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You are here : News (/news/) / Commuter Rail to Temporarily Operate Reduced Service Schedule Starting December 14 (<https://www.keoliscs.com/news/commuter-rail-to-temporarily-operate-reduced-service-schedule-starting-december-14/>)

## COMMUTER RAIL TO TEMPORARILY OPERATE REDUCED SERVICE SCHEDULE STARTING DECEMBER 14

*Reduced schedule for at least two weeks to accommodate low employee availability due to COVID-19 absences*

**BOSTON** – December 10, 2020 – The MBTA and Keolis Commuter Services announced today that, due to low employee availability because of COVID-19 absences, Commuter Rail will temporarily operate a Reduced Service Schedule starting Monday, December 14. Regular train service includes 541 daily trains, but as of December 14, Commuter Rail will operate 246 daily trains.

The MBTA and Keolis, like other employers in Massachusetts, have experienced an increase in COVID-19 cases over the past 10 days. The Reduced Service Schedule will run at least through December 27. During this time, the MBTA and Keolis will monitor employee availability to determine if the Reduced Service Schedule needs to remain in place for an extended period.

The reduced schedule includes daily service on all Commuter Rail lines and at all stations, and it is already posted as the Storm Schedule, which was designed in advance to provide lower service levels in severe weather. Reduced Service Schedules, which impact weekday service only, are available at [MBTA.com](https://www.mbtacom.com) and in major stations today. The Reduced Service Schedule has no changes to weekend scheduled trips.

“Passengers are encouraged to check the Reduced Service Schedule in advance to plan their trip because there are changes in the weekday schedule,” said David Scorey, CEO and General Manager, Keolis. “Our rigorous cleaning practices at stations and onboard trains remain in place, including regular deep cleanings, sanitizing touch points and the use of foggers to help ensure safety. Masks continue to be a requirement for all passengers and crews on trains as well.”

Since March, Keolis and the MBTA have introduced new technologies like electrostatic sprayers to help sanitize passenger areas quickly and thoroughly. As part of this enhanced sanitization, added attention is given to touched surfaces, employee areas and air filtration systems. Passengers are reminded that all coach cars on every train remain open so they may spread out and maintain social distance.

Commuter Rail has operated consistently throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, helping to provide critical transit for essential workers, including nurses and medical professionals, and for transit-dependent communities. Ridership on Commuter Rail has been approximately 13 percent of its pre-COVID levels, and during the holiday weeks in December ridership is historically low.



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