

**Board Report**

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**File #:** 2020-0929, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response**Agenda Number:** 52.

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**REVISED**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**JANUARY 28, 2021**

**Motion by:****DIRECTORS HAHN, BUTTS, MITCHELL, BARGER, AND SOLIS****Face Coverings Required on Metro Buses and Trains**

On May 4, 2020 Supervisor Hahn sent a letter to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) urging Metro to immediately enforce a requirement that all passengers wear face coverings while on Metro buses and trains. In turn, the CEO responded with Board Box that stated that Metro would enforce face coverings in accordance with Los Angeles County health orders. Since then, Metro has sought compliance for this requirement primarily through education. Signs on buses state that face coverings are required, and staff distribute free face coverings to riders.

However, internal practices and policies include exceptions for the face covering requirement, which can put Metro employees and the public at risk. On January 14, 2021 CBS Los Angeles released a story showing a sign reportedly at Division 8 stating, "Per Executive Management's directive all Operators are to board patrons not wearing a mask, face covering, on their buses at this time unless directed otherwise."

Metro has since confirmed the following: 1) Operators are directed to state one time that "A mask is required on all Buses and Trains," 2) If a passenger refuses to comply, operators are to call and report to the Bus Operation Control Center (BOC) to see if there is law enforcement available to assist, 3) Operators are not allowed to bypass unmasked riders.

At the January Operations Committee, Metro reported that operators are at up to 70% of absences to regular time, resulting in impacts to transit service hours. Metro's current staffing shortages suggest that the face covering policy can be improved. As of January 19, Metro has reported seven employee deaths related to COVID-19.

On January 21, 2021 President Joe Biden signed the Executive Order on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel. Section 2, mandates masks be worn in compliance with CDC guidelines on trains and buses in addition to other modes of transportation. This order, in addition to the pleas from our operators, should compel us to consider more enforcement mechanisms as soon as possible.

**SUBJECT: FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED ON METRO BUSES AND TRAINS**

**RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE Motion by Directors Hahn, Butts, Mitchell, Barger, and Solis that the Board of Directors direct the Chief Executive Officer to:

- A. Reiterate for both the public and staff that face coverings are mandatory
- B. Report back in 14 days on the following:
  - a. Recommendations on how to strengthen efforts to ensure compliance with mandatory face coverings, including but not limited to fines
  - b. Recommendations for alternative transportation options for patrons instructed not to wear a face covering by a medical provider