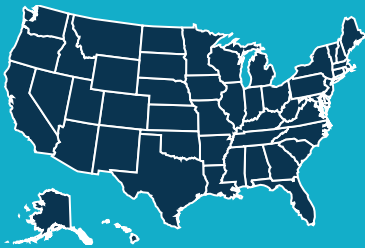
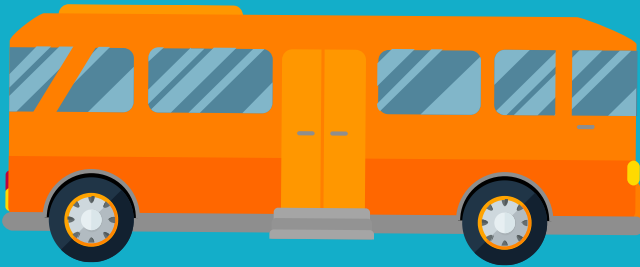


# Transit Agencies Responses to COVID-19

Data below are from 111 transit agencies across the U.S., including the 50 largest and at least one from every state.



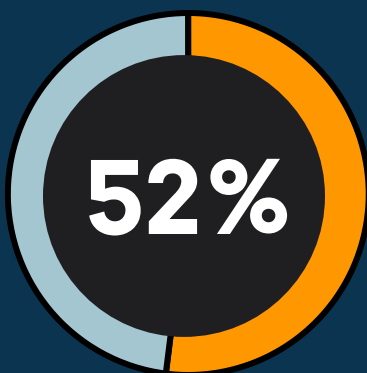
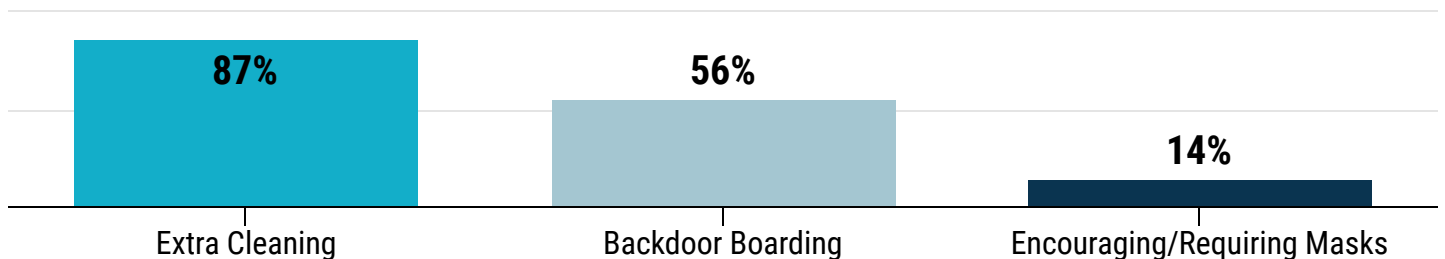
See details:

