

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Danielle Glagola
(831) 420-2550
dglagola@scmttd.com
scmttd.com



METRO Brings Awareness to the TSA Security Directive Mandating Face Masks on Public Transportation

Santa Cruz, CA (Monday, February 22, 2021) - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an Order on January 29, 2021, requiring the public to wear face masks while on conveyances and in transportation hubs. Meaning that masks must be worn at Transit Centers, transit facilities, bus stops, waiting for a bus, and while onboard buses and other public transportation vehicles.

The Order emphasizes that the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads easily via respiratory droplets and that wearing masks prevent infected individuals from spreading the disease. To that end, the CDC is exercising its statutory and regulatory authority to require wearing masks on transit.

Further, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) issued a Security Directive (SD) January 31, 2021, that went into effect on February 1, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. The SD was issued to enforce the requirements of the CDC Order mandating masks, as well as implement the Executive Order issued on January 21, 2021. The SD now makes the wearing of a face mask mandatory by Federal law at all transit facilities and while on a public transit vehicles. Failure to comply can result in removal from a vehicle and/or transit facility and will constitute a violation of Federal law.

“METRO has required the mandatory use of face masks at all of our Transit Centers, facilities, and onboard our vehicles since June 2020 so the newly issued Security Directive just goes one step further in making mask use Federal law. We appreciate all of the steps our employees and customers have already taken to slow the spread of the virus, including wearing a mask when using METRO services, further protecting our community and we hope to be able to continue with this dedication moving forward.” – Alex Clifford, METRO CEO/General Manager.

Additionally, this Security Directive outlines The CDC guidance on proper face mask wearing which includes:

- Masks must completely cover the nose and mouth of the wearer.
- Masks are to be secured to the head, including with ties or ear loops.
- A mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Masks do not include face shields or bandanas.
- Masks should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.
- Medical masks and N-95 respirators fulfill the requirements of this SD.
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For more information on this Security Directive including who is exempt, please visit www.tsa.gov/sd-and-ea.

METRO’s number one priority has always been to keep our customers, community, and employees safe and through additional measures, like mandatory face mask use, we will continue to do so.

For more information on METRO’s commitment to safety visit scmttd.com/safety

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About Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District:

Established in 1968, Santa Cruz METRO provides fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service throughout Santa Cruz County, with limited service connecting to Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center and Santa Clara

County, transporting more than 5 million passenger trips a year. METRO also operates ParaCruz paratransit service to Santa Cruz County, providing about 73,500 trips per year. METRO's operating budget in FY21 is almost \$55 million and is funded through a combination of farebox revenue, sales tax, and state and federal sources. Today it operates a fleet of 94 buses on at least 24 fixed-routes. For more information, visit www.scmtd.com. Like METRO on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SantaCruzMETRO or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/SantaCruzMETRO.