

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Pauletta Tonilas:

Good evening everyone and thank you for joining us for this special live telephone town hall meeting hosted by the Regional Transportation District, also known as RTD. I'm Pauletta Tonilas, assistant general manager of communications for RTD and I'll be your moderator this evening as we talk about the latest on how RTD is addressing COVID-19. Also, anything else you'd like to hear about tonight related to RTD, so we welcome you. We hope this finds you healthy and safe in the comfort of your own home. Joining me this evening is Doug Tisdale, RTD director for district H. Also sitting in to answer your questions are Michael Ford, chief operations officer, Mike Meader, chief security officer and Tegan Rice, service planner and scheduler. We're here to listen to your questions, folks. This is all about you. We want to hear what's on your mind. We want to give you an opportunity to ask us questions or give us comments.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Now, if this is your first time on a telephone town hall, here's how it works. To ask a question, just press star three on your keypad and you'll be transferred to someone who will take down some basic information and get you in the queue. We ask you to then stay on the line, listening on the conversation, and when I call your name then you can ask your question live. We do ask you to keep it brief because we want to get to as many of you as possible this evening. Again, this is a live telephone town hall meeting being hosted by the Regional Transportation District, otherwise known as RTD, and it is my pleasure now to introduce you to your RTD director, RTD board member, Doug Tisdale for district H. That is your RTD district, district H. Director Tisdale, thank you so much for taking time out of your evening to be on the call with us and helping to host the call tonight and looking forward to hearing what you have to say, but lay out a little bit of information for us, director, about how RTD is handling COVID-19.

Doug Tisdale:

Thank you very much Pauletta, and I just want to say good evening to everyone and thank you all for joining us on this telephone town hall tonight. It's a great opportunity to share information with all of you. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on all of our lives. Now, as you know, RTD's core value is safety. Well, that's especially important during these difficult times and so we focus on keeping our passengers and our employees safe and healthy. Remember, RTD provides a vital service here. We are literally a lifeline for many people in the community and it's crucial that we continue operating that lifeline for the public that relies on us. We communicate, collaborate and cooperate constantly with the state, regional and local authorities about best practices, about safe operation, about communication with the public. We do all of that to preserve our mission of safety.

Doug Tisdale:

RTD public transit as part of the critical infrastructure that we have continues to operate for essential travel. Some people may not know that we are still operating on a reduced schedule, but we are operating. Now, with essential travel, well, that as you understand, includes things like trips for groceries or to get necessary healthcare, medication, to reach an essential job. Essential workers and all of those industries rely on the RTD daily. Now we need everyone's help to keep the transit system safe. It's not just us, it's not just you, it's not just the other riders, everyone needs to help. So we have some standards that we'd like to have you keep in mind.

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Doug Tisdale:

First of all, let's not take unnecessary trips and please limit the time that is spent in the RTD stations to 10 minutes and as often as possible, keep that social distance of six feet between yourself and other passengers. And for heaven's sake, wear a mask or other protective facial covering. Please, we're here for your safety. We'd like you to be here for [inaudible 00:04:59]. Now, there's a lot to cover tonight and we want to answer your questions. I'll give you some contact information for me at the end, but in the meanwhile, while we're online, feel free to look for me on LinkedIn, find me on Facebook and I'll be happy to continue the dialogue. Thank you and back to you Pauletta.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thank you very much director Tisdale. That is director Doug Tisdale, the RTD director for district H. This is a live telephone town hall meeting being hosted by the Regional Transportation District and we're here for you folks. We want to hear what you have to say, so to get in the queue to ask us a question or even to just provide us with a comment or an idea, press star three on your keypad and you'll get in the queue. Again, that's star three, to get in the queue. We're going to go up to Tom next. So Tom, go ahead and ask your question.

Tom:

Yes, I'm asking, what are your plans to protect the drivers moving forward? Are you going to build plexiglass cages around them or what is the plan going forward?

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yeah, that's a great question, Tom. I'm going to ask our chief operating officer, Michael Ford, to weigh in first about some of the things that we're already doing to protect operators and what we're looking at moving forward. Michael.

Michael Ford:

Thank you very much for the question, Pauletta. Yes, we are looking at ways to protect our operators right now. Obviously wearing masks, having wipes, having Lysol and other components to keep them safe and healthy is really important to us. The social distancing, the more to your point, we are looking at some prototypes right now. Whether that's plexiglass or some kind of glass, we're not sure at this point. We're actually experimenting. We have some engineers and designers right now, are looking at the securement areas to protect our operators. We've got some prototypes going right now. We're also working with some other manufacturers and getting their information to determine what best focus that we can put on this. We have a lot of different buses, so we would have to fit up two buses a little bit differently depending on the types that we have.

