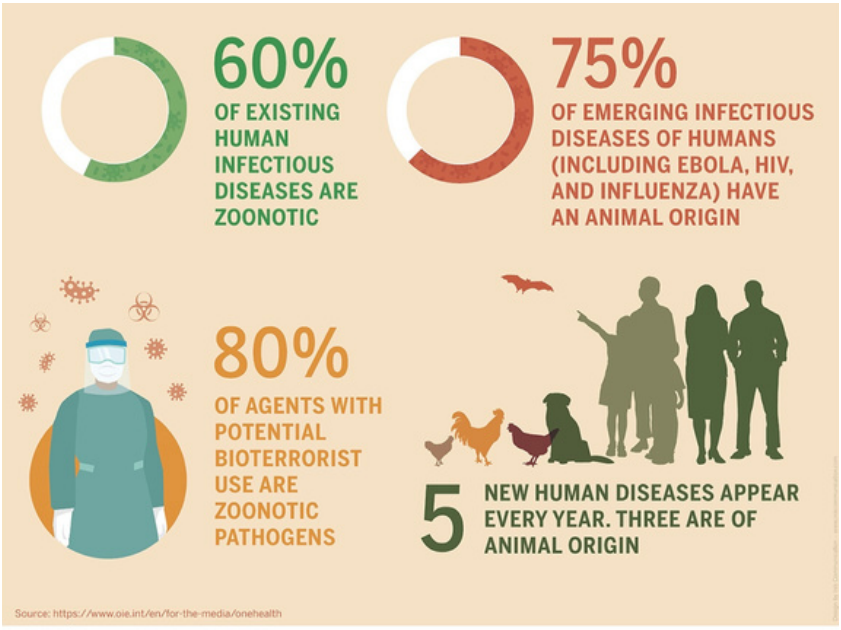
How to Prepare for Another Pandemic

Will There Be Another Pandemic, and When Might it Occur?

It is likely that another pandemic will occur in our lifetime. It might be similar to Covid-19, or it might be very different, presenting with different symptoms, or different ways in which it spreads from person to person. It could be less contagious, but it could also be much more contagious.

The odds of another pandemic are increasing. This is partly because as the population of the world has increased, more people live near natural areas which have historically been limited to animal life.

This means there is more interaction between animals and people, which creates more opportunities for a disease to jump from an animal to a person. The diseases that occur this way are called ZOONOTIC. Covid-19 is of a zoonotic origin.



Source: *CDC One Health Information* ***here***.

Aside from Covid-19, these are other well known zoonotic diseases:

- Ebola
- Avian Influenza (bird flu)
- SARS
- MERS
- Rabies
- Lyme disease
- some forms of tuberculosis.

While the odds are that another pandemic will be of zoonotic origin, ***there are many other infectious diseases***, some of which could also lead to a pandemic.

There are many known infectious diseases. Click on a diseases below for more information

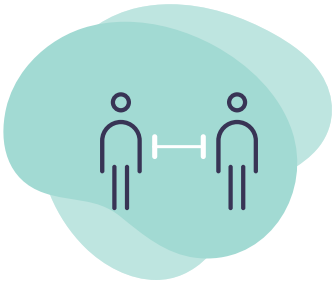
Infection Control Guidelines

- Antibiotic (antimicrobial) Resistance
- Anthrax
- Avian influenza (H5N1)
- Avian influenza (H7N9)
- Blood safety
- Botulism
- Brucellosis
- Campylobacteriosis
- Campylobacter jejuni
- C. difficile
- Chikungunya
- Cholera
- Clostridium perfringens
- Community-Acquired Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (CA-MRSA)
- COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease, SARS-CoV-2)
- Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (variant CJD)
- Cryptococcosis
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Cyclosporiasis (cyclospora)
- Dengue fever
- Diphteria
- E. coli (Escherichia coli) infection
- Ebola virus disease
- Emerging Respiratory Pathogens
- Flu (influenza)
- Foodborne, Waterborne and Zoonotic Infections
- Giardia infection (giardiasis)
- Hand, foot and mouth disease (Enterovirus 71, EV 71)
- Hantavirus
- Haemophilus influenzae (type b and non-b)
- Hepatitis
- Histoplasmosis
- HIV/AIDS
- Hookworm disease
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Invasive Pneumococcal Disease
- Japanese encephalitis
- Lassa fever
- Legionella (Legionnaires' disease and Pontiac fever)
- Leptospirosis
- Listeriosis (Listeria)
- Lyme disease
- Lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus
- Malaria
- Marburg virus disease
- Measles
- Invasive Meningococcal Disease
- Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus
- Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)
- Mpox (monkeypox)
- Mumps
- Noroviruses
- Non-polio enterovirus infections
- Non-Tuberculous Mycobacterium (NTM) Infections
- Notifiable Diseases
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Plague
- Pneumococcal
- Poliomyelitis (Polio)
- Prion diseases
- Psittacosis
- Q Fever
- Rabies
- Rift Valley Fever
- Ringworm
- Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever
- Roundworm
- Rubella
- Salmonella
- SARS
- Scarlet Fever
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)
- Shigellosis
- Shingles (Herpes Zoster)
- Simian Foamy Virus
- Smallpox (eradicated)
- Syphilis
- Tetanus
- Toxoplasmosis
- Trichinellosis
- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Tularemia
- Typhoid fever
- Valley fever
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Vibriosis (infection with Vibrio)
- West Nile virus
- Yellow fever
- Zika virus

PREPARATION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

These strategies are to be used as basic guidelines that may limit your exposure to an infectious disease. First follow federal and local guidelines, then supplement with these additional strategies as you feel necessary depending on the severity of disease.

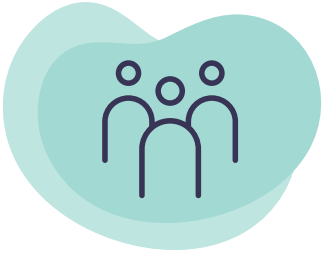
Wear masks while at work according to local guidelines



Keep your distance as possible from coworkers

Cough and sneeze into elbow even if wearing a mask

Attend your designated shift to reduce worker density



Avoid conflict with potentially dangerous riders

Stay home if you feel sick and let your supervisor know

"When it comes to worker safety, we should be driven by the 'precautionary principle' that reasonable steps to reduce risk should not await scientific certainty about the nature of the hazard or risk."

Source: NIEHS Covid-19 Response training tool

The following are reasonable steps management can take to help keep transit workers safe:

1. Reduce Density

Limit the amount of workers and passengers, while still following safety protocols , and keeping necessary posts filled.

2. Implement the use of Barriers and Partitions

In workrooms and buses

3. Increase Ventilation

For all transportation and **clean ventilation systems monthly.**

4. Provide Appropriate PPE

Management should provide approved personal protective equipment Give new masks frequently to ensure proper coverage and cleanliness of mask.

5. Frequently clean trains, buses, and stations

Increase cleaning staff and protocols for more thorough and daily cleaning. Include monthly cleaning of ventilation ducts for clean air.

