






Post-COVID Transit Lessons Learned – Operations

Rodney Davis, Director of Customer Relations, Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)

Hampton Roads Transit Service Area



-  **Chesapeake**
-  **Hampton**
-  **Newport News**
-    **Norfolk**
-   **Portsmouth**
-   **Virginia Beach**

Legend	
 Bus	 Ferry
 Light Rail	 Trolley

Serving a population of 1.3 million over 798 square miles.

Key Employers



Newport News Shipyard
Norfolk Naval Shipyard
BAE Systems
Colonna's Shipbuilding
General Dynamics
Smithfield Foods



Sentara
Bon Secour
Riverside Medical
VA Medical Center
Naval Medical Center Portsmouth



Old Dominion
Norfolk State
Hampton
Eastern Virginia Medical School
Christopher Newport
Virginia Wesleyan
Tidewater Community
Thomas Nelson

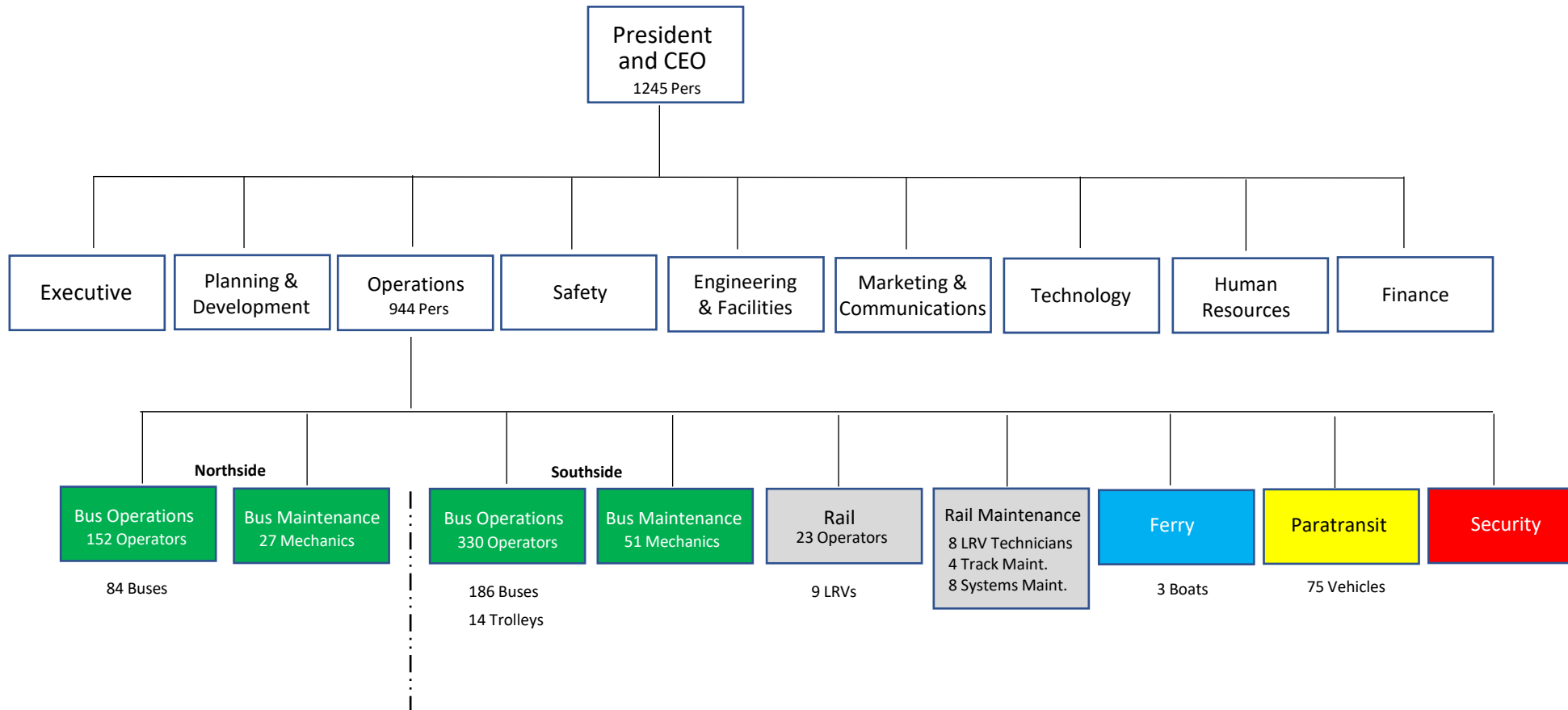


Tourism / Hospitality
Restaurants
Retail
Hotels
Venues



Naval Station Norfolk
Naval Support Activity
JEB Little Creek
JB Langley-Eustis
Coast Guard