Michael Ford:

Our efforts right now are to get the new normal and make sure that we have those provisions in place so we can protect them from virus and other unsightly things that might happen. So to your point, we are working on that right now and we've got prototype that we're circulating and we're trying to see how that addresses that need for our operators on a variety of different types of buses. So thank you for the question.

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thank you very much Michael. That's Michael Ford, RTD's chief operations officer. You know there's a lot of talk about masks, director Tisdale mentioned please wear a mask earlier. There are some jurisdictions that have now put out a mask order where they want people to wear masks when out in public. We at RTD have an internal policy, a use of face covering policy that requires our employees to wear masks when out in public and on duty. That includes, of course, our bus operators. The exception of course, would be the rare case where an operator had a condition where they couldn't wear a mask. We're requiring our operators to wear a mask. But director Tisdale, let's touch a little bit more on the importance of masks where we not only protect ourselves, we're protecting each other, but really there's only so much we're able to do to enforce this. Why don't you touch on that a little bit?

Doug Tisdale:

You're so right Pauletta. It is a joint effort. We have to look to our riders to help us in this fight against this pandemic. And one way that you can help us is by wearing those protective coverings. If you think about it, the protective covering isn't really so much to protect you from others. It's to protect others from you. Whatever you might be breathing out or aspirating or exhaling is going to be caught by that protective covering so you're not going around causing problems for others. So it is really important that we all step to the line in that regard and provide our safety and the safety of others by wearing those protective masks.

Doug Tisdale:

Now, it's going to be mandated as of Wednesday in the city and County of Denver, but we operate in a 2,400 square mile area. The city and County of Denver is only 150 square miles and 50 of those square miles are the airport. It's a small, tiny portion of our region. But we're asking people in any event outside of the city and County of Denver, please to use good common sense and to use a mask or other protective facial covering.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks very much director Tisdale. If you'd like to get in the queue to ask us a question or give us a comment, please press star three on your keypad and we'll get you in the queue. All right, we're going to go up next to Libby. Libby, go ahead and ask your question.

Libby:

I'm wondering whether service will be reinstated on the D line so that those of us who attend downtown events when they do open, have access to the ride back South.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Well, thank you for that, Libby. I'm going to bring in Tegan Rice, who is our service planner and scheduler, who's on the line with us tonight. Tegan, why don't you go ahead and answer the question about rail?

Tegan Rice:

With the latest May 20 service change, it was decided to not run the D line on weekends or the late night service due to the ridership, it's primarily commuters going to and from work. However, there is

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

the H line that serves the performing arts center and there's a scheduled meet, I25, where the train will sit there for three minutes and then you can transfer to the C line to get down to your destination.

Pauletta Tonilas:

[crosstalk 00:11:49]. Yeah, go ahead director.

Doug Tisdale:

Yeah, Pauletta, if I can, let me just jump in on that because I want to emphasize, in other words, we've created a connection. We've created an answer. So for folks who live South West that depend upon the C and the D line on the Southwest rail, we've specifically programmed that so that you can take the H line from the performing arts complex down to Broadway and there will be a train waiting for you there. There will be a train out to the Southwest to take you home after the theater and concerts and other events. We have worked very hard to make sure we've got that connection. There is of course, also the opportunity if you wanted to and if it's a pleasant summer evening, to go directly to Union Station and to ride the train from Union Station. But we've looked at this and we're absolutely doing what we can to solve that problem because we want to encourage people to use the light rail for the cultural activities as well. Thank you Tegan for teeing that up, and thank you Pauletta for letting me jump in.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Of course, director, any time. All right, we're going to go to Catherine next. Catherine, you're in the queue and you're up next. Go ahead and ask your question.

Catherine:

Hello. Thank you so much. Good evening. The question was, are you going to clean the buses and the light rails nightly as they do the New York city subways?

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yeah, that's a great question, Catherine. Mike Meader, who is our chief of safety and security can answer that. Mike, do you want to tell Catherine and all the other listeners about our cleaning process now and what we're looking at moving forward?

