

TfL advises Tube customers to only travel if their journey is essential during planned RMT strike

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Transport for London (TfL) is advising customers that there will be severe disruption across the Tube network, with little or no service expected between the evening of Sunday 7 January and the morning of Friday 12 January, if the planned strike by RMT members goes ahead.

RMT on Wednesday called on the London Mayor and Transport for London (TfL) to enter unconditional talks hosted by the conciliation service ACAS to avert strike action scheduled for later this week.

TfL says, should the strikes go ahead, it will operate as much of the network as possible, but it is currently expecting the following service throughout the week:

- On Sunday 7 January, Tube services will end earlier than normal. Customers are advised to complete Tube journeys by 17:30, although lines serving the Emirates will try to remain open longer. Football fans are encouraged to make their way straight to the trains after the match as services will start to close from 19:30 on those lines
- From Monday 8 to Thursday 11 January, severe disruption is expected, with little to no Tube service expected to run
- On Friday 12 January, Tube services will start later than normal, with a good service expected by 12:00

While Londoners will still be able to travel on London Overground, Elizabeth line, DLR and Tram services, they may be subject to last-minute changes, including non-stopping at some stations shared with London Underground, although TfL says it will do everything possible to keep these open at all times. TfL expects these services will be much busier than usual and customers are advised to check before they travel.

Talks between TfL and RMT are currently ongoing as TfL seeks to try and avoid this planned strike action, which is over pay and conditions. In November, TfL made a full and final offer to increase the base pay for all London Underground workers by five per cent and this was accepted by members of the ASLEF union.

London buses are also expected to operate normally during this planned strike action, but customers should leave more time for their journeys as it is expected that many routes will be extremely busy.

Walking or cycling may be quicker for some journeys and planning tools are available to plan walking journeys. Santander Cycles will be available, with teams ensuring that bikes are distributed at key locations according to demand. Rental e-scooters are also available to hire in some London boroughs.

Glynn Barton, TfL's Chief Operating Officer, said: "We are disappointed that RMT is planning strike action in response to our offer of a five per cent pay increase. We have been clear throughout our productive discussions with our trade unions that this offer is the most we can afford while ensuring that we can operate safely, reliably and sustainably. We encourage the RMT to engage with us to avoid disruption for Londoners. We would like to advise anyone travelling during the strike days to check before they travel."

The union says it had been invited to talks with TfL earlier this week after London Underground workers backed rolling strike action by over 90 per cent against a below inflation pay offer.

The union also wants to see full staff travel facilities for all tube workers restored to prevent the creation of a two-tier workforce.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said that Tube workers were not going to accept poor offers and the continual undermining of conditions.

"The refusal of TfL to restore staff travel facilities and create a two-tier workforce is also unacceptable," he said.

"Our members have made it clear that they are prepared to take action and we urge TfL to enter into meaningful conciliatory talks to avert disruption in the capital."

TfL is supporting customers to choose alternative travel routes where possible through a comprehensive communications campaign, which includes station announcements, posters, emails and social media.

For the latest information on how TfL services are operating, please use TfL's real-time travel tools, including status updates, Journey Planner and TfL Go. Travel advice for the planned strike action is available at tfl.gov.uk/strikes

Photo credit: Transport for London