HRT Organization & Key Functions



Situation March 2020

- News of the pandemic spreads
- COVID inquiries increase
- Schools begin to close
- Operator shortage begins to become critical



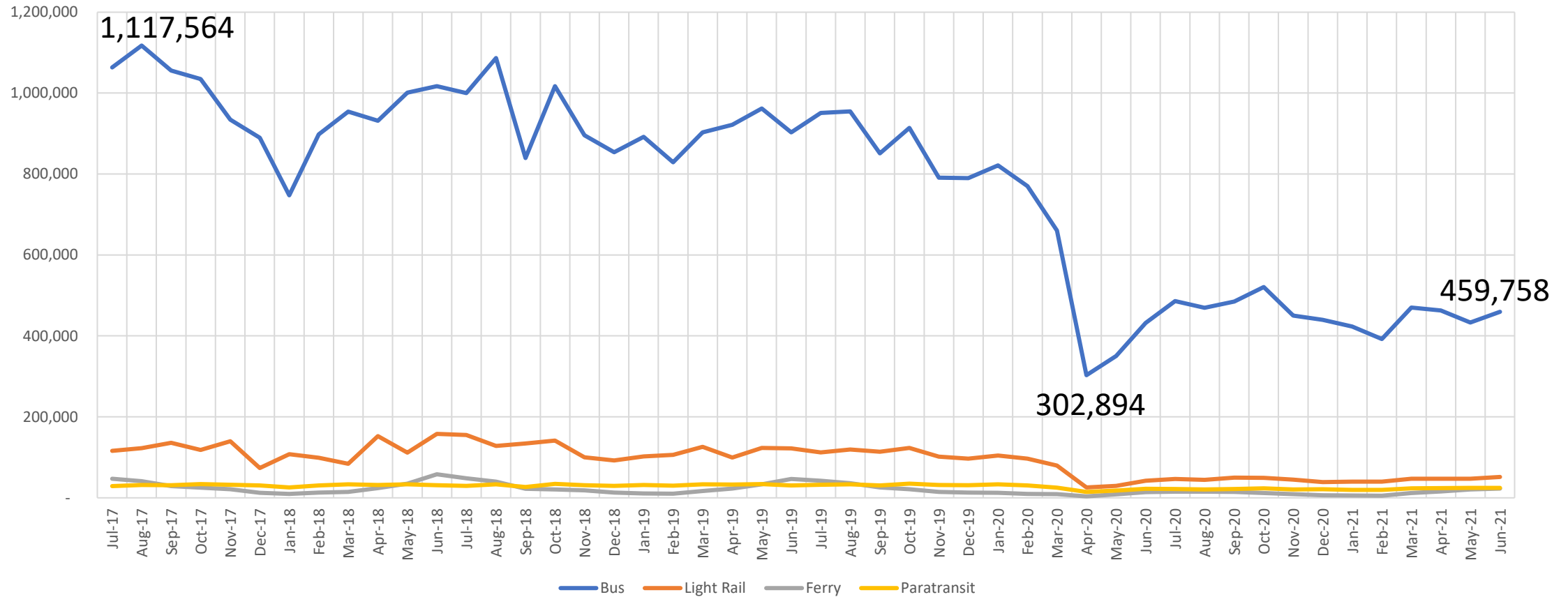
Key Events

- Mar 14, 2020 – HRT Continues Regular Service
- Mar 31, 2020 – HRT Switches to Essential Service Plan
- April 10, 2020 – HRT Temporarily Halts Fare Collection
- May 29, 2020 – Executive Order – Face Covering Required
- June 14, 2020 – HRT Returns to Regular Service
- July 1, 2020 – End of Free Fare
- Feb 1, 2021 – Mask Requirements Tightened
- May 9, 2021 – Service Reliability Plan