6. Communicate Clearly with Workers

*Learn more about clear communication in the workplace **here**.*

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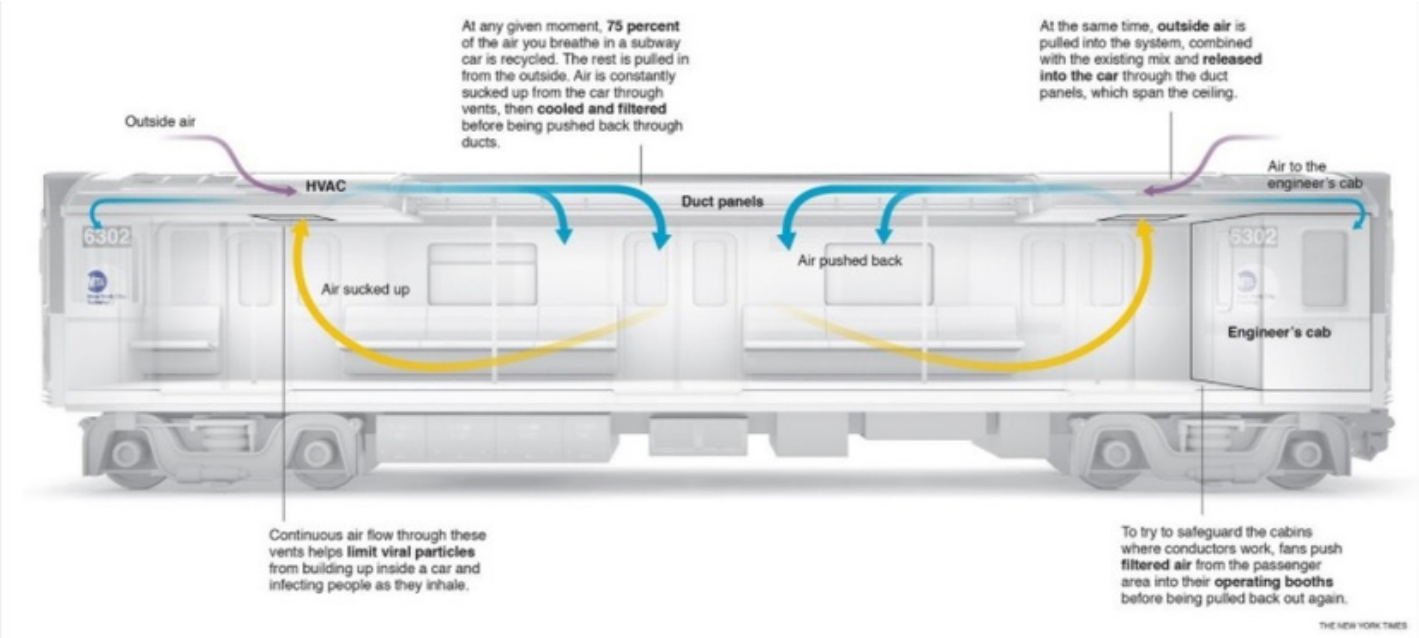
VENTILATION

Learn more from the New York Times *here*.

How the NYC Subway Ventilation System Works

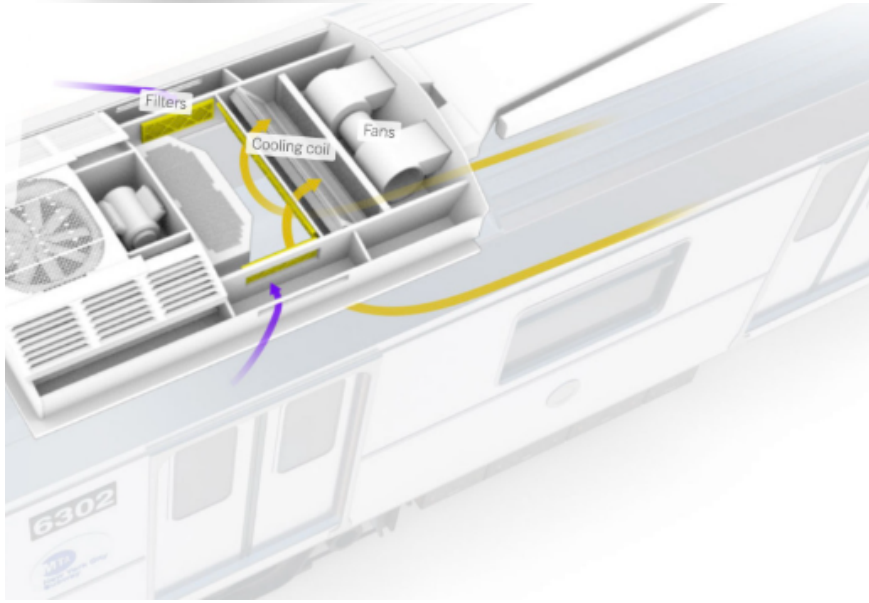


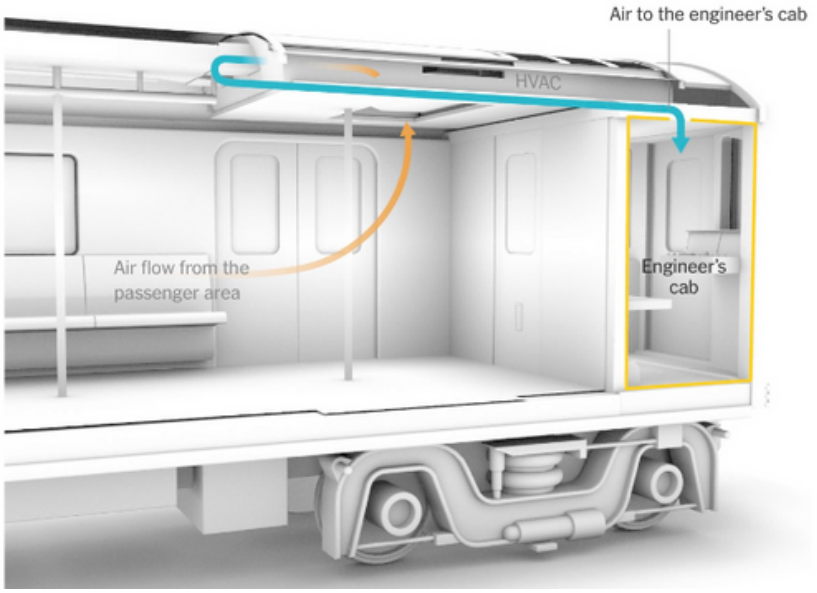
Air is pulled up into vents and filtered before it is released back down through ducts.

Learn more from the New York Times *here*.

Most NYC Subways Have Two Filters Systems on each End of the Car

- Unfortunately, some viral particles do slip through. However, the ventilation system works to replace 100% of the air pulled into the vents about every three minutes.
- The filters catch and block most virus causing droplets and aerosols released when passengers sneeze, cough and sometimes just breathe, but they don't catch 100%.





To keep conductors as safe as possible, the area where they work receives 100% filtered air.

Cleaning Your Work Station Helps to Keep You and Your Co-workers Healthy

1. Before you start your shift, protect yourself by using disinfectant wipes to clean surfaces touched frequently. You may not know if the person who worked the shift before you is healthy, and disinfectants kill most surface level viruses and bacteria.
2. Hand sanitizers are always recommended when working in areas with many people.
3. If you feel you might be sick, clean your station again at the end of each shift to reduce the spread of disease.