Mike Meader:

Sure. Thank you for the question, Catherine. This is Mike Meader, the chief safety and security officer. We have been cleaning all of our vehicles nightly since back in early March as a matter of fact. We are cleaning them in accordance with all the public health recommendations from the CDC state and local public health providers. They provide us with some guidance on that. Basically, what has changed is that we're using a disinfectant. It's an EPA, what they call an EPA emerging virus disinfectant that is known to kill the Coronavirus. We have expanded the use of that on all the surfaces on the bus, seats, anything that can be touched, pretty much any station or rail or seatback, windows, any of those kinds of things are being cleaned on a nightly basis right now. So when those vehicles, the trains and the buses roll out in the morning, they are very, very clean and disinfected.

Mike Meader:

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

We do try right now when there is an opportunity, with vehicles either at the end of the line from a train perspective, to try to wipe them, basic wipe down of those on some of those cases. The buses are pretty much out, a lot of them for 22 hours, but sometimes they're out for four or five hours. They come in for a couple of hours and are back out. If we can, we're trying to get to some of those. We're also providing wipes for our operators. As they go out and change shifts, they go out to the bus and can certainly clean the area around their workstation as well. So we're ensuring that our operators also are keeping areas just as clean and disinfected as we possibly can. We're doing a lot of the same cleaning in our facilities as well, so we make sure that all of the facilities that our employees are moving through are getting cleaned on a daily basis as well.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks very much Mike. That's Mike Meader, RTD's chief of safety and security. Folks, this is a live telephone town hall [crosstalk 00:16:03]. Yes, go ahead, director.

Doug Tisdale:

I'm sorry. I was just going to say, let me just follow up on that for a little bit because I think some other safety measures that we're taking, we haven't mentioned yet and I'd like people to be aware of it. I'll do that right after you take a second to announce our telephone number again, just in case people want to know how they can leave a question.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yes. Absolutely, folks. This is a live telephone town hall that is intended to listen to what you have to say. We're here to answer your questions or even just hear a comment or a thought that you might have for RTD. What I'll throw out there is for you to think about is letting us know as we all start to move around the region more and stay at home orders get lifted and we all start to get back to whatever the new normal is. We want to know from you what we'll give you more of a comfort level to hop on board RTD and ride. You can even give us a question or give us your comments about that. So you do that by pressing star three to get in the queue. Again, star three, and we'd love to hear what you have to say. Go ahead, director.

Doug Tisdale:

Thank you very much Pauletta. I wanted to share with folks because we talked about the cleaning every single day. That's every single day, the buses and trains are thoroughly cleaned. We're not taking chances here. In addition to that, the board adopted a rear door boarding policy a couple of weeks ago and that means that you enter and exit the bus through the rear door. Now, that's not on all of the buses obviously. The regional buses just have the front door and so you're still going to go in through that, but all of the rest of the fleet will have rear door boarding.

Doug Tisdale:

Of course as you know, we have suspended the collection of fares during this crisis. In other words, everyone for the time being is riding for free on the buses and the light rail throughout the system. And part of that is again, to create this additional social distancing between our operators and the riders. Speaking of that, we also have now limits on how many people we are taking on each of the vehicles that we have. We have 15 people that we will allow to be boarded on our standard buses and then 20 people on the larger buses, those articulated buses for example, and 30 people on a train car at any one

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

time. I think it's important that they understand, those of our riders who are listening tonight and those who aren't riders, that we are taking these additional steps to provide per safety so that you will feel safe and secure when you're on our system.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thank you, director Tisdale. Again, if you'd like to get in the queue, star three, and we're going to go up next to William. William, go ahead. Ask the question.

William:

Yeah. You asked earlier about what would make us feel more comfortable to be on the train. Given that you're in such close quarters, the masking becomes really important and even though it's required in many places now, when I go to a grocery store, I see lots of people walking around without a mask. So I just wondered if this law would really have no teeth if it's not enforced. And yet I know it'd be really tough to enforce and you can't prevent somebody from taking their mask off out of defiance once they're on the train. That's just a concern is that there's a lot of, let's say defined people around that don't think they're required to wear a mask, which seems totally inconsistent. I mean, they just as might as well drive at a hundred miles an hour down main street. It's civil responsibility and you can be asymptomatic and yet a carrier. I think this needs to be enforced. It would help. That's my observation.

Pauletta Tonilas:

William, thank you so much for that. That's great to hear. And yes, you make a lot of really good points. It is a challenge to enforce a mask requirement and I'll ask Mike Meader first to address that and the challenge it poses for us. Mike.

Mike Meader:

Thank you Pauletta. William, that's great. And trust me, I wish everybody would obey and wear the mask anytime they're outside of their home. That's going to keep them healthier and keep everyone around them healthier. It is a challenge, you're absolutely right. I think that the order that the mayor's handing down on Wednesday, which requires masks being worn in public and in stores and of course in bus stops and on vehicles. Anytime you're out there, we'll make some difference. There's some evidence in other places in cities where those orders have come down, that mask usage does increase. I agree there's always going to be some people who just don't, for whatever reason, want to wear a mask. Enforcement is fairly difficult, although it's a lawful order, to really make sure that everyone's doing that.