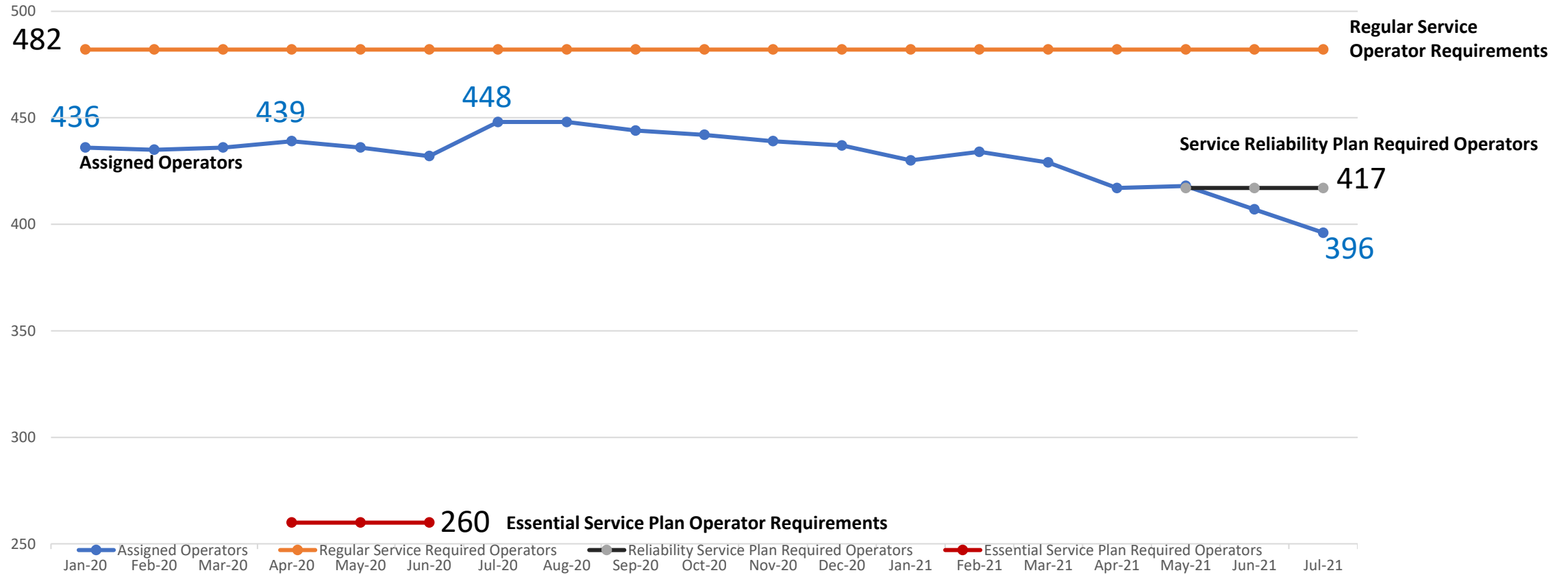


Ridership – All Modes

Ridership by Mode FY18-FY21



Operations – Anticipate Operator Unavailability



Operations – Reduced Service, Free Fare, and Rear Door Boarding Presents a Variety of Challenges

- Social distancing was difficult to achieve. Some buses were full or near full
- Front doors were prioritized for ADA passengers. Some passengers insisted on using the front door
- Difficult to count ridership. APCs not NTD certified
- Operators punched “free ride” key to record boardings. Multiple input errors



Operations – Improved Communication/Notification System Required

- 60% of operators are relieved “on the street”
- Some operators do not have email
- Contact information for some operators was outdated



Paratransit – Sustain Approach. No Need for Service Reduction

- Customer demand decreased
- Did not reduce service, but reduced capacity (Maximum of 3 in cutaway, 2 in van, 1 in TNCC)



Planning – Build Reduced Service Plan on the Number of Available Operators. Adjust to Degree Possible IAW Customer and Employer Needs

- HRT Switches to Essential Service Plan alert (March 31, 2020)
 - Robert Hall Shuttle (Routes 13 & 15) alert (April 1, 2020)
 - Route 20, 21, 45 Frequency Increase alert (April 2, 2020)
 - Route 104, 112 Frequency Increase alert (April 8, 2020)
 - Service Adjustments on Route 1 alert (April 13, 2020)
- } Essential Service Plan Adjustments



CUSTOMER ALERT

Important: HRT Switches to Essential Service Plan
Effective: Tuesday, March 31, 2020

In response to the [Coronavirus](#), effective Tuesday, March 31, 2020, HRT will implement the “Essential Service Plan.” This means there will be no change to the Sunday schedule. However, bus routes that normally operate Monday through Saturday will run on an hourly basis (except certain MAX routes) unless they have been temporarily suspended. Please see the list of temporarily suspended routes. There will be no 15 or 30-minute bus service. In most cases, these routes will also start later and end earlier. Please check the Essential Service Plan route schedule on gohrt.com to ensure you can arrive on time at your destination.