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Accountability & Caring

How you look out for others says a lot about your character. Ask yourself:

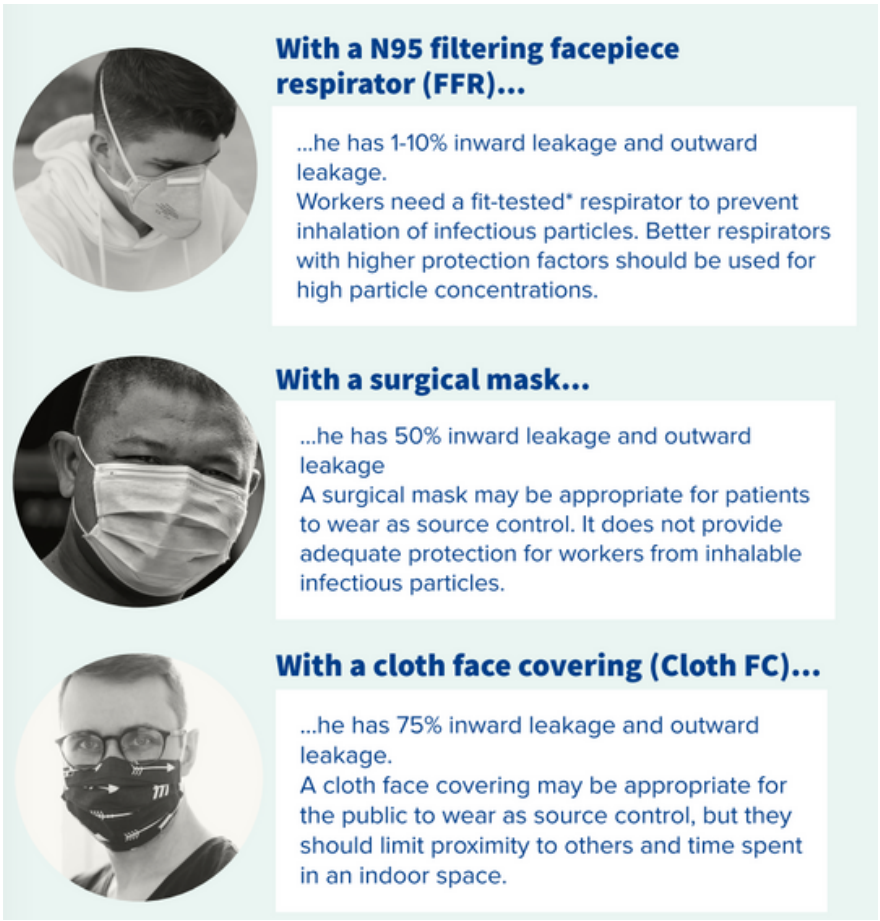
- Am I leaving my work station in a way that I would want to find it?
- How am I treating other transit workers and would I want to be treated in a similar manner?
- How can I support surrounding departments and visiting workers feel welcome?
- How can I pay it forward in gratitude to my coworkers who go the extra mile for others?

Look out for each other!

Tips for Mask use and Storage

There may come a time when mask use is important again to protect yourself and your loved ones from carrying disease

- If available, try to use a N95 mask (if able to be fitted to your face for best use) as they have the best protection. If you cannot access a N95, use a surgical mask to still have some protection.
- Take off mask by holding the strings attached to your ears, avoiding too much touching of the face covering to reduce germ spread
- When eating, place the bag in a breathable bag or pocket
- If using a cloth mask, make sure to wash regularly as it gets wet or dirty.
- Disposable surgical masks should be thrown out after one use but often need to be used multiple times due to limited resources, in this case, try to keep your mask as clean as possible.



Learn about fit testing *here*.

Access this Resource *here*.

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Learn more ***here***.

IMPORTANT STEPS TO CHOOSING A MASK

Make sure your mask fits

- Pick a mask with multiple layers to keep your respiratory droplets in and others' out.
- Choose a mask with a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top.

For extra protection

Wear a disposable mask under a cloth mask

Knot and tuck ear loops of a 3-ply mask

Use a mask fitter or brace over a disposable or cloth mask

Respirators must form a seal to the face to work properly.

- Follow manufacturer instructions.
- Check for markings on N95, KN95, and other respirators that indicate the product is authentic.

CDC

cdc.gov/coronavirus

CS 329987-A | 01/31/2022

Improve How Your Mask Protects You

Accessible version: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html

When choosing a mask, look at how well it fits, how well it filters the air, and how many layers it has:

1. Make sure your mask fits snugly against your face.
2. Pick a mask with layers to keep your respiratory droplets in and others' out.

Do

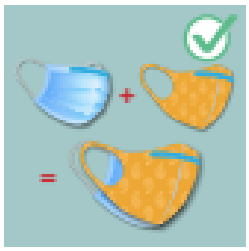
Improve fit

Choose a mask with a **nose wire**

Use a **mask fitter** or **brace**

Check that it **fits snugly** over your nose, mouth, and chin

Add layers of material



2 ways to layer

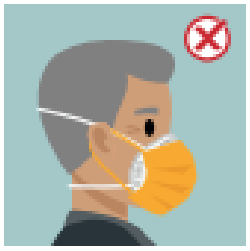
- Use a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric
- Wear a disposable mask underneath a cloth mask. The cloth mask should push the edges of the disposable mask against your face.

Make sure you can see and breathe easily

Knot and tuck ear loops of a 3-ply mask

Do NOT

Combine two disposable masks



Combine a KN95 mask with any other mask.