Mike Meader:

We don't have the resources from a law enforcement perspective to have someone on every bus and train, unfortunately to enforce that order. So we're really, really appealing to people to continue to think about their own health and safety and the health and safety of people around them and implore them to wear masks, wear some sort of a face covering, as I said, anytime you're outside your home and particularly when you're getting on an RTD bus or train. That is a difficult challenge for us. Boarding by the rear door also presents a little bit more of a challenge because it's not something the bus driver can really monitor and we really don't want him/her focusing on that, we want them focusing on safely operating the vehicle and taking care of all of the passengers. So it is a challenge. There's no doubt

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

about it. On the flip side, it is a lawful order that's coming down on Wednesday. So we're really, really hopeful people pay a little more attention to it and just do the right thing. But thank you William.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks Mike. That's Mike Meader, RTD's chief of safety and security. All right, we're going to go right to Bernie. Bernie, you're next. Go ahead.

Bernie:

Good evening everybody. My name is Bernie. When I was director of the National Guard Association, RTD saw fit to grant military free rides to all active duty military. I'm grateful for that and please keep it going. My reason for calling tonight is that I use the Colorado symphony orchestra as an important means of entertainment and on those cold winter nights at the South street and convention center stop, it's bitter cold at 9:30 and 10:00 o'clock at night. I was wondering why you can't install infrared overhead devices that would keep our huddled masses together in a more fitting way so they don't have to freeze after listening to the beautiful Colorado symphony orchestra. That is my question.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Bernie, that's really nice to hear that you love culture. Our director, Tisdale, also is a lover of culture as well. Director Tisdale, do you first want to touch on that about, we don't have heaters at our station stops and in our shelters. Do you want to first touch on that?

Doug Tisdale:

I will, and I thank you for the opportunity. First of all, let me thank Bernie for your service. We thank you very much for that. And I thank you for mentioning the fact that we continue to provide that discount for active duty military to ride for free at any time, not just during a pandemic, but at any time for active duty military to ride for free on the RTD system. The thing about the station, and I'll let Michael Ford, who's our chief operations officer, comment on this further.

Doug Tisdale:

The issue is that we don't actually own the stops and all of the various stations. Some of these are owned by the municipalities where we are. So for that station, I don't believe that we operate that. I believe that's a city and County of Denver that does it, so we can't. Whereas, at Union Station, for example, we do have some heaters available and stuff. So in various places we do have things like that, but not at the civic center station. I know what you mean I've used that stop a lot and the wind just gets funneled through there like it's a tornado or something. So perhaps Michael Ford can add some more detail on that and correct any misinformation I provided.

Michael Ford:

Thank you director Tisdale. No, I think you've got that right. I just think that as we continue to look at how we can better serve our public, and we are also engaged in re-imagine RTD, I think those are finer points that we can collaborate and partner with others that may own those areas of where we can make headway, we can try to do that. I think this collective effort that we're engaged in right now about how do we redesign our service for the future of the immediate future as well as the long term, can have some of those components already as part of that. So I really appreciate the question and I think it's

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

something that we should take up further discussions. And also looking at partnerships maybe that will help us work together with others that may own certain aspects of the bus stops and other facilities so we can work collaboratively to try to improve those human conditions and make the whole experience of riding transportation superior. So again, thank you for that comment and we'll obviously take those considerations under advisement as we continue to move forward. Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Michael mentioned re-imagine RTD and that is RTD's initiative that we kicked off last fall. Where we are looking at ourselves and how we provide service and what is the right way to provide service, the right level of service, how do we best optimize the resources that we have and put those to the greatest good? Actually, re-imagine RTD is here at a very good time for us to be working with our local stakeholders on because it is perfect as we look to bring back service and what's the right level of service to bring back gradually. And then how do we look at that in the longer term? So director Tisdale, I really think that we're fortunate that we are in the middle of our re-imagine RTD initiative. You agree?

