

# MASON TRANSIT AUTHORITY

## PRESS RELEASE



**For Immediate Release**  
**June 8, 2020**

Starting Monday, June 15, Mason Transit will be reinstating some of its service that was reduced due to COVID-19. Service hours were reduced by 66% in response to low ridership and lack of available drivers, all impacts of the coronavirus. "People were not using public transportation due to the Stay at Home order and concerns over the spread of the virus on public transportation systems," said General Manager Danette Brannin. "Additionally, drivers in the high-risk group that needed to self-isolate for a time to protect themselves or a family member were not available to drive. This added strain on our ability to provide service and we had no option but to make reductions."

With Mason County in Phase 2 of reopening in Washington state, MTA is prepared for ridership to return and has planned phases for reinstating service to the pre-COVID-19 status. "It will be difficult to predict how fast ridership will return, but we are ready to meet the demand," said Brannin. There are challenges to face as ridership and service resume with social distancing requirements. MTA has incorporated social distancing practices that include limiting passengers on vehicles and rear door boarding and off boarding. The agency will continue to be fare-free out of county through at least June 30. When riding, MTA asked that riders wear a face covering and not to ride if experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms. Buses are cleaned regularly and wiped down as often as possible between routes.

Some of the service that will be reinstated on June 15 is the Route 6 to and from Olympia, including Little Creek Casino, and the Zipper Route. The Zipper route will help with more frequency within Shelton as well as provide another option to allow for social distancing. More Dial-a-Ride will be available, and drivers will be available to back up routes that exceed the limit of passengers so riders will not have to wait for the route to come around again.

Please visit MTA's website for the latest information and service availability or call Customer Service at 360.427.5033.