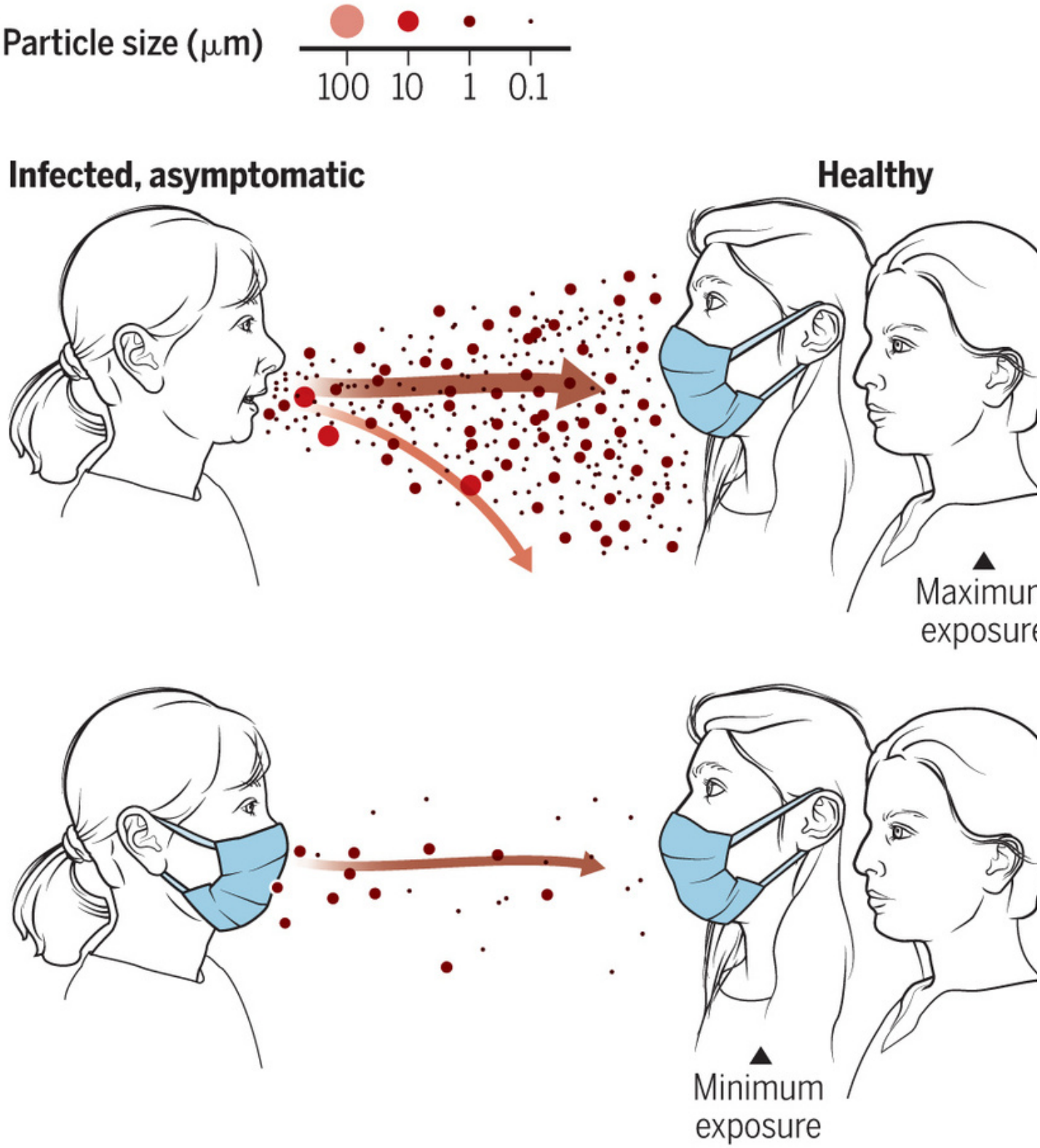
CDC

CS 321019-A 03/11/2021

cdc.gov/coronavirus

Masks reduce airborne transmission

Infectious aerosol particles can be released during breathing and speaking by asymptomatic infected individuals. No masking maximizes exposure, whereas universal masking results in the least exposure.



Additional information found *here*.

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HOW COVID-19 VACCINES WORK

WE CAN DO THIS

What Vaccines Do

Vaccines are medicines that help protect you from germs that can make you sick.

Vaccines teach your immune system—your body's defenses against infection—how to recognize and attack harmful germs.

Kinds of COVID Vaccines

Two kinds of COVID vaccines are available in the United States:

- mRNA
- Protein subunit

The COVID Vaccines Are Safe and Effective

Most people in the U.S. have gotten a COVID vaccine. Results from ongoing medical studies and safety monitoring show that the vaccines are safe. For the best protection, stay up to date with your COVID vaccine.

How the COVID Vaccines Work

The different kinds of COVID vaccines basically do the same thing:

- They either directly introduce your immune system to a harmless piece of the virus called a spike protein or give your cells the instructions to make the spike protein.
- The spike protein looks like an invading germ and triggers your immune system.
- Your immune system learns how to identify and attack the virus. But the vaccines don't contain the coronavirus, so you can't get COVID from them.

mRNA Vaccines Under the Microscope

mRNA (which stands for messenger ribonucleic acid) is a tiny molecule that cells make all the time. These molecules have instructions that cells use to do different things.

For the COVID mRNA vaccines, scientists made an mRNA molecule with the spike protein instructions. mRNA is fragile and can't pass through a cell's wall on its own. To get around this problem, the mRNA molecules are coated in fat. The fat protects the mRNA and easily connects with a cell's wall so the mRNA can get inside. Your cells break down and get rid of the mRNA once they get the spike protein instructions.

WHAT'S A SPIKE PROTEIN?

All over the surface of the virus that causes COVID are spikes made of protein. In fact, it's this crown of spike proteins that coronaviruses are named for.

Corona means crown in Latin. These spike proteins are like keys that unlock your cells and allow the virus to enter and infect them.

Protein Subunit Vaccines Under the Microscope

A protein subunit vaccine contains a harmless piece of the germ. For the COVID protein subunit vaccine, scientists used moth cells to create copies of the spike protein. The vaccine also has an ingredient called an adjuvant—made from soapbark trees—that increases the immune response to the spike proteins in the vaccine.

For more information, visit CDC.GOV/CORONAVIRUS.

Learn more *here*.

A Guide to Understanding Your Community's Needs Regarding COVID-19 Vaccines.

Reducing Supply Chain Issues for Resources

MTA workers insights were taken from focus groups following the Covid-19 pandemic. The main repeated commented was how masks were limited at the start of the pandemic and this was extremely frustrating to the health and safety of all workers. Here are some tips on what you can do depending on your role to prepare for a pandemic scenario. The supply chain is the journey of raw materials and goods before their assembly and eventually sale.

Position	Supply Chain Preparedness
Government Offices/Mayor	Consider allocating budget to pandemic preparedness and letting MTA know how to disseminate these funds and resources.
MTA Upper-Mid level Management	Find resources ahead of a pandemic, look into stockpiling materials with government budgets such as masks, gloves, and other supples.
Local 100 TWU Upper Management	Advocate to the MTA on ensuring resources are available and how to get access to them in the event of an emergency.
Union Representatives	Make sure that your staff knows about resource reserves. In a pandemic scenario ensure that these resources are provided to all workers.
All MTA Workers	If not given a mask, raise with your Union representative.

Home Health: Reducing Infectious Disease in the Home

Infectious diseases are often brought home from various locations such as schools, workplaces, or social events. Below is some guidance for how to reduce the spread of an infectious disease (in this instance Covid-19) in your home.

World Health Organization

Home care for people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Take care of yourself and your family

For caregivers

Ensure the ill person rests, drinks plenty of fluids and eats nutritious food.

Wear a medical mask when in the same room with an ill person. Do not touch the mask or face during use and discard it afterward.

Frequently clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based rub, especially:

- after any type of contact with the ill person or their surroundings
- before, during and after preparing food
- before eating
- after using the toilet

Use dedicated dishes, cups, eating utensils, towels and bedlinens for the ill person. Wash dishes, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedlinens used by the ill person with soap and water.

Identify frequently touched surfaces by the ill person and clean and disinfect them daily.

Call your health care facility immediately if the ill person worsens or experiences difficulty breathing.

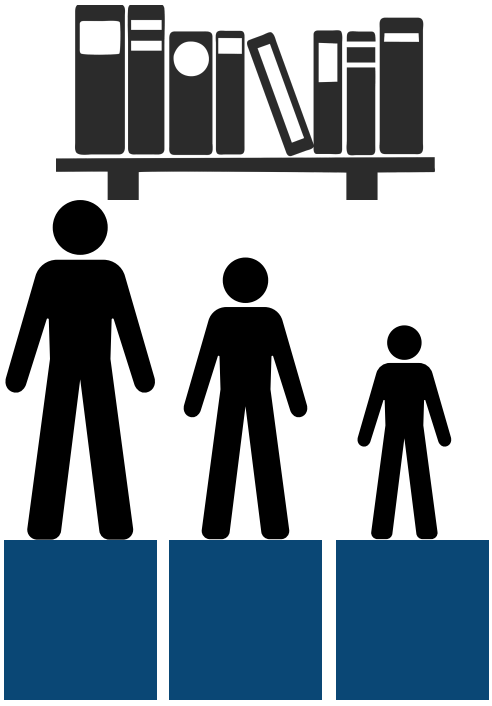
EPI·WiN www.who.int/covid-19

UNDERSTANDING EQUITY

Health Equity. What is it?

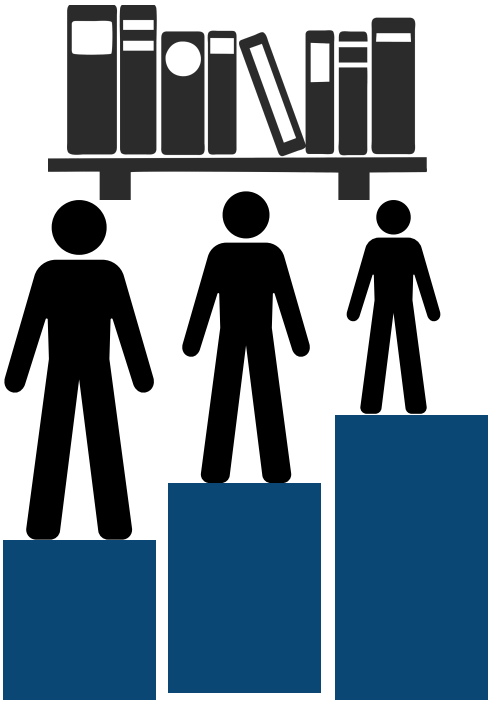
Health equity is defined as, the state in which everyone has a fair opportunity to address health needs. This term plays into the concept of the social determinants of health, in which everyone has different resources, environments, and qualities that contribute to their access to health care. Health equity focuses on giving resources to those who need more resources to have the same level of health as another individual with more built in support.

