

## TRANSIT

# MTA to Add More Officers to Subway to Stop Fare Evaders

Fare evasion is on track to cost the authority \$260 million this year, MTA's chairman said



The initiative to combat fare evasion and assaults will focus primarily on Manhattan, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. PHOTO: RICHARD B. LEVINE/ZUMA PRESS

*By Paul Berger*

June 17, 2019 6:24 pm ET

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority will deploy 500 officers to target fare evasion and assaults on New York City's subway and bus systems.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Monday that the officers would be assigned to patrol 50 subway stations and 50 bus routes where fare evasion and assaults are most common.

Mr. Cuomo declined to identify the locations. But pointing to Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. beside him at the Midtown press conference, Mr. Cuomo indicated that the initiative would focus primarily on Manhattan.

The MTA will supply 300 of the officers, and the New York Police Department would supply another 200, he said.

People who don't pay for the subway and bus are liable for a \$100 summons for evading the fare. In the past, officers often arrested fare-evaders. Mr. Vance announced in 2017 that he would no longer prosecute most of those cases.

On Monday, Mr. Vance said his office would contribute \$40 million toward deterrence of fare evasion, including funding a study to better fortify subway gates and turnstile systems and experimenting with the use of video cameras at fare-payment areas.

MTA Chairman Patrick Foye said fare evasion is on track to cost the authority \$260 million this year. Evasion is the worst on buses where one in five riders is estimated to evade the fare, Authority officials said.

---

RELATED

---

- New York's MTA Plans Retail Revamp of Highly Trafficked Subway Stations (June 16)
- New York's Gov. Cuomo Weighs Adding Two Allies to MTA Board (June 4)
- MTA's New Watchdog Vows to Root Out Fraud (May 30)
- MTA Investigates Subway Surfers Pulling Train Brakes (May 22)
- MTA Vendors Mull Ending Contracts as Authority Seeks 10% Cuts (May 18)
- The MTA Is Raising Revenues and Cutting Costs. Now, Workers Want a Raise (May 1)

Mr. Foye said that the MTA will transfer 100 officers from its bridges and tunnels, where their role has been reduced because of a switch from toll booths to electronic toll collection. A further 200 MTA officers will be redeployed from other locations, he said.

An NYPD spokeswoman said that its officers would include a mix of new recruits and officers who usually perform administrative work.

Transport Workers Union Local 100, which represents about 39,000 subway and bus workers, has warned for weeks about assaults on its members.

The union said that last year workers were subjected to 101 assaults and more than 2,300 cases of harassment, including verbal abuse, physical contact without injury and spitting.

—Ben Chapman contributed to this article.

Write to Paul Berger at [Paul.Berger@wsj.com](mailto:Paul.Berger@wsj.com)