<https://arcg.is/055jHy>

# 94%

of all transit agencies modified service or eliminated routes

## Agencies' On-Vehicle Changes to Combat COVID-19

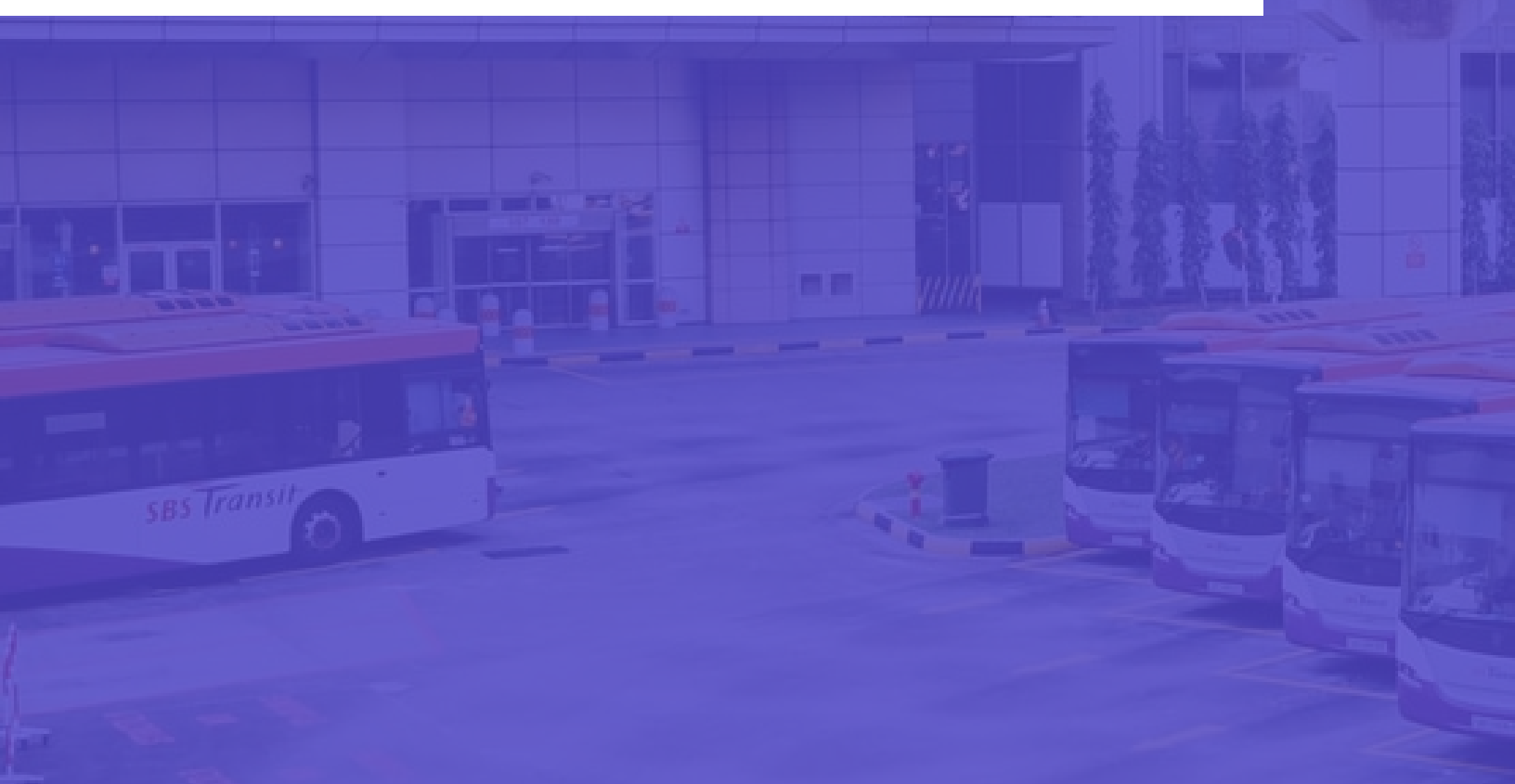


of transit agencies suspended fare collection to reduce interaction and limit the spread of COVID-19

-Layout by Eric Burdette

# June 2020

## Transit Agencies Response to COVID-19



*Prepared by Eric Burdette and John Larson-Friend  
Transportation Research Group  
University of Oregon*

# U.S. Public Transit and COVID-19

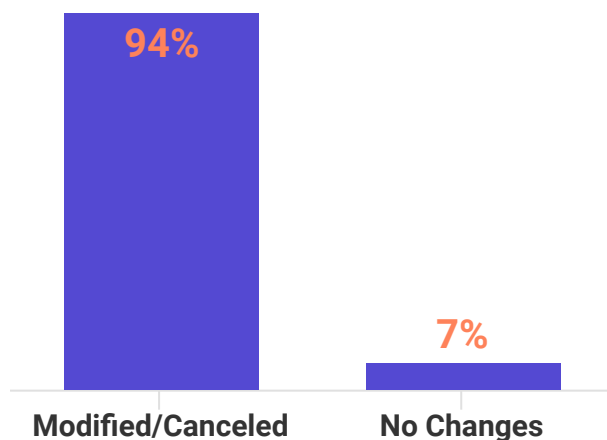
The outbreak of COVID-19 in the spring of 2020 ground the U.S. to a halt. With stay at home orders implemented in all 50 states, the American Public Transportation Association notes that ridership on public transportation in April 2020 had **declined by 73%** compared to April 2019.

In addition to seeing massive declines in ridership, public transportation agencies in the U.S. took unprecedented **steps to safeguard employees and riders** while maintaining an essential service.

