Coronavirus: severe restrictions to Swiss rail travel

From Monday, 23 March 2020, a transitional timetable will apply. The Swiss public-transport offer will be severely restricted. Core service will be maintained. The entire public-transport sector and the Federal Office of Transport are working together to implement these changes.
Key facts at a glance:

- Please check the online timetable again shortly before starting any journey.
- Please buy your tickets electronically (on a website or in an app)
- SBB is providing refunds. Visit www.sbb.ch/en/refund. For further information: 0848 44 66 88 (CHF 0.08/min)
- The GA Travelcard can be deposited for 30 days free of charge. This does not apply to the Familia GA Travelcard for children, Familia GA Travelcard for young adults or the GA Travelcard for dogs. Alternatively, the GA Travelcard can be cancelled directly online at swisspass.ch. The notice period of one month applies.
- There are new minimum opening hours for shops offering basic provisions in railway stations: 9am to 6pm
- Please observe the FOPH’s behaviour and hygiene recommendations.

Current information on rail services

The Swiss public-transport offer will be gradually reduced from Thursday 19 March 2020. The transitional timetable will be valid until at least 26 April 2020. During this time period, core public transport service and connectivity to essential locations such as hospitals and supermarkets will continue to be maintained. During the first few days of the new timetable in particular, connections may be missed as Swiss public transport has to adapt to the reduced frequency. The core public-transport service still enables implementation of the Confederation’s social distancing recommendations.

Please check your connection on the online timetable immediately before starting your journey. The timetable will be continuously updated. In the change-over phase until 26 March, it will be updated by 8pm at the latest for the following day.

The service offer will be reduced systematically in three steps:

Step 1: from Thursday 19 March

- Additional peak time trains on long-distance services will be suspended
- Night trains no longer run, stations will be closed at night on weekends as well
- International trains within Switzerland only run to the border

Step 2: from Monday 23 March

- IC2 Zürich HB–Zug–Lugano: partially suspended
- IC4 Zürich HB–Schaffhausen: suspended
- IR36 Basel SBB–Brugg AG–Zürich HB(–Zürich Flughafen): partially suspended
- IR75 Luzern–Zürich HB–Konstanz: Zürich HB–Konstanz suspended
- IR90 Genève-Aéroport–Lausanne–Brig: partially suspended
- RE Annemasse–Genève–Lausanne–Vevey/St-Maurice: suspended between Annemasse and Genève
- S Léman Express: partially suspended
- S Tilo: partially suspended

**Step 3: from Thursday 26 March**

- IC1 Genève Aéroport–Bern–Zürich HB–St. Gallen: suspended between Zürich and St. Gallen
- IC3 Basel SBB–Zürich–Chur: partially suspended
- IR16 Bern–Olten–Brugg AG–Zürich HB: suspended between Bern and Olten
- IR17 Bern–Burgdorf–Olten(-Zürich HB): suspended
- IR75 Luzern–Zürich HB–Konstanz: additional peak-time trains suspended
- RE Olten–Luzern: suspended

**Step 4: from Thursday, 2 April**

- IR 70 Zürich–Luzern: suspended
- RE Olten–Wettingen: suspended (from 30 March)

The details of the transitional timetable for regional services will be provided by the relevant cantons, regional transport networks and transport companies.

**Largest ever timetable change: connections may be missed.**

These measures constitute the largest timetable change that has ever been implemented in such a short time frame. In particular during the first few days of the new timetable, connections may often be missed, as the Swiss public-transport system needs to adapt to the reduced frequency. Switzerland’s transport companies would like to apologise to the passengers affected. If passengers miss a connection, their tickets will remain valid with no restrictions. The online timetable will be updated daily as soon as the timetable changes have been entered into the systems.
Information on refunds and temporary halt to supersaver-ticket sales

From Thursday 19 March 2020, supersaver tickets and Saver Day Passes will no longer be sold. The halt to sales will continue for the duration of the reduced timetable. It is currently planned to remain in force until 26 April 2020. All tickets already purchased will retain their validity. If the connection sold is not available in light of the reduced timetable, the supersaver ticket can be used for the next connection.

For refunds, see the site www.sbb.ch/en/refund. SBB customer service staff are fully committed to responding to all queries. SBB asks you to take note that response times will be longer than usual in light of the current situation. Further information about fares issues is available at www.allianceswisspass.ch/coronavirus (in German and French).

Depositing GA Travelcards and returning municipal Day Passes

- If you wish to deposit your GA Travelcard, the current terms and conditions apply, meaning GA Travelcards can be deposited for 30 days free of charge.
- Customers who have already purchased a municipal Day Pass and are no longer able, or no longer wish to make the journey because of the coronavirus situation, should go to the relevant issuing office (municipalities). Each municipality will determine for itself whether it will issue refunds for Day Passes.

New minimum opening hours for shops in stations and on other SBB real estate

- For food, convenience stores, pharmacies and kiosks, the following minimum opening hours apply to ensure basic provisions are provided: Monday to Sunday, 9am to 6pm. There is an exception for kiosks: They can remain closed on Saturday and Sunday, since no significant travel activity is expected then.
  - Longer opening hours are voluntary, and at the discretion of the tenant.
  - Notices on shop fronts will give current opening hours.

These modifications are temporary, enter into force immediately and until further notice, and will be amended immediately if the authorities responsible issue new instructions, which will always take precedence and be binding.
SBB recommends that passengers using public transport:

- avoid travelling by public transport as far as possible.
- maintain distance from other people if possible when waiting at stations or stops
- maintain distance to other people on public transport as far as possible.

SBB supports the recommendations of the FOPH and expects personal responsibility from customers and flexibility from employers.

The following measures have been implemented to protect staff:

- Travel Centres and points of sale remain open as before, but with amended opening hours. Information will be provided directly at the locations affected.
- There will be no catering services on board trains (dining car and seat service).
- Long-distance services will continue to be run with train crew on board. Ticket checks will be reduced significantly with immediate effect. Passengers are still required to have tickets.

The FOPH is reminding people of these basic rules with an information campaign.

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water: instructions.
- When coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with the crook of your elbow or a paper tissue.
- In case of fever and coughing, stay at home.
- The purpose of social distancing is primarily to protect older people who are particularly at risk: always maintain a two-metre distance to other people if possible, for example when waiting in a queue.
- Avoid shaking hands

For further information about the coronavirus and recommendations on behaviour, and in particular for information about travel abroad, see the FOPH website.