

Livermore Amador Valley  
**TRANSIT AUTHORITY**



**LAVTA's COVID-19 Response and Action Plan**

**Last Updated - June 2020**

If the past three months have taught us anything, it is that the only thing we can count on is uncertainty. What we have found thus far is that planning ahead is helpful, but the ability to remain nimble and fluid allows us to respond quickly as the environment in which we operate sometimes changes over the course of a single day.

As we move forward, and as more and more of our key constituents move back into their pre-COVID activities, we see three key areas that must remain at the forefront of our focus to operate in a safe environment for our passengers and our employees.

1. Health & Safety

- a. *Implement an extensive cleaning and disinfecting regime.* Since early March, we have been disinfecting all buses once each day – including driver compartments, fareboxes, Clipper card readers, handrails, stanchions, seats, and other onboard hard surfaces. Our plans moving forward are to also implement additional disinfecting of high touch surfaces on our vehicles at layover points along our routes.
- b. *Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies.* Since early March, we have been offering our employees individual hand sanitizer dispensers and gloves. Our plans moving forward are to install hand sanitizer stations onboard all of our buses. Since April 18, face coverings or masks have been required for all transit passengers and drivers. All of our employees have been provided with various face covering options. Each driver also carries a supply of disposable masks for distribution to passengers attempting to board the bus without one.
- c. *Conduct education and outreach efforts.* Since early March, we have posted on buses and at our facilities CDC guidance regarding the symptoms of COVID-19 as well as tips on preventing the spread of the disease. This activity is expected to continue as new information is released. We have reached out to all three area school districts and Las Positas College to discuss the challenges that could be present as schools reopen for in classroom education. We also plan to reach out to major employers to encourage staggered shifts to help spread out the commute and avoid crowding during peak travel times as employees begin to return to work.

- d. *Provide a protective barrier for bus operators.* On March 18, we instituted rear door boarding except for passengers with mobility devices. Blocking off the front section of the bus helped create a safer environment for our operators. Moving forward, we plan to install barriers adjacent to the driver compartment to offer a level of separation from passengers as front door boarding and fare collection resumes. We anticipate a short-term solution in the next month followed by a more permanent installation by this fall.

## 2. Physical Distancing

- a. *Maintain CDC guidance of 6 feet.* In mid-March, we implemented rear door boarding and went to fare-free operation in order maintain the CDC recommended distance between our passengers and our drivers. Signage on vehicles promoted social distancing guidelines. We continue to monitor passenger loads on a daily basis and have rarely reached peak loads where social distancing would be difficult to achieve. Moving forward, we will continue to monitor peak loads and will implement actions as necessary to maintain appropriate load levels. By July 1, we plan to add visual distancing cues on board buses and at key transfer location. We also plan to stage standby buses at the East Dublin BART Station and the Livermore Transit Center to handle capacity issues in a timely manner.

## 3. Efficiency in Delivering Public Transit

- a. *Closely monitor demand.* Our average weekday ridership during the week of March 2 was approximately 7,000. After the Shelter in Place Orders took effect on March 17, our ridership hit its lowest point during the week of April 6 when the weekday average ridership was 660. A slight rebound has happened, with average weekday ridership hitting 935 the week of May 11. Moving forward, as ridership continues to climb, service can be restored incrementally as needed to maintain safe operating capacities.
- b. *Improve passenger information technology.* We currently monitor passenger loads by having drivers report to Dispatch when certain load limits are reached. Moving forward, our goal is to automate this information by July 1 so that it will be available in real time to both LAVTA staff and our passengers.
- c. *Offer alternative service delivery options.* The first COVID-19 related service reductions made on March 26 and the second round on April 6 included several routes with extremely low productivity. On May 1, LAVTA expanded the Go Dublin program to also include the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton and rebranded the program Go Tri-Valley. Go Tri-Valley provides a safety net level of mobility to all persons throughout our service area by subsidizing half the cost of Uber and Lyft rides up to a maximum of \$5.00.

Our entire business model is completely changed from where we were just 3 months ago, when we were riding the wave of six consecutive months of double-digit ridership growth. The new reality is that with physical distancing likely to be in place for a long period of time, even the most successful transit agencies will act more like social services than businesses. Until a vaccine is widely available and effective and public anxiety is calmed, the new role for transit will likely be providing a way for essential workers to get to jobs and helping those with reduced financial means during the pandemic and the related economic downturn.