Essential Service Plan

Southside: (Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Portsmouth and Chesapeake)
Monday - Sunday (7 Days)



CUSTOMER ALERT


Route 104 Frequency Increase - Essential Service Plan
Effective: Wednesday, April 8, 2020

The following additional trips will be added to the Route **104** (Monday-Friday only). The Essential Service Plan has been modified to accommodate this change.

Route 104

Outbound (NNTC – Net Center)
6:15 AM
7:15 AM

Inbound (Net Center to NNTC)
5:45 AM
6:45 AM
7:45 AM



CUSTOMER ALERT

Robert Hall Shuttle - Essential Service Plan
Effective: Wednesday, April 1, 2020

In order to provide service to and from Robert Hall during the activation of the Essential Service Plan, an hourly shuttle will be provided between Military Circle & Robert Hall (Route 15 Shuttle), and between Liberty & Seaboard and Robert Hall (Route 13 Shuttle).

Liberty & Seaboard Robert Hall (Route 13 Shuttle)
The shuttle will operate Monday - Saturday. The shuttle will follow the Route 13 trip arrangement between Liberty & Seaboard and Robert Hall.

From Liberty St & Seaboard Ave to Robert Hall Blvd			From Robert Hall Blvd to Liberty St & Seaboard Ave		
3	4	5	5	4	3
Liberty St & Seaboard Ave	Frederick Rd & Suffolk Rd	Robert Hall Blvd	Robert Hall Blvd	Frederick Rd & Suffolk Rd	Liberty St & Seaboard Ave
6:15	6:28	6:40	6:50	6:57	7:18
7:15	7:28	7:40	7:50	7:57	8:18
8:15	8:28	8:40	8:50	8:57	9:18
9:15	9:28	9:40	9:50	9:57	10:18
10:15	10:28	10:40	10:50	10:57	11:18
11:15	11:28	11:40	11:50	11:57	12:18

Planning – Anticipate Shift Changes by Key Employers

- HRT Switches to Essential Service Plan alert (March 31, 2020)
- **Newport News Shipyard (NNSY) Reduces Number of Shifts from Three to Two (May 4, 2020)**
 - Adjustments {
 - ❑ Service adjustments to Routes 103, 64 alerts (May 4, 2020)
 - ❑ Service adjustments on Metro Area Express (MAX) Routes 966, 967, 972 alerts (May 4, 2020)
 - ❑ Service adjustments to Peninsula Commuter Routes (PCS) 403, 405, 414, 415, 430 alerts (May 4, 2020)
 - ❑ Service adjustment on Route 961 alert (May 11, 2020)
- End of Essential Service Plan and Return to Regular Service alert (June 14, 2020)
- **NNSY Returns to 3-shift Schedule (August 17, 2020)**
 - ❑ Shipyard PCS Routes Return to Regular Service (August 24, 2020)
- Service Reliability Plan alert (May 9, 2021)

Planning – Reduced Service Plans Should Be Loaded in CAD-AVL System


Essential Service Plan was not loaded in the Computer Aided Dispatch-Automatic Vehicle Location (CAD-AVL) system

- Could not monitor schedules or on-time performance
- Operators used “open mic” to communicate, and relied on timecard for schedule adherence

Customer Relations – Some Customers Will Claim Medical Exemption from Mask Requirement. Need a Mask Exemption Policy.

- Governor Northam Executive Order on Face Covering Requirement alert (May 29, 2020)
 - ❑ Customers complain about mask requirements
 - ❑ Customers complain mask requirements and social distancing are not being enforced
 - ❑ Customers claim exemption from mask requirements because of medical condition
- CDC Mask Requirement alert (February 1, 2021)
 - ❑ Customers complain about masks requirements
 - ❑ Customers complain mask requirements and social distancing are not being enforced
 - ❑ Customers claim exemption from mask requirements because of medical condition
- Mask Exemption Card Policy (February 1, 2021)



		NUMBER	EFF. DATE
		CS-117	Created 2/4/2021
POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL		SUPERSEDED	
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT Customer Relations Division		KEY SUBJECT Mask Exemptions	
TITLE Medical Exemption Card Policy			
APPLIES TO Customer Relations Division of Planning & Development Department and Operations Department		APPROVAL(S) William Harrell, Ray Amoruso, Rodney Davis, Benjamin Simms & Dawn Sciortino	
Purpose To delineate policy and procedures for the production, issuance, and authorized use of the HRT mask Medical Exemption Card.			
Bottom Line			

Security – Some Customers Will Refuse to Comply with Mask Requirements. Need Additional Security.

