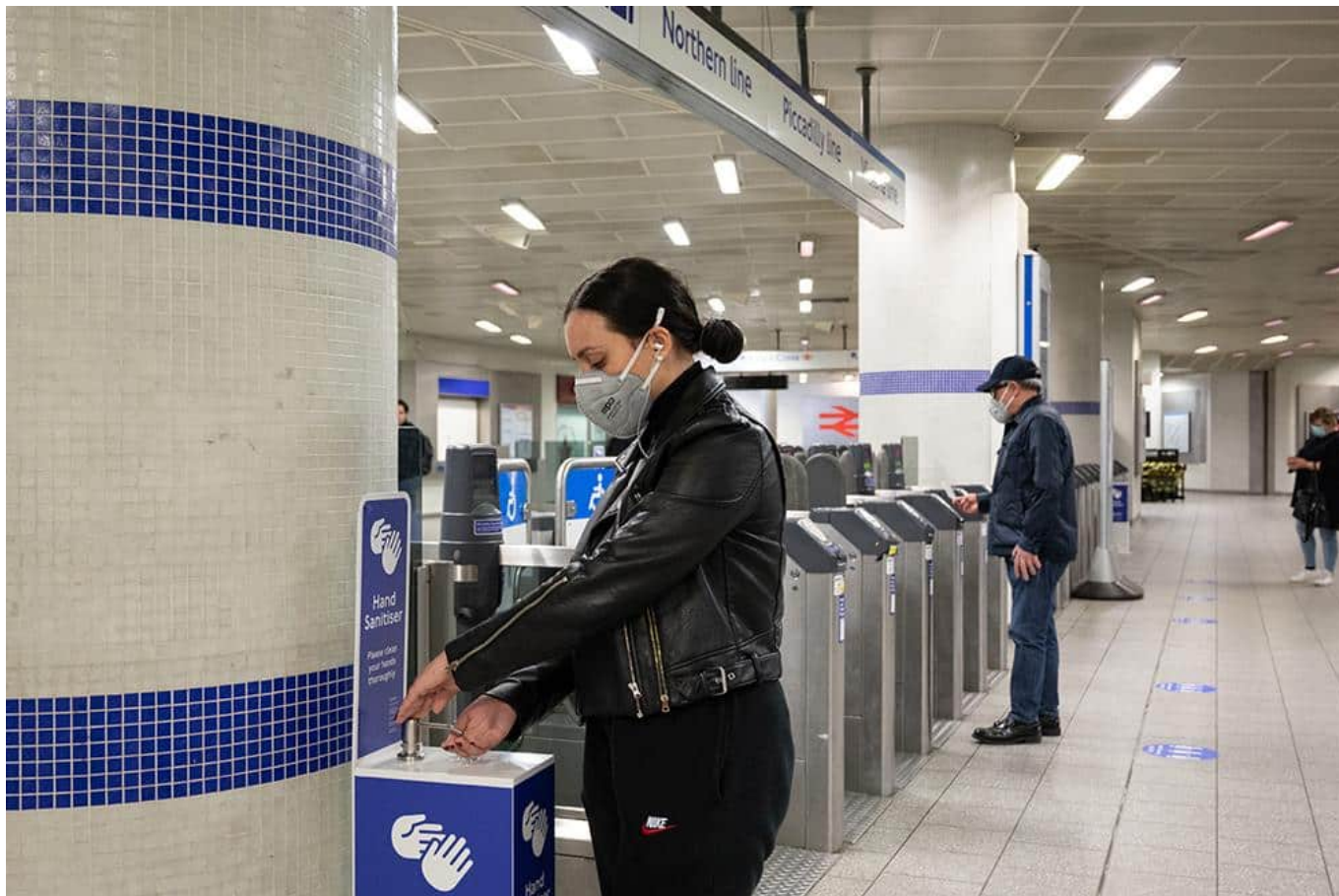


# Face coverings must be worn on public transport network from Monday 15 June

June 5, 2020



Transport for London (TfL) has confirmed that, in line with new Government guidance on the wearing of face coverings on public transport, all customers travelling on the TfL transport network must wear face coverings for the duration of their journeys from Monday 15 June.

The latest scientific advice suggests that, although face coverings are unlikely to prevent an individual from catching the coronavirus, they can help prevent someone who is infected from infecting others and therefore help control the virus.

TfL has been running a far-reaching communications campaign to encourage the use of face coverings, with posters, radio and other advertisements, announcements and millions of emails sent to customers. The latest estimates suggest that between 30-50 per cent of customers on public transport are now protecting other passengers and staff by using a face covering, with the new requirements designed to make face coverings the norm.

Face coverings can be a simple cloth that covers the nose and mouth. They can be made using many items found in the home or in many shops open across London, with resources available to help people

make their own, including at [www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/face-covering-guidance](https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/face-covering-guidance)

Alternatively, face coverings can be purchased at a number of local shops or online.