Equality



Everyone gets the same support but not all have access to the benefits.

Equity



Everyone gets the different support and all have access to the benefits.

Learn more *here*.

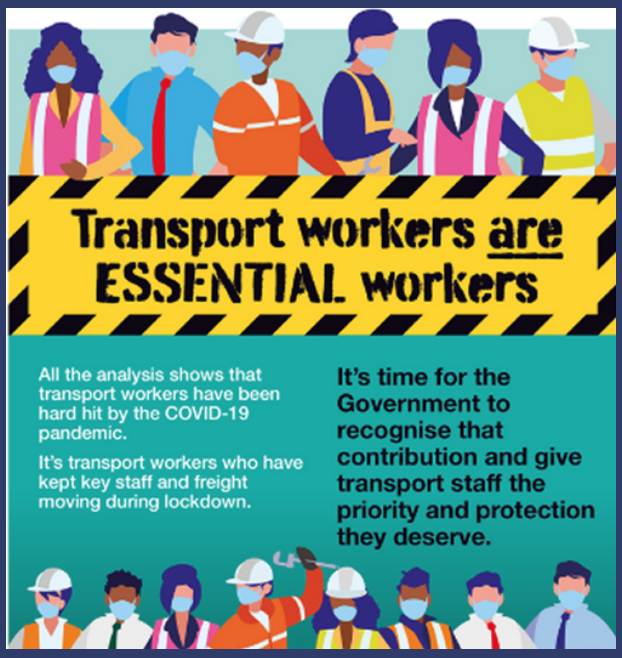
ESSENTIAL VS. FRONTLINE

Essential workers are defined by researchers at as, "workers who are vital to the core functions of the economy and society." Many of these workers during the Covid-19 pandemic were also ***frontline workers***, meaning that they have to be face to face with others and cannot work from an alternative environment such as work from home. ***Transportation workers are essential AND frontline workers, making them particularly susceptible to infectious disease spread.***

WHO IS AN ESSENTIAL WORKER?

Defined by the Centers for Disease and Control (CDC) as “those who conduct a range of operations and services in industries that are essential to ensure the continuity of critical functions in the United States.” As a transit worker, you are essential to continuing society.

YOUR SAFETY MATTERS



Learn more about international transit advocacy *here*.

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Who is essential?

Transit Workers are one of only 16 Sectors of the Workforce Officially designated as Essential Workers

Source: CISA Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce, 2021

In no particular ranking order:

- Communications
- Chemical
- Commercial Facilities
- Critical Manufacturing
- Dams
- Dense Industrial Base
- Emergency Services
- Energy
- Financial
- Food and Agriculture
- Government Facilities
- Information Technology
- Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste
- Healthcare and Public Health
- Transportation Systems
- Water

Learn more *here*.

"Transportation" mentioned 50 times in this document outlining who is an essential worker.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A WORKER?

These rights are presented from the Occupational Safety & Health Administration through the U.S. Department of Labor. This agency works to improve the health of workers through policies and programs.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

OSHA Website

Know Your Rights

Federal law entitles you to a safe workplace. Your employer must keep your workplace free of known health and safety hazards. You have the right to speak up. If you have fear of retaliation, you still have the right to:

- Receive workplace safety and health training in a language you understand
- Work on machines that are safe
- Receive required safety equipment, such as gloves or a harness and lifeline for falls
- Be protected from toxic chemicals
- Request an OSHA inspection, and speak to the inspector
- Report an injury or illness, and get copies of your medical records
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses
- See results of tests taken to find workplace hazards

Reporting a Workplace Health & Safety Violation: File a Complaint

The Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau (PESH), enforces safety and health standards in **New York State** made under the United States Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA).

PESH will respond to :

- Deaths related to occupational safety and health
- Accidents that send two or more public employees to the hospital
- Complaints from public employees or their representatives

The Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau also:

- Inspects public employer work sites
- Gives technical assistance during statewide emergencies

Download this document to file a complaint to PESH *here*.

Learn more about PESH.

5 WORKERS HAVE RIGHTS TO QUESTIONS BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

01 Essential Rights

If I am considered an “essential worker” in NYC, what does that mean? What additional rights do I have?

02 Contact Rights

In an emergency, who can I contact for current health info?

03 Working Rights

Will I be required to work overtime?

04 Contract Rights

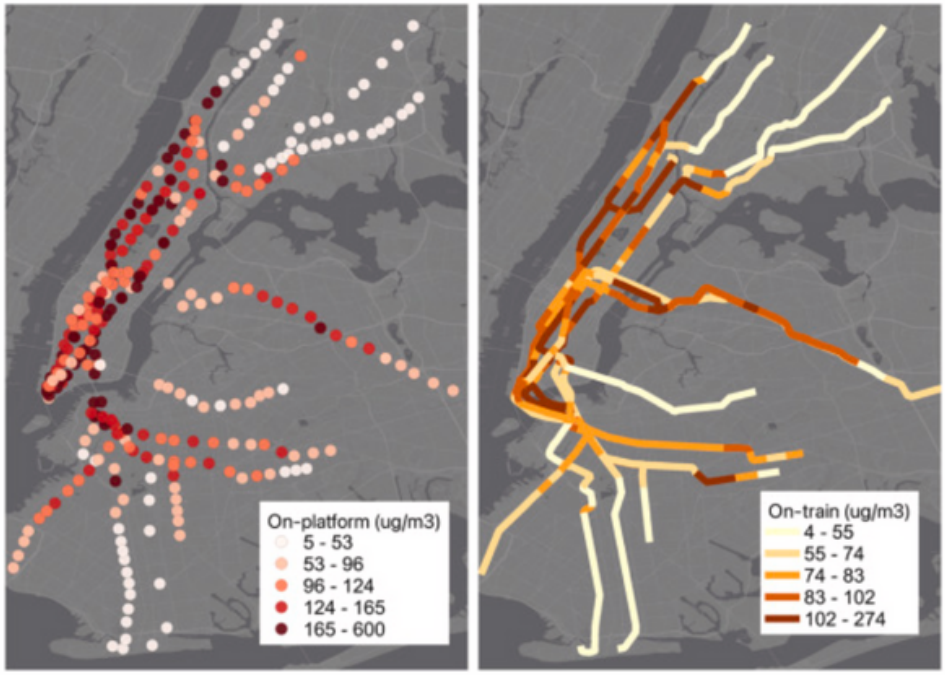
Do I have contractual obligations to this job?

05 Working Rights

If members of my family/household are in a high risk group, will NYC provide workers leave or housing for me? What about bereavement rights if a family member were to pass away?

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAFE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

"The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act) was passed to prevent workers from being killed or otherwise harmed at work. The law requires employers to provide their employees with working conditions that are free of known dangers."



Azad, et al., 2023

NYU Study on Air Pollution in the NYC Subway Stations

New York Post News Reporting

Report Environmental Violations in your workplace ***here*** by filling out a simple form.

