



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT

Liam Blank, Policy & Communications Manager

liam@tstc.org

MTA Walks Back on Accessibility, Permanently Bans Cash Transactions at Subway Booths

*Yesterday, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority announced that NYC subway booth workers will no longer accept cash or swap damaged MetroCards. These transactions were initially suspended in March 2020 to protect workers from COVID-19. With the phased rollout of the “tap-and-go” OMNY fare payment system set to complete in 2023, the MTA no longer deems these transactions necessary. In response, **Liam Blank, a spokesperson for Tri-State Transportation Campaign**, released the following statement:*

“We’re concerned about the timing of this decision to permanently end cash transactions at subway booths because doing so right now is inherently inequitable. The MTA says that cash will still be accepted at ticket vending machines, but these machines are constantly broken, so it’s important to have built-in redundancy. Vulnerable populations that rely on transit may also prefer to interact with a person who could provide more assistance than a machine. Given that ridership is still lagging significantly due to the pandemic, the MTA should not be creating more barriers to using public transit right now.

“People know if a transit agency cares for them or not. A subway booth worker is a lot more than a fare collector—they are also customer service representatives, emergency response personnel, and guardians of the system. Their very presence in the station is a sign that the MTA cares and they’re willing to devote resources to accommodate all riders. The MTA should be careful of over-fetishizing technology and forgetting about the less politically-visible riders who depend on them.”

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[Tri-State Transportation Campaign](https://www.tstc.org/) is a 27-year old advocacy organization that fights for an equitable, safe, multi-modal transportation network that provides options and supports the economies of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. TSTC works to fix our commutes, meet our climate goals, stop traffic deaths, and make transportation fair.