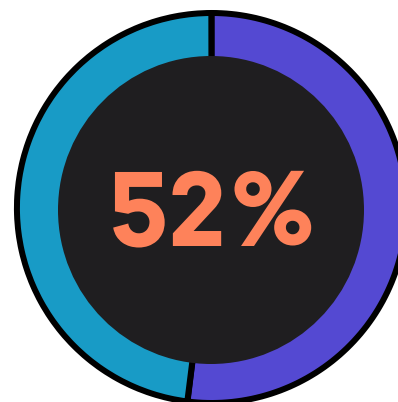
We reached out to transportation agencies as well as compiled independent research to collect **data on 111 agencies and their responses** to the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are highlights from the findings.

Note: totals of more than 100% are due to rounding.

Nearly all transit agencies modified or canceled some aspect of service.



Over half of all transit agencies eliminated fare collection to reduce interaction.



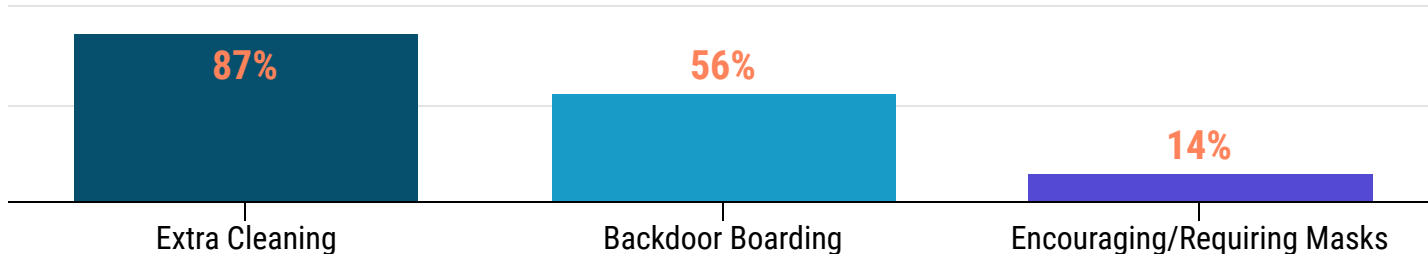
While over 50% of transit agencies eliminated fares, others took less drastic steps, such as **extending passes**, accepting cashless payments only, and **reducing enforcement**. One agency asked that passengers have fares on their person, but did not require them to pay.

# Onboard Changes

In addition to most agencies modifying and/or canceling service, nearly all agencies adopted policies to attempt to **limit the spread** of COVID-19 onboard transit vehicles.



## Agencies' On-Vehicle Changes to Combat COVID-19



While extra cleaning, backdoor boarding, and mask use were some of the most common policies taken by transit agencies, there were others that took additional steps such as **creating barriers** so that the driver/operator had extra space, **marking off seats** to maintain social distancing, and **limiting the numbers of riders** per vehicles as well.

Stay at home orders generally went into effect across the U.S. in March 2020. While nearly all of transit agencies had some form of on-vehicle policy to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, as of the completion of this memo (June 2020), a three transit agencies in Pennsylvania, Florida and Mississippi had **resumed normal operations** following their state and/or local government's reopening guidance.

# Next Steps and Notes

Transit agencies in the U.S. were faced with an exceptional challenge with COVID-19: Provide an essential service while limiting the spread of a highly-contagious virus. As the thread of COVID-19 recedes, public transportation agencies are facing a new challenge: Reduced revenues.

Indeed, the American Public Transportation Association estimates that public transit agencies in the U.S. will be facing a collective budget shortfall of \$23.8 billion between the second quarter of 2020 and the fourth quarter of 2021. This shortfall is due not only to decreased revenues at the fare box, but also due to projected declines in tax revenues as the economy goes through a COVID-19 induced recession.

Suggested next steps and/or areas for additional research and study are to research, monitor, and report on how transit agencies adjust and pivot services with reduced ridership and falling revenues.

While providing an essential service for the populations they serve, public transit agencies are facing immense challenges in the next 18 months as revenues decline.

---

This memo contains summaries of some of the most common responses from 111 transit agencies in the U.S. The complete data are catalogued and mapped here: <https://arcg.is/055jHy>

---

About the researchers:

- **Eric Burdette** is a Master of Public Administration candidate at the University of Oregon. His contact is [eburdett@uoregon.edu](mailto:eburdett@uoregon.edu).
- **John Larson-Friend** is a Master of Community and Regional Planning candidate at the University of Oregon. His contact is [jfriend2@uoregon.edu](mailto:jfriend2@uoregon.edu).