Doug Tisdale:

Yes I do, Pauletta, because we are now forced to examine things that we never thought we'd have to examine. We had this idea of going ahead with the re-imagine process that we started really some time ago, but now it's taken on a much sharper focus by virtue of having to deal with these extreme circumstances. And I know that, and there are a number of questions in the queue here that I'm seeing relative to people asking about when will service be restored, how will service be restored? We'll get into that. Our goal is to do it as quickly as we responsibly can. But in the meanwhile, we're taking this time also to look at what will our service look like in the future? As I said, this is giving us a great opportunity, unfortunate as it is, but a great opportunity to examine those questions as well.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thank you, director Tisdale. Okay, we're going to go to Anne who's up next in the queue. Go ahead Anne.

Ann:

Good evening. I'm Ann from Centennial. I think you've addressed this a little bit in that last conversation and my question was, is the intent to reinstate some of the routes that you've had to cancel because of lack of ridership due to this virus, is there the intention to reinstate them or is that something you're going to be looking at as we hopefully get through this pandemic situation that we're in right now? There's a couple of routes that affect me personally, so that's why I'm asking that.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yeah, and that's very good. Thank you. There's lots of layers of answers to this and I would say that yes, our intent is to reinstate service and we'll look to do that gradually. We are evaluating our operation through this pandemic crisis and as we start to see more riders coming back to the system, we will be making those judgments on adding service back. But Michael, I will go ahead and turn it over to you for a quick minute for you to address how we're looking at doing that. How do we go from where we've reduced service to this point of Saturday bus service, Sunday rail service to ramping this back up?

Michael Ford:

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Thank you, Pauletta. We want to continue to look through where the services are needed, making sure that we can get people to essential places like universities and stores and work and all those trips that really are designed to move people where they want to go, even for entertainment. But at the same time, we want to make sure that we're looking at our data, looking at our information to determine what new markets might be opening up as a result of this. So our intent is always to address the resources that we have, meaning the operators and the employees to match what we can actually deliver so we can be efficient and effective and providing you the most efficient service possible.

Michael Ford:

Our intent is to continue to monitor, to continue to evaluate and to look at how we continue to provide service in this new normal that we're in. Our commitment is always to make sure that we're providing the necessary services that people demand or working with other partners to carry that service on. So it's a seamless trip. We're looking again, and a lot of that comes into the data that we collect, the observation, the demands, the outreach, the surveys that we do to garner that information so we can make sure we're meeting the needs, not just today but well into the future. Thank you Pauletta.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks Michael. And I will mention that just today, we launched an online survey that is available through the RTD website at [rtd-denver.com](http://rtd-denver.com) and we would love for you to participate in that survey, folks. It's a very quick survey. Take you maybe five minutes to go ahead and click through and answer some questions for us so that we can get an idea of how people are using our service now, when folks expect to come back to RTD, and what will give you more of a comfort level to hop back on board RTD. So you can give us some input through that online survey that we just launched today on our website or you could get in the queue by pressing star three and tell us right now on the call what things should RTD be considering as we wrap service back up and entice you to come back on board? We ask you to share those thoughts with us. Okay. We're going to go now to [Kavita 00:33:23]. Kavita, you're next step in the queue so go ahead.

Kavita:

Hi, my name's Kavita. I've ridden RTD for about 20 years on and off, love it. If I understand correctly, you said that the larger buses would have up to 20 people sitting in it. So my question is, what happens if there's more than 20 people waiting to get on the bus? How will that be handled? Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Great question, Kavita. There's several things that we're actually doing. Michael, do you want to explain some of the things that we're doing to manage numbers of people on our buses and trains?

Michael Ford:

Yes. Thank you, Pauletta. I mentioned earlier that we really monitor the services and we want to make sure we have extra resources to accommodate those needs. So we continually are provided from our operators, our supervisors, our security officers, what the load looks like, operators call in and give us information so we can position resources out there in the field so we can maximize the opportunities to help with social distancing. That means having additional vehicles and operators available so we reduce the opportunities that we would have overload on particular routes and we're doing that on a day to day basis. Again, we're utilizing a lot of information out there in the field to help us be as effective and

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

efficient as possible when delivering those services. That's what we're doing with eyes and ears out there, data that we get and positioning resources accordingly so we can be as effective and efficient and helping out with the social distancing so we can continue to uphold those standards that we think are very, very important to our public and to our employees. Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yeah. And people see a bus that says bus is full, our bus operators have the ability to flip the sign to say that if they start to sense that we are getting to that capacity. And then as they let people off the bus, then others we encourage to come on board. But as Michael was saying, given that we have dropped down or reduced service, we do have operators available now that can run buses on a standby in staging areas so that those can be dispatched on the routes where we have more riders. So there's several things, several layers of how we're trying to manage the situation. Okay, we're going to go to Bobby next. Bobby, you're in the queue and you're up.