The best way to fight for something in Congress is to call your member of congress. Remember, they work for you.

Find your local NY Representative

Find your members of Congress

Find your Senator

How to Write a Letter to Your Elected Representative

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Linked Resources!

Where do you go from here?

These resources can act as an additional guide to using your voice within your work environment.

Get Involved: How to Lobby (TWU)

→ Transit Worker Shortage (American Public Transportation Association)

→ Guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency)

→ Riders Alliance Advocacy Group: Fighting for better transit for all New Yorkers (Riders Alliance)

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT ADDITIONAL

- How Transit Advocates Are Mobilizing for Riders and Workers in Response to COVID-19 (Transit Center)
- Protecting Transit Workers is a Matter of Racial Justice (Transit Center)
- Transit workers and riders: We want to hear from you (Transportation for America)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN YOUR UNION?

How participating benefits you.

You have a right to communication within your workplace. As a member of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), you have the right through the union to a communication representative who will address your concerns and can become a source for advocating for your rights.

Participating in your union benefits you. Attending your depot's union meeting is one of the main ways you can make lasting changes for your department. If you are waiting for an opportunity for change, sometimes you have to create it. Learn your meeting schedule and consider attending. See one example of recent union successes!

Additional

TWU Safety Committee April 2020

MTA Board - Safety Committee Meeting - 11/29/2022 (Youtube Video)

TWU 2023 Memorandum of Understanding Contract

MTA COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines

MTA Safety and Security

The Safety Team through the TWU Local 100 can be a resource for transit workers for additional advocacy. Feel free to contact to the Safety Department or your TWU representative with concerns or ideas for improvement.

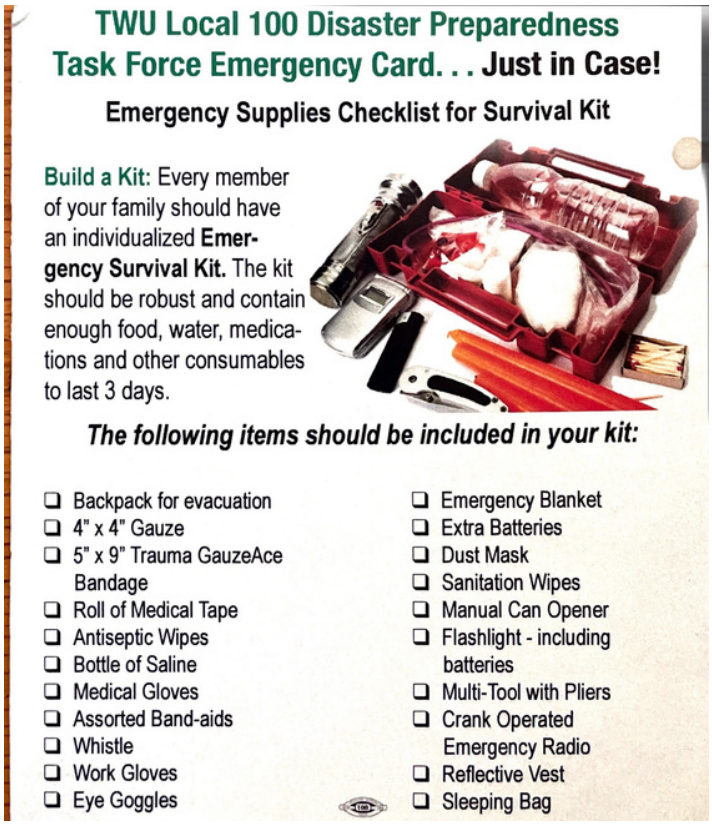
Contact your Safety Team

See your Union-Wide Officers and Executive Board

Access more resources from the TWU *here*.

Past TWU Local 100 Disaster Preparedness Emergency Card

This was created by the TWU for supplies to keep in an emergency kit. As many of these resource that you can have stored in a small kit will be beneficial in various emergency settings.



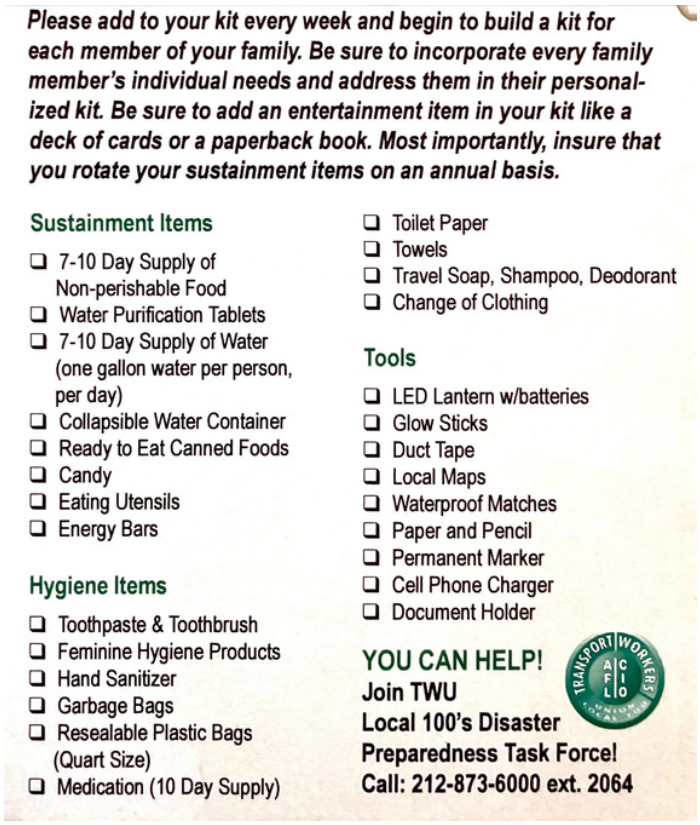
TWU Local 100 Disaster Preparedness Task Force Emergency Card. . . Just in Case!

Emergency Supplies Checklist for Survival Kit

Build a Kit: Every member of your family should have an individualized **Emergency Survival Kit.** The kit should be robust and contain enough food, water, medications and other consumables to last 3 days.

The following items should be included in your kit:

- ❑ Backpack for evacuation
- ❑ 4" x 4" Gauze
- ❑ 5" x 9" Trauma GauzeAce Bandage
- ❑ Roll of Medical Tape
- ❑ Antiseptic Wipes
- ❑ Bottle of Saline
- ❑ Medical Gloves
- ❑ Assorted Band-aids
- ❑ Whistle
- ❑ Work Gloves
- ❑ Eye Goggles
- ❑ Emergency Blanket
- ❑ Extra Batteries
- ❑ Dust Mask
- ❑ Sanitation Wipes
- ❑ Manual Can Opener
- ❑ Flashlight - including batteries
- ❑ Multi-Tool with Pliers
- ❑ Crank Operated Emergency Radio
- ❑ Reflective Vest
- ❑ Sleeping Bag



Please add to your kit every week and begin to build a kit for each member of your family. Be sure to incorporate every family member's individual needs and address them in their personalized kit. Be sure to add an entertainment item in your kit like a deck of cards or a paperback book. Most importantly, insure that you rotate your sustainment items on an annual basis.

