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As Summer Approaches, RIPTA Reminds Public Of Service Options to Multiple Beaches

Year-round Service Is Augmented by Summer ‘Beach Bus’ Which Offers Express Service from Key Locations Starting in June

Providence, Rhode Island, May 17, 2021 – As a statewide transit agency, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) works to balance the service needs of urban and business centers with residents’ desire to access recreation sites. RIPTA offers year-round service to a number of popular beaches, and announced today that starting next month, it is resuming its seasonal express route to several South County beaches. Called the “Beach Bus,” this express service will operate on weekends and holidays from June 19, 2021 to August 22, 2021.

“Whether it’s May or December, we provide service to many of our beaches,” said Scott Avedisian, RIPTA’s Chief Executive Officer. “While much of that service is focused on beaches in the South County area, we also consider the desirability of Lincoln Woods with its 126-acre pond, picnic areas and walking trails,” he said. “We want people to enjoy the recreational areas our State has to offer.”

RIPTA officials noted that they are also bolstering the Beach Bus service this year by adding more express trips that depart directly from Providence and additional trips that leave the beach area midday and return to Providence on weekends. “This additional seasonal service creates even more travel options for Rhode Islanders,” Avedisian said.

“Rhode Island is the Ocean State, and what better way to enjoy it than spending time at our beautiful beaches and recreational areas all across our state – from Lincoln Woods to Newport,” said Governor Dan McKee. “As we reopen state beaches at full capacity this summer, the return of the “Beach Bus” with its enhanced schedule is a win-win for Rhode Islanders – it cuts down on weekend beach traffic while connecting more folks in the northern half of our state with beach access in South County.”

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“Rhode Island is fortunate to have a network of public parks and beaches where families can picnic, walk, fish, swim, or just enjoy getting out in nature,” said DEM Director Janet Coit. “The RIPTA Beach Bus provides another important option for Rhode Islanders who wish to visit our beautiful state parks and beaches.”

The Beach Bus service was suspended last year due to COVID-19 restrictions and limitations on crowd capacity at State beaches. This year, as in the prior years, the Beach Bus will provide direct service to South County from Woonsocket, Cranston, Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and North Providence. The complete schedule will be available on www.ripta.com. RIPTA officials noted that there is also frequent service to the South County beaches on Route 66, which operates year-round.

Below is a summary of RIPTA routes that offer access to some of Rhode Island’s beaches. Unless noted, these routes operate year-round.

**Route 66 (URI/Galilee):** This route provides access to South County Beaches seven days a week with trips that depart Kennedy Plaza hourly. The service operates from 6am to 11:15pm on weekdays, and from 8am to 10pm on weekends. Stops along the way make this route an option for more than the greater Providence area. Passengers can board at T.F. Green Airport, the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) Warwick campus, numerous South County locations, and the University of Rhode Island. It also services Park-and-Ride lots in East Greenwich, Wickford, North Kingstown and South Kingstown, giving beachgoers the option of saving on beach parking fees by parking at these locations instead and taking the bus to the beach.

**Route 14 (West Bay):** Route 14 provides regular, year-round service Monday through Saturday from Kennedy Plaza to Narragansett Beach. It operates from 5:40am to 7:15pm on weekdays, and from 7:45am to 5pm on Saturdays.

**Route 3 (Oakland Beach):** Passengers who want a shorter trip to the shore can use Route 3 to visit to Oakland Beach in Warwick. This route operates every 40 minutes on weekdays from 6am to 9:30pm, every 70 minutes on Saturdays from 6:30am to 8:30pm, and every 100 minutes on Sundays from 8am to 7:30pm. Outbound service departs from Providence Station and Kennedy Plaza.
**Route 54 (Lincoln/Woonsocket):** People who want an outing to Lincoln Woods can use Route 54. This route departs Kennedy Plaza every 30 minutes on weekdays from 6am to midnight, every 50 minutes on Saturdays from 7am to 11:30pm, and every 60 minutes on Sundays from 6:30am to 10:30pm. Outbound service leaving Providence departs Rhode Island Hospital and includes departure locations at Kennedy Plaza and Providence Station. Inbound service operates from the Community Care Alliance in Woonsocket, creating access from the north to Lincoln Woods.

**Narragansett/South Kingstown Flex and South Aquidneck Island Flex Zones:** Flex service is localized service that RIPTA offers in communities with little or no fixed-route service. There are seven Flex Zones in the state. The Narragansett/South Kingstown Flex Zone provides service to Narragansett and Salty Brine beaches, while the South Aquidneck Zone serves Easton’s Beach in Newport. All Flex Zones have at least one stop connecting them to RIPTA’s statewide network.

**Summer 2021 Newport/Middletown Beach Shuttle Pilot Program:** After listening to community concerns about access to local beaches, RIPTA is offering a local beach shuttle that will connect neighborhoods in north Newport to Easton’s Beach in Newport and Second Beach in Middletown. This pilot program will be assessed at the end of the season. Visit [https://www.ripta.com/beachshuttle](https://www.ripta.com/beachshuttle) for more information on this pilot.

*For information on RIPTA services, passengers may call 781-9400 or visit ripta.com.*