

Governor Christie Takes Action To Prepare Public Safety Measures In Advance Of Papal Visit

Friday, September 18, 2015 Tags: [Executive Orders](#)



Executive Order Builds On Ongoing Preparation Efforts & Ensures Officials Have All Tools To Ensure A Safe And Orderly Visit

Trenton, NJ - With an estimated 2 million visitors expected to gather in Philadelphia for the upcoming World Meeting of Families and Papal visit, Governor Chris Christie today signed an Executive Order that puts in place measures to manage the occasion, coordinate any requests for mutual assistance with neighboring governments, and ensure a safe and orderly visit for New Jersey residents and many thousands of visitors expected to travel through New Jersey for the occasion. In effect, the Governor's Order provides emergency management, law enforcement, county and local officials with the tools needed for a secure and orderly visit of His Holiness Pope Francis.

"Given the Pope's comprehensive schedule and the influx of people traveling to see him, the events associated with his visit span the normal State, county and municipal operating services," said Governor Christie. "Managing this historic event requires the coordinated deployment of personnel and other resources to ensure the health, safety and resources of the citizens of New Jersey."

The order, which will remain in effect until Tuesday September 29, 2015 at 8:00 a.m., provides officials with the authority to accommodate mutual aid requests as well as contraflow of traffic on roadways and, consistent with the deployment of the National Guard in Philadelphia, authorizes use of the New Jersey National Guard to support events as needed.

According to Philadelphia officials, it is estimated that as many as 2 million people will attend the World Meeting of Families and Papal Mass on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia. With tens of thousands of visitors travelling through the southwest region of New Jersey to access Philadelphia, gridlock on roadways within a 50-mile radius around the City is anticipated. In addition, as many as 250,000 additional vehicles and thousands of buses will be travelling through New Jersey into Philadelphia.

New Jersey officials already have put transportation plans in place:

ROADWAYS:

- As directed by the Delaware River Port Authority, the Ben Franklin Bridge between Camden and Philadelphia will be closed at 10 p.m. Friday, September 25 through noon Monday, September 28. Because of the bridge closure, NJDOT will be closing I-676 northbound from Exit 3 to the Bridge, as well as Route 30 westbound from Airport Circle (Route 38/Route 130) to the Bridge.
- NJDOT roadways expected to be impacted by the increased traffic include: I-295, as well as Routes 38, 42, 45, 47, 55, 70, 73, 90, 130, 168, and 322.
- Traffic congestion and delays are expected on I-95, I-195 and US 1, and heavy volume is anticipated on the New Jersey Turnpike and the Atlantic City Expressway;
- For motorists crossing into Philadelphia to celebrate Mass with Pope Francis, the NJDOT and New Jersey's other transportation agencies will utilize detour and electronic message signs to divert traffic onto northbound and southbound US Route 130 to access other crossings into Philly.

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BUS AND RAIL:

- On Thursday, September 24 and Friday, September 25, NJ TRANSIT will provide service for the regular commute with additional capacity offered via rail and bus into and out of New York City.
- On Saturday, September 26 and Sunday, September 27, special tickets will be needed to travel on both the **Atlantic City Rail Line** and the **RiverLINE** light rail service
- On Saturday, September 26 and Sunday, September 27, the **Atlantic City Rail Line** will be **express only** between Atlantic City and Philadelphia. Trains will depart Atlantic City beginning at 6 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday and will operate approximately hourly for most of the day. Trains will depart Philadelphia for Atlantic City on a "load and go" basis following the event.
- Limited bus service will run along the **Atlantic City Rail Line** corridor on Saturday and Sunday in order to serve regular ACRL customers who utilize stations in between Atlantic City and Philadelphia.
- The **RiverLINE** will operate on a 15-minute schedule on Saturday and Sunday in both directions between Trenton and Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden with no service in downtown Camden between WRTC and the Entertainment Center. Once events in Philadelphia are underway, the RiverLINE will shift to a 30 minute schedule.
- On Thursday and Friday, **NJ Transit buses** will run regularly- scheduled weekday service on routes in the Philadelphia/Camden area. Once the Ben Franklin Bridge closes to vehicular traffic, all Philadelphia bus routes will be truncated at the Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden but will remain on schedule for trips outbound from the Camden area.
- Bus service will be enhanced on the majority of bus routes throughout the weekend in South and North Jersey.
- Bus customers boarding at **Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden** will be subject to a special queuing operation in order to facilitate the safe and orderly boarding of passengers following events in Philadelphia.

TRAVEL FOR NORTH JERSEY NJ TRANSIT CUSTOMERS:

- For Thursday, September 24th and Friday, September 25th, papal event visitors are advised to plan their trip ahead of time, plan to travel off-peak when possible and purchase round-trip tickets in advance. Large crowds are expected along with enhanced security measures and expected delays.
- When returning to New Jersey in the evening on September 25th, customers should be prepared for longer wait times especially immediately following the Papal Mass at Madison Square Garden at 6:00 p.m.
- NJ TRANSIT will operate additional rail service during the off-peak into Penn Station New York and enhance its bus service into Port Authority Bus Terminal (PABT). Normal football Game Day rail service will run on Thursday and Sunday for the Giants and Jets games, respectively.
- Signage and posters will be available at all major rail stations and bus terminals to inform NJ TRANSIT customers of travel options. Also, NJ TRANSIT Ambassadors, who are knowledgeable about travel information during this special Papal event, will be on hand to assist customers.
- Special queuing in Penn Station New York will also be in place to handle anticipated crowds. The new busing operations in place at the Port Authority Bus Terminal (PABT) should help vehicles, and customers, travel to and from the terminal more quickly.
- NJ TRANSIT is also working closely with area transportation partners to provide alternate transit options throughout the visit. Customers can transfer to PATH service at Newark Penn Station or at Hoboken where they can also travel via NY Waterway. NY Waterway will operate their regular service for Thursday and Friday but will have boats on standby if needed. They also are modifying their bus schedule to coincide with the Papal procession.

For more the latest transportation information regarding the Papal visit, go to:

<http://www.nj.gov/transportation/commuter/events/papal.shtm> or visit www.njtransit.com/papal for any updated NJ TRANSIT Papal travel news.

A copy of the Executive Order [pdf 14kB]

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