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Riders must wear masks on DART buses beginning Aug. 23 *DART restoring full service to most routes on Aug. 23*

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is requiring riders to wear a mask or face covering when they ride the bus beginning Sunday, Aug. 23, 2020. Riders are encouraged to wear their own reusable mask or face covering but disposable masks will be available at the front of each bus. Small children and anyone with a medical exemption will not be required to wear a mask.

The DART Board of Commissioners approved the mask requirement at its meeting earlier this week. Scientific evidence is clear that wearing a mask or face covering is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially in indoor or enclosed spaces, like DART buses. DART staff recommended the Board vote on this issue after receiving recommendations from riders and employees calling for clarification on mask requirements. DART has been strongly encouraging passengers to wear masks since COVID-19 began spreading in central Iowa. DART operators have been required to wear a mask or face shield while driving since June.

Media can download B-roll video footage showing riders and staff wearing masks onboard DART buses by [clicking here](#).

More service updates planned for August

The new mask requirement will coincide with DART's next adjustment to service on Aug. 23. With this service update, most routes will be restored to the frequency and schedule they operated before the COVID-19 pandemic. A few Local Routes and all Express Routes will continue operating at a reduced service level but will see an increase in trips or frequency with this service change. Service on two routes, Local Route 13 and the Link Shuttle, that had been temporarily suspended will be restored. Finally, the D-Line route will return to its normal route, traveling primarily on Locust and Grand throughout the East Village with the opening of the Locust Street bridge.

Routes undergoing changes

- Local Routes: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 52 and 60
- Express Routes: 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98 and 99
- Shuttle Routes: D-Line and Link

More information on this service update, including route schedules is available now at ridedart.com/August. DART will have print copies of the schedules available on buses and at DART Central Station after the service change goes into effect on Aug. 23.

Ongoing safety measures

The new mask requirement is just one of the many safety measures DART has taken to promote the health and wellbeing of its employees and riders. Some other measures include:

- The installation of temporary plastic barriers between the fareboxes and the operator's seat on all buses;
- providing hand sanitizer for riders on the bus; and

- limiting capacity on each bus to around 50% by blocking off seats to promote social distancing.
- daily cleaning and sanitizing of all DART vehicles and facilities with regular disinfecting of high-touch areas throughout the day;
- providing PPE for all employees;
- requiring employees to complete wellbeing check before work each day, which includes a temperature check;
- limiting the number of people inside DART Central Station; and
- operating extra buses on busy routes during peak travel times to prevent overcrowding on buses.

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is Iowa's largest, and only, regional transit agency, providing service in and around Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services, providing nearly 4.5 million annual rides that connect thousands of people every day to jobs, school, healthcare and other essential destinations. Twelve member governments make up DART's service area, where the agency carries out its mission to enrich lives, connect communities and expand opportunities for central Iowans. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit the website at ridedart.com, download the free MyDART app or call 515-283-8100.

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