

# Metro rail manages to get back 60% of pre-Covid ridership

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**Chennai:** Despite losing patronage from techies and students who work and attend classes from home, metro rail has managed to recover 60% of its pre-Covid ridership in less than a month after train services resumed following the lockdown.

The footfalls rose from 41% of pre-Covid average number of passengers in June to 60% in July. After services resumed on June 21 till July 16, 12.8 lakh people used the services. CMRL's pre-Covid daily average ridership was 1.16 lakh, which it has been struggling to get back since the lockdown in 2020. With footfalls now increasing, CMRL has extended train timings from 7am to 10pm on Sundays and public holidays starting from July 18.

On June 30, 47,043 people travelled in metro trains. It jumped to 65,468 on July 15. On Friday, the numbers were 69,794, which is the highest since June 21.

Metro rail officials said most of their passengers now include private and government office staff, who may be regulars, some air passengers and the rest of those who use the train

service for a single quick trip. "We also extended our service timings during the week from 5.30am to 10pm as well as our peak hour services by an hour in the morning and in the evening, as our footfalls started to increase, and we wanted to make sure passengers follow covid protocols like physical distancing in trains," an official said.

Central metro station has been recording the highest average footfalls of 3,905, followed by Thirumangalam with 2,061, High Court 2,311 and Airport with 2,302. Stations in Wimco Nagar, Thiruvottiyur and Washermenpet in the north, LIC, Thousand Lights in the city core and Guindy and Meenambakkam in the south cater to anywhere between 1091 to 1,716 passengers a day. Stations on the other corridors including Egmore, Koyambedu, Vadapalani and the interchange at Alandur cater to anywhere between 1,041 to 1,605 passengers.

With metro train services available in the city for the last six years, officials said each of their trains has run an average 2.9 lakh kilometres. Their first train alone has recorded 3.2 lakh kilometres so far.