Bobby:

All right, good evening. How are you doing? I was just wondering if there's any plans on restoring route 43 or any service in Parker in general in the near future. Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Well, thank you Bobby. I'll go ahead and turn it over to Tegan Rice, who is our service planner and scheduler on the line with us. Tegan.

Tegan Rice:

Hi. Yeah, so currently the plan was primarily just focused on ensuring services that would get people to hospitals, grocery stores, et cetera. But as Michael mentioned earlier, with re-imagine and also we do hope to ramp up service once its ridership starts to improve but we also need to do it safely. But we're still continuing to monitor ridership and when we get the complaints we do take them into consideration as to whether or not a route is warranted to be added back into the COVID plan.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks Tegan. Three times a year, RTD does service changes and that is intended to adjust service to the various realities that we have happening across the system. Some of them happen every year as school lets out. We don't need as much service to serve students. And then when school goes back in, we will make changes to ramp that up. But three times a year, we do this every year and we do go out for public input before we do these changes. And we do listen to what people have to say. Director Tisdale, public input and engagement is a big part of what RTD does and especially as it relates to service changes. We've done a lot of that recently.

Doug Tisdale:

And we have indeed, Paula. I want to appreciate everyone in the community who has participated in the public outreach that we had for the May service changes and I want to applaud our staff for their excellent work in helping with that as well. The interesting thing is we went out and we had all these meetings about the May service changes and we said because of the operator shortage, we are going to

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

be reducing some service and it was somewhere between an eight to 10% depending on how you count reduction in service.

Doug Tisdale:

Just as we were at the point of approving all that, and we did approve it, is when this pandemic hit us and we then had to address immediately the concept of severely constrained service doing what we call the COVID pandemic plan. And that got to be a real exercise and skill at trying to figure out where we could best provide service. As we scale back from this COVID pandemic plan based upon the ridership that starts building up, we will be restoring to that May service change. But by the time that comes around, we'll already be looking at the September service change because as Pauletta points out, we do it three times a year and it gets very challenging and people like Tegan have a huge task in trying to balance all this out. But that's what we're doing.

Doug Tisdale:

I should say because I talk too long, I know, speaking of three times, star three, star three. If you have a question, please press star three on your phone and we'll get to your questions. Thank you for the patience of some of the people who have been in the queue here with us. We appreciate that. But please, press star three, and we'll be happy to answer your questions. But I wanted to say one more thing before I put myself back on mute here because I think Mike Meader would think that something was wrong with me if I forgot to mention this. Now more than ever, ladies and gentlemen, your safety and your security is important to us.

Doug Tisdale:

We want you to know that whenever you are on the bus or the train, you are safe. We want you to know that you can take your smartphone, your iPhone, your Android, either one, and you can install the RTD Transit Watch app. That's Transit Watch app. You go to that app and you're on a bus or a train and you are immediately in touch with our 24 hour command center. If there's any problem, any issue, anything that makes you uncomfortable or that is inappropriate going on a bus or a train or a station, you can be in touch with our RTD police force immediately and they will respond immediately. So please remember, Transit Watch is the name of the app on the Apple, iPhone store or on the Android store. And if you install the Transit Watch app, you'll never ride alone. Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks very much for that, director Tisdale. And I'm sure Mr. Meader thanks you for that too. That's one for Transit Watch.

Doug Tisdale:

Right.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yeah, right. We're going to go up next to Brenda. Brenda, go ahead.

Brenda:

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Hi, this is Brenda. Director Tisdale, I just wanted to say, first of all, thank you for the valuable service that RTD provides to the entire community. I believe that the workers are essential and that they are doing their part to come to work every day and do everything they can. That being said, I do have concerns for their safety. They are in a word held hostage every day in their job and in their position with people that get on the bus or get on that train, what can you do to ensure that they remain COVID negative?

Pauletta Tonilas:

Brenda, Yeah. Thank you so much for that and thank you for the care for our operators. We care for them a great deal as well. I will tell you that my experience in talking with operators is they have a great deal of pride in their job and the public service that they provide. And yes, they're put in a tough position right now. They are considered essential workers and that comes with a certain amount of commitment beyond what many of us are doing right now. Mike, I would ask you to weigh in about just what you're seeing, you and Michael both visit the divisions, our bus operating divisions a lot. What is the sense amongst operators right now?