- Security force expanded (May 27, 2020)
 - ❑ Added four roving security guards
- Governor's Executive Order 63 on Face Covering Requirement alert (May 29, 2020)
 - ❑ Customers complain about mask requirements
 - ❑ Customers complain mask requirements and social distancing are not being enforced
 - ❑ Customers claim exemption from mask requirements because of medical condition
- CDC Mask Requirement alert (February 1, 2021)
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Mask Exemptions, Complaints & Incidents

- Mask Exemptions**
- 15 Applied
 - 4 Approved

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	CY Total
Mask Complaints	5	15	13	5	3	11	9	61

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	CY Total
Mask Compliance	3(2)	13(1)	13(5)	10(4)	5(4)	10(3)	11(6)	65(25)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	CY Total
TSA Reportable	0	0	5	3	4	0	1	13

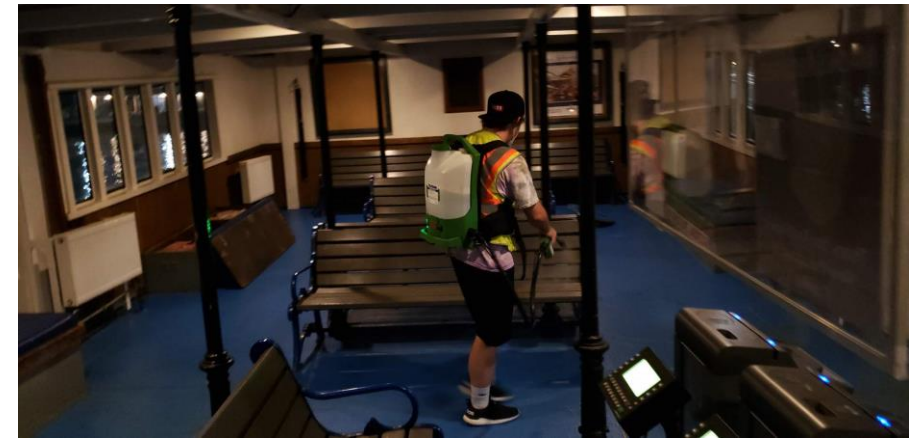
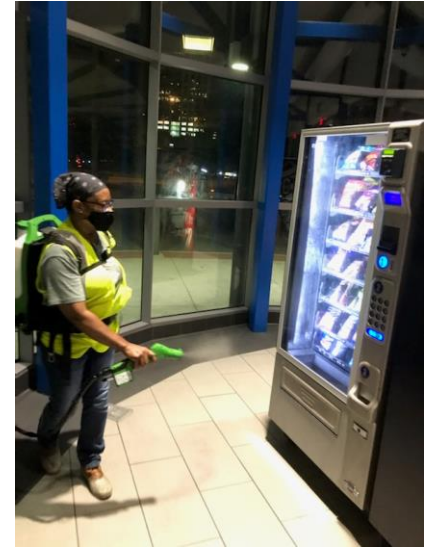
Communications – “On the Ground” Outreach is Necessary When Business & Retail Landscape Has Changed Significantly

- Leveraged Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC)
- Communicated changes to key employers ASAP
- Commercial landscape changed after one year
- Tremendous variation in business opening and closing times
- “On the ground” outreach was necessary
- Employers said they depend on our services



Safety & Facilities – Maintain Stocks of Cleaning Supplies. Use Multiple Vendors. Sustain Midday Transit Center Cleaning

- HRT takes additional steps to Combat Coronavirus alert (March 23, 2020)
 - ❑ Distributed masks, hand sanitizer, wipes, and disinfectant
 - ❑ Enforced mandatory masking
 - ❑ Propped open interior doors in all facilities
 - ❑ Installed air ionizers
 - ❑ Installed physical barriers
 - ❑ Cleaned (electrostatic) all vehicles and facilities nightly
- Transit centers closed for midday cleaning alert (March 24, 2020 – Present)



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