Sustainment Items

- ❑ 7-10 Day Supply of Non-perishable Food
- ❑ Water Purification Tablets
- ❑ 7-10 Day Supply of Water (one gallon water per person, per day)
- ❑ Collapsible Water Container
- ❑ Ready to Eat Canned Foods
- ❑ Candy
- ❑ Eating Utensils
- ❑ Energy Bars

Hygiene Items

- ❑ Toothpaste & Toothbrush
- ❑ Feminine Hygiene Products
- ❑ Hand Sanitizer
- ❑ Garbage Bags
- ❑ Resealable Plastic Bags (Quart Size)
- ❑ Medication (10 Day Supply)
- ❑ Toilet Paper
- ❑ Towels
- ❑ Travel Soap, Shampoo, Deodorant
- ❑ Change of Clothing

Tools

- ❑ LED Lantern w/batteries
- ❑ Glow Sticks
- ❑ Duct Tape
- ❑ Local Maps
- ❑ Waterproof Matches
- ❑ Paper and Pencil
- ❑ Permanent Marker
- ❑ Cell Phone Charger
- ❑ Document Holder

YOU CAN HELP!
Join TWU Local 100's Disaster Preparedness Task Force!
Call: 212-873-6000 ext. 2064

Communication Channels

Depending on your depot or department, you may have a GroupMe, Whatsapp, or other group messaging platform to communicate with other transit workers. This platform can be used to build relationships with other workers that you aren't in contact every day. It also can be used for expressing your concerns and seeing if others are experiencing similar issues to bring up with the union. Union representatives get text message updates when something comes up within a station. Adding a union representative to your group could help spread messages that may be lost otherwise. Ask your union about what Facebook support groups you can join.

FIGHTING FOR HAZARD PAY

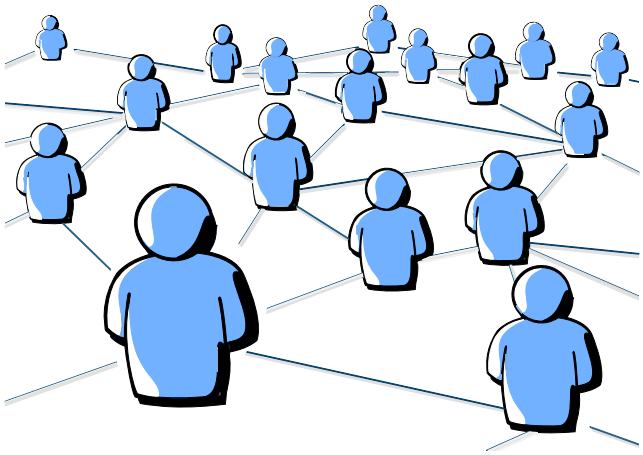
Congress passed hazard pay laws for workers as seen below. You are entitled to additional benefits during a pandemic.

1. Pandemic Premium Pay.—
    a. (1) IN GENERAL.—An essential work employer receiving a grant under section 104 shall, in accordance with this subsection, provide each essential worker of the essential work employer with premium pay at a rate equal to $13 for each hour of work performed by the essential worker for the employer from January 27, 2020, until the date that is 60 days after the last day of the COVID–19 Public Health Emergency.
    b. See link for additional writeup including tax benefits to essential workers during a pandemic according to this bill passed in 2020.
    c. Make sure that the MTA and TWU have your correct current address so that you are able to get your ballot by mail for various elections. If you were told you would be sent something and did not receive it, please follow up with your representative.

See TWU stances and resources here.

Community resilience is the ability of a community to recover from a disaster and bond together during difficult times.

What does community mean to you?

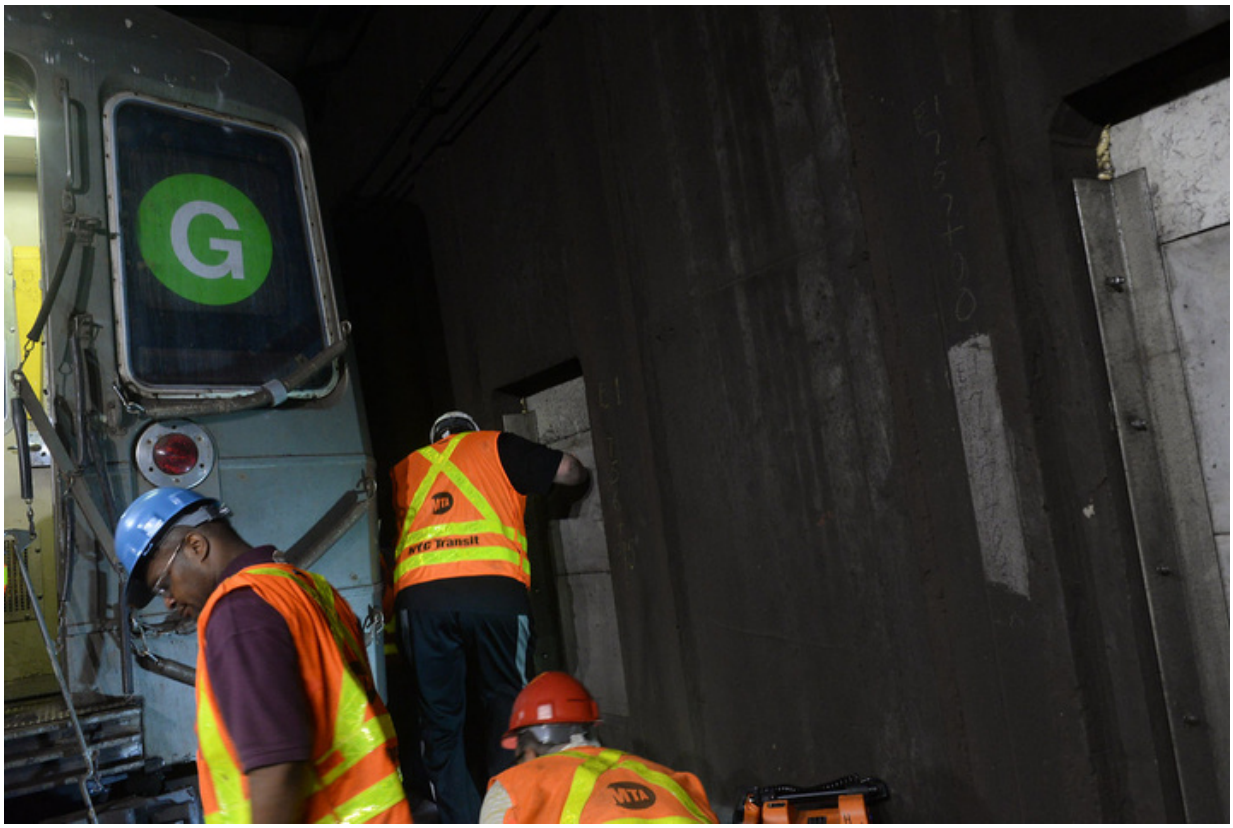


Steps to reach community resilience:

1. Create social connectedness through communication channels with other workers. Are you in contact with at least three coworkers?
2. Know who you can turn to when issues arise. Do you know and have access to your TWU (or local union) representative?
3. Build the social health of the community. Are there wellness groups within your organization? Wellness Wednesdays?
4. Have clear communication channels especially in an emergency scenario, such as a pandemic. Know who is a reliable information source.
5. Gain government support in planning, response, and recovery. How can government support supply chain efforts such as access to masks?

Solidarity & Companionship

Prior to a pandemic, or any kind of emergency situation in which new dangers to health and safety occur, it is important to have contact to someone in your workplace. **The Buddy System** ensures that you have one person looking out for who you also look out for in the workplace. Find someone who can participate in the buddy system with you before a disaster event occurs.



Tips for starting the Buddy System ***here***.

More about the Buddy System ***here***.

Avoiding Violence: Tips for the General Public

1. Stay aware of your surroundings always
2. Keep your back to a pole or wall when the train is approaching to avoid being pushed
3. If someone is acting strangely, try to keep some distance and do not make eye contact
4. If someone is bothering or harassing you, walk away and alert MTA police about the situation
5. Avoid traveling alone in new areas or late at night on the subway
6. Keep expensive items hidden

See *here* for more tips for subway rider safety.

