

Stranded by Transit Cuts: Miami

As the coronavirus batters public finances, transit agencies are implementing or proposing the deepest service cuts in a generation. While public transportation received relief funding in the federal CARES Act, this aid has been nearly exhausted in major cities as the crisis stretches on.

Agencies across the U.S. are warning of service cuts as deep as 40%. What would the impact of those cuts be in a region like Miami? An analysis using the Center for Neighborhood Technology's AllTransit tool suggests they would be deep and profound.

Ayanna Wright, 43, rides the bus to get from her home in Miami Gardens to her late shift at a restaurant in the northeast section of Miami — a commute of around an hour and a half. But the night owl bus service she depended on has been suspended, and she's now forced to pay for an Uber multiple times per week. "God forbid I have to be at work at midnight - that means I have to leave my house at 10 pm to be at work," she said. "If public transit were cut further, that would be even more time and money out of my pocket, and I can't afford it."

The Impact on the Miami Region

Public transportation that runs frequently is key to economic mobility. But in the Miami region, the vast majority of people who benefit from access to frequent full-day service today would lose that service. 227,724 people would lose access to frequent full-day transit; businesses would suffer as 100,102 jobs currently near frequent full-day transit lose that access.

- The impact would fall heavily on Black residents and people of color. Nearly a third of people losing access to frequent full-day transit would be Black residents, and three-quarters non-white or Hispanic.
- 18,370 households without access to a private vehicle would lose access to frequent transit, imperiling their ability to meet essential needs. Overall, 91,118 households would lose access to frequent full-day transit.

DISCLAIMER: This analysis is based on the potential impact of budget shortfalls without further emergency aid, not specific transit agency proposals.

How Many Will Lose Access to Frequent Full-Day Transit: Miami

	How Many Will Lose Access to Frequent Full-Day Transit	Currently Within 1/2-Mile of Frequent Transit	Near Frequent Transit After 50% Peak and 30% Off-Peak Cut	% Change
People	227,724	387,063	159,339	-59%
<i>Black</i>	70,668	97,674	27,006	-72%
<i>Total Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, other and multiple races</i>	169,998	300,303	130,305	-57%
Households	91,118	153,413	62,295	-59%
<i>With incomes under \$25,000</i>	28,556	49,288	20,732	-58%
<i>Without access to a private vehicle</i>	18,370	29,244	10,874	-63%
Jobs	100,002	351,465	251,463	-28%
<p>Notes: Figures are for the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL Metropolitan Statistical Area using Census figures from 2017 and transit service data from 2018.</p> <p>“Frequent full-day transit” is defined as transit that runs at least every 15 minutes between 7 am and 10 pm.</p>				

Methods and Background

For this analysis, the Center for Neighborhood Technology ran an analysis using the AllTransit tool, which combines publicly available transit schedule information (GTFS feeds) and new data created by CNT for more than 300 regions where it did not previously exist.

The analysis is focused on frequent full-day service, defined as transit that runs at least every 15 minutes between 7 am and 10 pm. CNT modelled a schedule where peak service (service between 7-9 am and 4-6 pm) was reduced by 50% while off-peak service was reduced by 30%. This reflects that many transit agencies are likely to tailor service cuts to attempt to preserve full-day service.