To help customers adjust to the forthcoming new requirement, TfL is also piloting the temporary distribution of free face coverings at a selection of Tube and bus stations that have typically seen higher numbers of customers travelling throughout the lockdown period.

TfL's distribution of face coverings, which should be used once over a single journey, will start this coming Monday 8 June and is expected to run over the next couple of weeks – with volunteers from TfL and the Greater London Authority (GLA) safely distributing them to customers who need them.

TfL's police partners will continue to support TfL and its operators and, from 15 June, will help customers to comply with the requirement to wear a face covering when on public transport.

In addition, TfL is working with retail tenants on the transport network to help make more face coverings available to people who are travelling.

The introduction of the new requirement on face coverings does not alter the existing guidance from the Government and the Mayor that the most important thing Londoners can do to keep themselves and each other safe is to continue to work from home where possible and to only use public transport for essential journeys that cannot be made by other means such as walking and cycling.

The Mayor of London Sadiq Khan said: "I'm pleased that our lobbying has paid off and the Government has finally seen sense and made it mandatory for people to wear face coverings on public transport. This is something I and others have been calling on ministers to do for some time, and is in line with a large body of evidence that they can help stop the spread of coronavirus.

"I encourage anyone travelling on public transport, or anywhere you can't keep a safe two-metre distance, to wear a face covering, but from Monday 15 June, everyone must wear a covering over their nose and mouth for the entirety of any journeys made using the public transport network. This will be mandatory and will help everyone be safer.

"TfL continues to work hard to maximise services despite staff being ill, shielding or self-isolating. The reality is that due to social distancing the effective capacity of public transport services has been dramatically reduced. We can only carry between 13-15 per cent of passengers. We all must play our part by working from home if we can and making journeys on foot or by bike if at all possible in order to keep the service safe for those who really need it. I want to thank Londoners who have made monumental sacrifices over the last ten weeks and stuck to the rules. I urge them to continue to do so to help save lives."

Mike Brown MVO, London's Transport Commissioner, said: "Coronavirus has changed how people will experience our transport network, with new safety and social distancing measures, limits on the number of people on buses, hand sanitizers, even more extensive cleaning and the use of face coverings. But to help control the virus, everyone must wear a face covering for the duration of their journey from 15 June.

"I encourage customers not to wait, and to start wearing them now if they are not already. Face coverings can now be quite easily made or purchased, and we are helping by temporarily handing out free masks at hot spot Tube and bus stations. But the clear advice from the Government and Mayor remains – people should continue to work from home if they can and avoid travelling on public transport to create space for those who are making essential journeys."

To ensure customers can travel safely and maintain social distancing wherever possible TfL has been ramping up its services to meet gradually growing demand.

TfL is working towards running normal services as soon as possible, despite staff being ill, shielding or self-isolating, and is already running over 85 per cent of Tube services and 85 per cent of bus services.

However, even with full services running, public transport will only be able to carry 13-15 per cent of normal passenger numbers while the recommend two-metre social distancing remains. The Mayor's Streetspace for London programme is therefore aimed at supporting the millions more journeys that will need to be made by walking and cycling.

It includes widening paths in busy town centres such as Brixton to prevent crowding, introducing new car free zones at the heart of central London and protected cycleways on busy thoroughfares like Park Lane. There has now been over 15,000m<sup>2</sup> of additional space created. In the last week more room has been made for pedestrians on Waterloo Road and a one-way system installed on Battersea Bridge to help those crossing on foot. Work to upgrade the CS8 cycling route between is also being fast-tracked.

TfL says it is doing everything possible to provide a safe transport network for those people who need to use it. Measures to help enable social distancing wherever possible are being put in place. These include new signage and platform stickers, as well as operating stations differently through restricting entry if necessary and one-way and queuing systems.

Hundreds of hand sanitiser points have been introduced across the transport network and an enhanced cleaning regime was introduced on the network earlier this year. This includes additional hospital-grade cleaning substances that kill viruses and bacteria on contact, new anti-viral disinfectant that protects for up to 30 days, key interchanges being cleaned more frequently – including during the day – and all regular 'touch point' areas on buses, such as poles and doors, being wiped down with a strong disinfectant every day.

In addition to wearing a face covering, people who have no choice but to use public transport should avoid the busiest times and locations. The busiest times on the network are between 05:45-08:15 and 16:00-17:30. Passengers are urged to take the most direct route and avoid busy interchanges. TfL has also published the 20 busiest stations at <https://tfl.gov.uk/status-updates/busiest-times-to-travel> to help people avoid known hotspots.

This will be updated regularly, and Londoners are encouraged to avoid using those stations wherever possible at busy times to help maintain social distancing and to avoid potentially having to wait to enter those stations.

*Photo credit: Transport for London*