Mental Health

Everybody experienced stress and anxiety during the pandemic. By continuing to work to keep the city running, you were put under additional pressure as an essential worker in transit. Accessing Mental Health resources is never a sign of weakness.

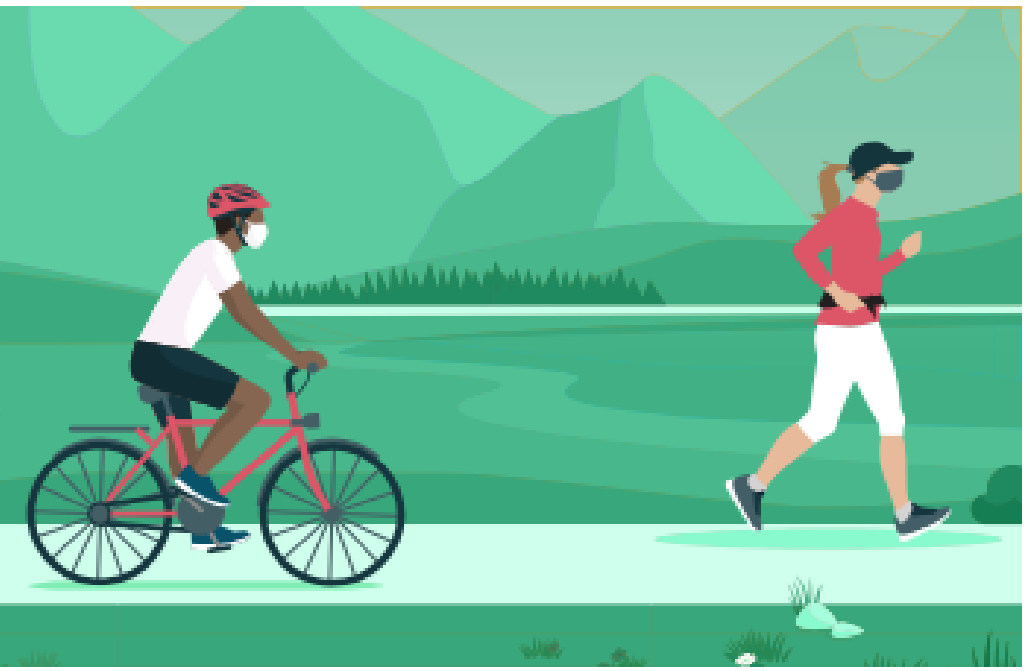
NYU, Infectious Disease Resource Guide

Learn more ***here.***

Critical workers: Care for yourself one small way each day

Find new ways to safely connect with family and friends, get support, and share feelings

Take breaks to relax and unwind through music, sports, gardening, or new hobbies



Treat yourself to healthy foods and get enough sleep

Take care of your body and get moving to lessen fatigue, anxiety, or sadness

CDC

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Disaster Distress Hotline: call or text 1-800-985-5990

cdc.gov/coronavirus

Learn more *here*.

I'M SO STRESSED OUT!

From the NATIONAL INSTITUTE *of* MENTAL HEALTH

Feeling overwhelmed? Read this fact sheet to learn whether it's stress or anxiety, and what you can do to cope.

Is it stress or anxiety?

Life can be stressful—you may feel stressed about performance at school, traumatic events (such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or an act of violence), or a life change. Everyone feels stress from time to time.

What is stress? Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause, such as having a lot of homework or having an illness. A stressor may be a one-time or short-term occurrence, or it can happen repeatedly over a long time.

What is anxiety? Anxiety is your body's reaction to stress and can occur even if there is no current threat.

If that anxiety doesn't go away and begins to interfere with your life, it could affect your health. You could experience problems with sleeping, or with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems. You also may be at higher risk for developing a mental illness such as an anxiety disorder or depression. More information about anxiety disorders is available at **www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders**.

So, how do you know when to seek help?

Stress vs. Anxiety

Stress

- Generally is a response to an external cause, such as taking a big test or arguing with a friend..
- Goes away once the situation is resolved.
- Can be positive or negative. For example, it may inspire you to meet a deadline, or it may cause you to lose sleep.

Both Stress and Anxiety

Both stress and anxiety can affect your mind and body. You may experience symptoms such as:

- Excessive worry
- Uneasiness
- Tension
- Headaches or body pain
- High blood pressure
- Loss of sleep

Anxiety

- Generally is internal, meaning it's your reaction to stress.
- Usually involves a persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that doesn't go away, and that interferes with how you live your life.
- Is constant, even if there is no immediate threat.

Learn more *here*.

It's important to manage your stress.

Everyone experiences stress, and sometimes that stress can feel overwhelming. You may be at risk for an anxiety disorder if it feels like you can't manage the stress and if the symptoms of your stress:

- Interfere with your everyday life.
- Cause you to avoid doing things.
- Seem to be always present.

Coping With Stress and Anxiety

Learning what causes or triggers your stress and what coping techniques work for you can help reduce your anxiety and improve your daily life. It may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Here are some activities you can try when you start to feel overwhelmed:

- Keep a journal.
- Download an app that provides relaxation exercises (such as deep breathing or visualization) or tips for practicing mindfulness, which is a psychological process of actively paying attention to the present moment.
- Exercise, and make sure you are eating healthy, regular meals.
- Stick to a sleep routine, and make sure you are getting enough sleep.
- Avoid drinking excess caffeine such as soft drinks or coffee.
- Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- Reach out to your friends or family members who help you cope in a positive way.

Recognize When You Need More Help

If you are struggling to cope, or the symptoms of your stress or anxiety won't go away, it may be time to talk to a professional. Psychotherapy (also called talk therapy) and medication are the two main treatments for anxiety, and many people benefit from a combination of the two.

If you or someone you know has a mental illness, is struggling emotionally, or has concerns about their mental health, there are ways to get help. Find more information on the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) website at **www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp**.

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at **988** or chat at **988lifeline.org**.

More Resources

- NIMH: Anxiety Disorders (**www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders**)
- NIMH: Caring for Your Mental Health (**www.nimh.nih.gov/mymentalhealth**)
- NIMH: Child and Adolescent Mental Health (**www.nimh.nih.gov/children**)
- NIMH: Tips for Talking With a Health Care Provider About Your Mental Health (**www.nimh.nih.gov/talkingtips**)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Anxiety and Depression in Children (**www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/depression.html**)

National Institute of Mental Health

NIH Publication No. 20-MH-8125

www.nimh.nih.gov

Follow NIMH on Social Media @NIMHgov

Non-MTA Affiliated Mental Health Contacts

Resource	Number	Text/Treatment
Disaster Distress Helpline (HHS):	Call 1-800-985-5990	Text TalkWithUs to 1-800-985-5990 (also available in Spanish)
Suicide Hotline: Federal Communications Commission	Call 988	Text 998
National Domestic Violence Hotline	Call 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)	Text "START" to 88788 Or Live Chat here.
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Hotline (SAMHSA)	National Helpline: 1-800-662-4357 (HELP) Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990	Treatment Locator
Veterans Crisis Line	Call 988 (Also suicide hotline)	Text 838255

PRODUCED BY THE NYU TRANSIT WORKER STUDY

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

July 16, 2023

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Funding provided by the National Institute for Nursing Research
R01NR020174-01

Additional Thanks to: Transit workers and supporters who assisted with focus groups to lead the needs of the workers, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and others from TWU, NYU and faculty.

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