

NEWS RELEASE



RTD to implement rear-door boarding starting Sunday following revised safety guidance

**Regional
Transportation
District**

Fare suspension and other operational changes are being made in the interest of employee and public safety

1660 Blake Street
Denver, CO
80202

720.326.7311
Media Line

DENVER (April 3, 2020) – For the safety of its employees and riders and in response to the rapidly changing spread of COVID-19, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) is making some notable operational changes starting Sunday, April 5, following revised guidance from RTD's safety consultant.

After contacting the agency's safety consultant, WSP, on Thursday, April 2, RTD officials received a recommendation from the consultant that RTD institute rear-door boarding based on emerging COVID-19 conditions and the potential for transmission of the disease to operators. Rear-door boarding provides for distance between operators and the public, mitigating known circumstances of infection – namely, close proximity to those who might be infected. The consultant's professional guidance is [linked here](#), along with an [overarching report](#) on COVID-19 safety practices for the transit industry.

Beginning at the start of the service day on Sunday and until further notice:

- RTD will switch to rear-door boarding and exiting on most buses, which provides another layer of social distancing between operators and riders. Passengers with disabilities should continue to board RTD vehicles at the front, where a wheelchair lift is available, if needed. RTD's over-the-road coaches used on Regional routes have front doors only. So, those passengers will still board and deboard from the front.
- Fare collection will be suspended on all buses and trains across the RTD system. The agency is working through processes for refunds and exchanges on applicable fare products.
- Service will be suspended on two downtown Denver bus routes, the 16th Street Free MallRide and Free MetroRide, which have experienced low ridership.
- RTD will move as many of the MallRide buses as possible to regular routes, to take advantage of the ability of these buses to offer multiple-door boarding and exiting. In addition, drivers on MallRide buses work in an enclosed compartment that provides separation from passengers.

"As the coronavirus pandemic continues to change quickly, we will continue to collaborate with all of our partners – including our consultant partners like WSP – for best practices and good guidance on how to navigate this crisis," said RTD interim General Manager and CEO Paul Ballard. "It's important that we be strategic and practical in our operational changes, not reactionary, so our team will continue to monitor information as it emerges, be nimble and make decisions that we deem to be the most prudent and responsible."

Being mindful of social distancing, RTD has been monitoring passenger loads on its bus and rail services. Bus operators seeing larger crowds forming along their route have been asked to call bus dispatch, so that additional buses can be deployed as they are available.

RTD also asks that the public use judgment in deciding whether to board vehicles, depending upon the number of passengers already on them. The agency is installing signage on buses and trains asking riders to respect social distancing, which is everyone's responsibility.

For the latest RTD updates about COVID-19, visit rtd-denver.com/coronavirus.

ABOUT RTD

The Regional Transportation District develops, operates and maintains a public transportation system that meets the transit needs of close to 3 million people within an eight-county service area in the Denver Metro region. RTD's buses, rail lines, shuttles and additional services provide approximately 100 million annual passenger trips. For more information, visit rtd-denver.com, call 303-299-6000 and follow along on social media: www.facebook.com/RideRTD, [@RideRTD](https://twitter.com/RideRTD) on Twitter, [@ridertd](https://www.instagram.com/ridertd) on Instagram and [rideRTDco](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8) on YouTube. For the most current RTD news, visit the News Stop, at rtd-denver.com/news-stop.

#