Mike Meader:

Pauletta, thank you. This is Mike Meader, and thank you for the question. It is our absolute utmost important thing that we do is taking care of our employees and our passengers. There's no doubt about it. I do visit a lot with the operators. It's like any kind of thing, the more you hear in the media and the news about the pandemic, something like this, we haven't seen anything like this before. Most of us in our lifetime. So there is a lot of anxiety associated with that. We are in constant communication with our operators, talking to them, educating, listening to them to understand where those concerns are so that we can address them. We're in daily contact with the public health agencies listening as they learn more about the virus and about the way we can best protect one another. We're coordinating our efforts to ensure we do the things we need to do.

Mike Meader:

We're reminding our employees at all times to practice social distancing. That distance that you can separate yourselves from others is the most effective way to fight the virus. You'll hear that constantly from the CDC and whatnot. We reconfigured work areas and office spaces to make sure that we can help to promote that social distancing and make them feel better about coming in. Obviously we have some very liberal policies about people if they're not feeling well or if they're needing to take care of a member of the family who might be sick as well, encouraging them to stay home so that they don't feel like they need to come in and others around them won't be concerned. Then of course, those who are able to work remotely in our organization, we have them working remotely so that they don't have to come in.

Mike Meader:

As far as the PPE goes, the personal protective equipment, we're distributing face coverings to all of our employees. They all have them. Hand sanitizer, plenty of that as well. The gloves are available, the nitrile gloves, although that's not the first line of defense as recommended by the CDC. But there's plenty of hand sanitizer, wipes, those kinds of things to make sure that we're protecting our employees. Of course, we're educating them on using those things and of course, washing hands as frequently as possible. We do require now all of our employees we have for a couple of weeks. And of course, the order that's coming down in Denver on Wednesday is reinforcing that essential workers and that's our

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

employees that they wear masks while they're on duty on RTD property and still maintaining that social distancing as much as they can too.

Mike Meader:

Those things are available to them, those things will protect them. We're keeping them updated on what's going on with the COVID-19, with the employees around them and making sure that again, communication is key here to help quell some of that anxiety that just comes along with the pandemic. We've been very fortunate, I'll say here, as compared to a lot of peers and a lot of other agencies in that we have not had a single digit number of confirmed positive cases amongst our 3000 employees. We're keeping very close contact with them, really just communication, as I said, is key in making sure they understand what's available to them and how much we care for all the things they're doing.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thank you, Mike, for going through all of that. We had somebody email us and say that they couldn't find the survey that I was talking about on the website. So I was mentioning that we'd love for you to participate in our online survey. If you go to [rtd-denver.com](http://rtd-denver.com), it's actually on the homepage and there's a little graphic with a thought cloud that says something like, take our survey, or how will you use RTD services? Take our survey. You can either click into it there or we have a dedicated COVID-19 webpage and it's on that COVID webpage as well. The survey is available in English and Spanish, just for your information. We just launched that survey today and people can participate in it through this Sunday, May 10th. So we'd love to hear what you have to say. All right, we're going to go to Terry next. Terry, go ahead.

Terry:

This is Terry. I was concerned about communication and it occurs to me, is the internet the best place to go or can you find out quickly on the telephone? Is there any provision where people on a certain bus route, for example, could get an email if there's something that's urgent or changing that they should be aware of and so on?

Pauletta Tonilas:

Terry, thank you very much for that. First of all, one of the best things to do is to sign up for rider alerts through RTD. You could do that through our website actually and rider alerts are sent out. If you subscribe to a rider alert for a certain bus route or a certain rail line or for several even, you will get rider alerts emailed to you when there's a change, a disruption or what have you. So I highly recommend that you do that. We also tweet out any changes in service. Our customer care agents who do our social media through our customer care department are fantastic about pushing those out on social media.

Pauletta Tonilas:

We also though have all of our rider alerts available on our website. On [rtd-denver.com](http://rtd-denver.com), you can go to rider alerts, there's an icon on the homepage that says rider alerts and you can click into it and see if there are any rider alerts or any changes at all on a particular route or rail line. Then also to get specific time information or location of where your train is or your bus, you can also look through our website or through our mobile app on our next ride app. It's just a real time information that will tell you where the bus is or where the train is. That's a lot of info, but there are lots of ways to keep up with particular routes and lines. Director Tisdale, did you have something that you wanted to say?

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Doug Tisdale:

I was just going to say, if I may-

Pauletta Tonilas:

Yes, director. Go ahead.

