

## West Midlands Railway urges customers to ditch cash to fight coronavirus

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West Midlands Railway is urging customers making essential journeys to purchase their travel online, using contactless cards or via mobile phone payments.

The operator is displaying posters at its stations following the latest government advice on cash handling and social distancing to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

Ticket offices will only accept cash as a last resort when passengers have no other means of payment. The limit for contactless card payments rises to £45 next week.

WMR is also reminding passengers that only essential journeys are permitted, with the focus on ensuring NHS staff and other key workers can get to their shifts.

Jonny Wiseman, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said: “Although government advice means trains are currently off-limits for most people, the railway remains open for key workers and others making essential journeys such as medical appointments.

“The safety and wellbeing of our staff and customers is our top priority, which is why from today we are only accepting cash as the payment method of last resort.

“We are also encouraging passengers to follow social distancing guidance and remain two metres apart as much as possible, including at stations and on trains.”

Andy Street, West Midlands Mayor, said: “We are keeping public transport moving for key workers and essential journeys only. I am pleased the vast majority of people across the region are following the Government’s clear guidance to stay at home.

“However for those who do have to travel, think about how you can minimise the risk of infection and protect yourself and frontline staff who are working incredibly hard in very challenging conditions.

“Not only should you be socially distancing where possible, leaving a gap of two metres, but you should also be looking to pay via contactless methods. I am pleased West Midlands Railway has taken steps to help make this possible.”

*Photo credit: West Midlands Railway*