



Transit Watch: Public Transit in Crisis



June 5, 2020

Friends,

Our intention with *Transit Watch* is to provide key stakeholders with up-to-date information about COVID-19 and its impact on public transit services and the communities they serve:

We Must Acknowledge Our Role in Advancing Racial Justice and Social Equity

As California and the nation confront two crises that disproportionately and adversely impact Black America, we acknowledge the heightened role our industry must continue to play in advancing racial justice.

Our work is integral to improving people's lives, regardless of race, economic standing or physical ability. We take seriously our role in connecting communities and working to overcome all forms of social inequality and oppression. Now more than ever, public transportation's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity is a fundamental part of who we are.

As California's transit industry rebuilds from the pandemic to the benefit of all riders, we must also recognize that, together, we wield tremendous power to specifically improve Black lives and the lives of other communities of color by expanding access to the clean and affordable transportation we've always provided. These communities have long-comprised the core of California's transit ridership and, in the face of COVID-19, they are also our essential workers.

Our rider demographics demonstrate the unique role transit can play in addressing systemic problems and achieving social equality. Consider these facts:

- Pre-crisis, transit ridership had a 50/50 gender split; today, 56% of riders are female.
- Among whites, public transit ridership has dropped by half, resulting in Black and Latino riders comprising the majority of transit riders.
- 92% of today's transit riders are using it to commute to work.
 - More than 20% work in health care services.
 - Almost 20% work in food preparation.
 - Almost 10% work in sales.
- Pre-crisis, approximately 20% of transit riders made under \$15,000; today, more than 35% of transit riders make under \$15,000.

For more details about who's riding public transit during the pandemic, see findings of a [recent survey by TransitApp](#).

For more information, please contact the California Transit Association at COVID-19@caltransit.org.