Doug Tisdale:

Pauletta, thank you very much on that question that we had. I really want to emphasize, there's also a third party app that's called Transit. You can go again to your app store, either on the Apple app store or the Android and get Transit. It's a third party app and it actually works all around the world with transit agencies all over the world. And they get the same information from us that we are providing through the website and they have it and they will send you notifications as well and that will give you real time service on if you're standing somewhere and you want to say, is there a train coming here soon or a bus coming here soon? The transit app is very reliable and gives you that information as well.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thank you for adding that, director Tisdale. Okay. We still have a few more minutes, folks. It's not too late to get in the queue. You can press star three now and you can still get in the queue. We're going to go to Brenda who is next? Go ahead Brenda.

Brenda:

Hi. You answered a previous question of mine but it pops something else up. Director Tisdale, you said something about you've got these crews at night disinfecting and cleaning, doing the super cleaning of these trains and these buses, which I totally commend, and it does make the general public feel much safer getting on a train and going to the airport or getting on a bus and going to the doctor's office. But my question to you is, are those folks that are doing, I want to say heavy lifting and putting themselves in harm's way, using those chemicals and being on that end line to clean, are you giving them hazard pay?

Pauletta Tonilas:

Michael Ford, our chief operations officer can address that. We have been asked that some. Michael, would you like to address that?

Michael Ford:

Yes. Thank you Pauletta. Yes, we are looking into other ways that we can support our employees in general. That issue has come up in some discussions. We have not made any decisions on that yet, but we are definitely aware of that provision and what others may be doing around the country. And we'll continue to talk and see where we might land. Obviously is an important component to supporting our operators. But there are many different ways we can do that. So we're quite aware of that provision that some transit agencies are participating in and we'll continue to evaluate and see what makes sense and what we can maybe do to address some of those concerns. Thank you.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Regional Transportation District  
District H Director Doug Tisdale  
May 4, 2020

Director Tisdale, I am going to ask you to share some information on our Accessoride service. We get a lot of questions every day about Accessoride service and how that is going. Why don't you share some points about that?

Doug Tisdale:

I appreciate this opportunity because that's a very important service and many of my constituents in district H, and just to remind you all, district H is cherry Hills village, Greenwood village, Centennial, Littleton, Columbine Valley and Highlands Ranch. At this point in time, we have not made any reductions at all to Accessoride services. In other words, all of the Accessoride services that we were providing before the Coronavirus pandemic hit us, we are still providing. Now, to reduce the demand for staff and really to provide better service for our customers who need this Accessoride service, we have moved from a five day advanced booking to a next day only advanced booking and that's until further notice. That means if you need a ride rather than calling out five days in advance, you call up the day before and say, I need to be at the doctor's at this or somewhere else such as the grocery store.

Doug Tisdale:

We're trying to make it easier for you on the grocery store because now we're providing free home grocery delivery service. All of RTD's current Accessoride customers can use King Soopers, Safeway, Community Ministry Southwest Food Bank, the Senior Hub Senior Solutions and Adams County Food Bank. Additional ones are being added as time goes by, and we'll share that with all of you on the RTD website. If you want to get that food delivery service, all you have to do is contact your local store or your food pantry that you may use to coordinate a pickup time. And then you just relay that information to RTD. Our drivers will be there to get the food order and to bring it to our customers. In addition to booking your trips for essential purposes, you can use Accessoride to purchase groceries as well.

Pauletta Tonilas:

Thanks very much director Tisdale. Without a doubt, Accessoride, one of our very important services and the grocery delivery service offering has really been quite popular, and what a great service that is? Well folks, we have come to just about the end of our telephone town hall meeting. I want to thank you for being on the line with us and sharing some of your evening with us. Want to remind you that you can get all of the updates of what RTD is doing to address COVID-19 or anything else on our website at [rtd-denver.com](http://rtd-denver.com). There is a dedicated COVID-19 webpage that you can click right into. Then of course we have that online survey on the website. Also, you can call our customer care center for any information about RTD or assistance with something that you might need. That phone number is 303-299-6000. I will now turn it over to director Tisdale to wrap us up tonight. Director.

Doug Tisdale:

Thank you very much, Pauletta. I appreciate all the time that all of you have put in and getting this all put together. I want to say a special thank you to all of our essential workers in the Denver region. And ladies and gentlemen, that includes your RTD operators. I want to thank you all who've been listening in with us. Well over a thousand people have been a part of this conversation. I want to thank you for your comments and remember, you can always contact me. You can reach out to [doug.tisdale@rtd-denver.com](mailto:doug.tisdale@rtd-denver.com). Do that and I will answer your emails. Or you can find me on Facebook, Doug Tisdale. Look for me on LinkedIn, Doug Tisdale, I'll be happy to answer your questions. I thank you all. And ladies and gentlemen, please remember this, this too will pass. Thank you and good night.