

Travel information for customers as Government restrictions are eased further from Monday 12 April

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With further lifting of lockdown restrictions by Government coming into effect on Monday 12 April, including reopening of non-essential retail and outdoor hospitality, Transport for London (TfL) is issuing information for customers who will be returning to the transport network.

As has been the case since July 2020, TfL continues to run near-normal levels of service across the public transport network and a wide range of active travel options are available, including Santander Cycles and protected cycling and walking routes, especially in central London and the West End.

TfL's enhanced cleaning regime continues to make the network cleaner than ever. Trains, trams, buses and stations are cleaned with hospital-grade cleaning substances that kill viruses and bacteria on contact and provide ongoing protection.

Independent testing by Imperial College London has been carried out monthly since September, taking swabs of touch points in stations, buses and air samples in ticket halls and has found no

traces of coronavirus on the transport network.

Initial analysis by TfL suggests that around 1.7 million Londoners (or more than 40 per cent of pre-pandemic ridership) have been using the network each weekday in recent weeks. With pay as you go with contactless and Oyster, customers can travel flexibly at quieter times by simply touching in and out and only paying for the journeys they make, reducing the need to queue or buy tickets in the station. Pay as you go fares are also capped so customers don't have to buy a Travelcard in advance.

Customers who have not travelled recently will see a number of changes to the network. Extensive signage is in place on trains, trams, buses, platforms and stations, reminding those who need to travel to socially distance. More than 1,000 hand sanitisers are installed across the network, and 200 UV light devices are continually sanitising escalator handrails.

Good ventilation through frequent air exchange is provided on London's transport network. London Underground, London Overground and TfL Rail services are well ventilated, with doors opening frequently to allow the regular exchange of air in carriages. Guidance from the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), and endorsed by the Rail Delivery Group, recommends that the air inside a train carriage should change around six to 12 times per hour. Assessments on Tube carriage ventilation systems indicate that the air changes more than 20 times every hour. The constant movement of trains draws fresh air into the system and pushes it around the network, and in the deeper Tube lines there are ventilation shafts and fans to supplement that air movement.

Buses are also fitted with a range of air extraction and ventilation systems. These systems, in conjunction with leaving windows open and the frequent opening of front and middle doors, ensure the flow of fresh air through the vehicle. Bus windows are being fitted with devices to ensure they stay open to allow fresh air in, and stickers are already on the windows of buses to encourage customers to leave them open.

TfL has been working with business groups throughout the pandemic, particularly with the construction industry that has continued to work throughout lockdown, to reduce the rare instances when social distancing has not been possible at certain specific times – particularly very early in the morning – and locations on the transport network.

As a result of this partnership, many employers have enabled their staff to stagger their journey times and many workers have been travelling at different times or taking different routes to work to find alternatives to stations that can be busier at certain times of the day. This has resulted in a 13 per cent reduction in exits from key construction-related stations, like Canning Town, between 06:00 and 10:00.

With more people across London returning to work in sectors that reopen on Monday 12 April following the Government's further relaxation of lockdown, TfL is continuing this work – asking employers to stagger shift times and asking customers to travel at the quieter times during the day when there is available spare capacity to help customers maintain social distancing.

At certain very limited times and locations '1m plus' social distancing is occasionally not possible. Users of public transport are asked to help by being patient and waiting for the next service if necessary, to minimise the occasions when social distancing is not immediately possible.

As a new business and customer information campaign is launched, which sets out to customers the extensive measures in place to ensure the transport network is ready for their return in a welcoming environment, TfL will be handing out free face coverings at key interchange stations.

Face coverings must continue to be worn, covering both the mouth and nose, in stations, on platforms and for the full duration of a journey, unless an exemption applies. While compliance continues to be high, TfL's enforcement officers, as well as both the Met Police and British Transport Police will be highly visible to ensure customers remain safe by stopping people without exemptions from using public transport until they put on a face covering. Tough action is taken on those who do not comply, to date around 149,000 customers have been stopped from travelling with around 2,700 receiving a fixed penalty notice.

TfL Travel Ambassadors in magenta tabards will also be on hand at key locations to welcome customers back to the transport network and to help everyone travel safely. Extensive information for customers and businesses is also available online at tfl.gov.uk, with regular advertisements running on radio to help support this activity.

Londoners are encouraged to use an active travel option for all or part of their journey to ensure space is available on public transport for those who need to use it, especially in central London and the West End. Legible London signs across the city can provide local information and potential route when on foot or bike, including Santander Cycles.

Andy Byford, London's Transport Commissioner, said: "With Government restrictions continuing to ease, more people are going to be returning to the transport network to travel around London and enjoy the shopping and leisure activities that are reopening. We are ready and looking forward to welcoming customers both back to our network, which is operating at near-normal levels of frequency, as well as supporting those who are walking and cycling – including Santander Cycles – particularly to complete journeys in central London and the West End.

"We're ensuring public transport is cleaner than ever, and our staff across London are ready to assist and to help keep everyone safe. Public transport is well-ventilated and our frequent public transport services will minimise the instances when social distancing is not possible. I would urge people to try to travel when there is more spare capacity – between 08:15 and 16:00 and after 17:30 on weekdays and before noon and after 18:00 on weekends – and to check before they travel as there may be some service changes at short notice if we deal with any staff absences.

"I would also ask customers to help us. Please be patient and wait for the next service, if necessary, to maintain social distancing. Do not assume that photographs showing crowded services are typical of the network – there is plenty of spare capacity available so long as we all work together to spread journeys across the day.

"Customers must continue to wear face coverings over their nose and mouth unless they are exempt and our enforcement officers and the Police will not hesitate to take enforcement action against anyone not complying with the rules that keep everyone safe."

TfL is continuing to urge customers to make journeys at quieter times, which are between 08:15 and 16:00

and after 17:30 during the week, and before noon and after 18:00 at weekends. Journey data will continue to be monitored so that messages can be communicated on any changes to the quieter times on the network and alternative interchanges.

TfL is operating services across the network at as close to normal as possible to help social distancing for those who need to travel, but like other businesses, could be affected by staff absence. This could mean some changes to service frequency or some short-notice station closures. The latest service information will be available online and through TfL travel tools including the TfL Go app. The TfL Go app enables customers to access live updates and train times for every station as well as the quieter times to travel. Customers are advised to check their journey before they travel.

Photo credit: Transport for London