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ESPA EXPRESS

*News From The
Empire State Passengers Association*

Governor Hochul Announces Hudson Valley Service Improvements - Bruce Becker

At a press event held on Monday, October 20, at Amtrak's Rensselaer Maintenance Facility, Governor Kathy Hochul announced several passenger-friendly service improvement initiatives.

The Governor was joined at the event by Amtrak President Roger Harris and Metro North President Justin Vonashek. ESPA President Gary Prophet was among the invited guests at the event.



L to R: Amtrak President Roger Harris; Governor Hochul; Metro North President Justin Vonashek

The announced improvements include:

- The reinstatement of one Amtrak Albany-Rensselaer to New York City daily round trip effective December 1st.
 - Train #238 will depart Albany-Rensselaer at 12:10pm and arrive into New York Penn Station at 2:45pm
 - Train #235 will depart New York Penn Station at 3:15pm and arrive into Albany-Rensselaer at 5:47pm
- The introduction of Metro North service between New York's Grand Central Terminal and Albany-Rensselaer starting in the spring of 2026.
 - The planned one daily round trip is expected to depart New York mid-morning and return from Albany-Rensselaer to Grand Central in the late afternoon.
 - Limited stops are expected on the Metro North segment to Poughkeepsie, with stops made at Rhinecliff, Hudson & Albany-Rensselaer.
 - Conventional Metro North locomotive-hauled commuter equipment will be used.
 - Fares are expected to be fixed at Amtrak's lowest 'bucket' rate (currently \$38.00 between New York & Albany) and reservations are expected to be required. Other Metro North fare programs are not expected to be offered.
 - The new train is expected to be staffed by Metro North crews, which will be qualified on the Amtrak-controlled Poughkeepsie to Albany line segment.
- Amtrak coach fares are being capped at a maximum of \$99.00 between New York & Albany-Rensselaer, regardless of the demand for seats. The current top, demand-based, coach fare is \$108.00.
- Amtrak President Roger Harris also announced that through Lake Shore Limited service between Albany & Boston will resume effective the first week in December. Extensive repairs due to a large land slip on the Amtrak-owned Post Road Branch will have been completed by this time.

Numerous details remain to be determined regarding the extended Metro North service. The Governor specifically clarified that there will be NO expansion of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority taxing authority outside of the current, legally defined, taxing area as a result of the new service.

ESPA applauds the return of the Amtrak round-trip and the cap on the often too-high fares passengers face. In addition, ESPA thanks the Governor for her leadership in making the new Metro North service possible.



**2026 ESPA (& Rail Passengers Association Northeast Division)
Annual Meeting & Lunch**
Saturday, March 14, 2026 - 11:00am to 4:00pm **DoubleTree Hotel-Schenectady**

Executive Director's Report: Steve Strauss

This summer flew by! It seems to be the pattern. ESPA has kept busy.

Treasurer Kevin Jones and I took the ESPA information table to two Farmers' Markets in Hudson, New York, to spread the gospel of better passenger train service. There we spoke with NBC's Today Show's Al Roker and many other folks interested in Amtrak service. We answered lots of questions and informed people that the route to better service in New York is through the State Capitol in Albany.

Visits to several state and local government officials were made. We talked about the Empire Corridor Service Development Plan and the State's plan to extend two additional Amtrak trains to Saratoga Springs.

ESPA members Daniel Hochman, Lou Venech and I met with Assemblywoman Claire Valdez in her Queens office in August. She is a member of the Transportation Committee; her district includes Amtrak's Sunnyside Yard and LIRR's Hunterspoint Avenue station. We talked about the need for food and beverage service on all Hudson Valley trains, and what ESPA believes is inadequate staffing at NYSDOT's Passenger and Freight Rail Bureau in Albany. I have some follow-up work to do for her in the fall.



In mid-August I joined Assemblymember Santabarbara for a taping of Albany Update, his fifteen-minute weekly discussion on important issues of concern to the residents of the 111th District.

View our session here - <https://bit.ly/4pWYpeF>



That same day, I had coffee with Albany Common Council member Sam Fein, the Democratic Party nominee for City Auditor in the November general election. We spoke about an op-ed he wrote calling for commuter rail service in the Capital District.

I also submitted ESPA's comments on the State's Draft Transportation Master Plan 2050 and participated in a Zoom call with Amtrak's New York Government Affairs Manager, Margaret Clark, along with members of the Lakeshore Rail Alliance. With a rearrangement of responsibilities, Margaret has gained oversight for Ohio; lost Connecticut and New York City, but she still covers Yonkers to Plattsburgh and the rest of the Empire and Adirondack corridors.

In late August, ESPA's Director of Communication, Bruce Becker, participated in a public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed extension of Buffalo's light-rail line. Bruce spoke in support of the one-seat rail option.

By the time you are reading this issue, we will have held a highly-successful one-day Symposium 'Improving Passenger In The Empire Corridor' in Syracuse. Over 50 attendees were brought together representing business and community leaders, government representatives, tourism and hospitality industry members, rail industry suppliers and rail advocates to learn about New York State's passenger rail improvement initiatives and what accelerated implementation could do for Upstate New York. Videos of the speakers and presentations will be available on the ESPA YouTube Channel.

Please plan to participate in our upcoming meetings: Working Group - 12:00n to 3:00pm on January 17, 2026 via Zoom and the 2026 Annual Meeting & Lunch on March 14, 2026 from 11:00am to 4:00pm at the DoubleTree Hotel in Schenectady. Complete information and registration details for all ESPA events are on our web page - www.esparail.org.

Steve

Amtrak has confirmed to ESPA that they plan to construct a new high-level platform with a canopy at the Saratoga Springs station. The planned improvements include:

- A new 600-foot-long platform.
- Installation of modern platform lighting to enhance safety and visibility.
- A snow melt system to support year-round operations and reduce maintenance needs.
- Updated signage for improved wayfinding.
- ADA-compliant pathways and access to the new platform.
- An upgraded ADA parking area to better serve passengers with mobility needs.

It is not currently clear where the new platform will be located. Amtrak noted that their plans are subject to modification based on budget availability and cost estimates for the work. They have not provided a schedule for the work, but improving ADA accessibility is a priority for the railroad.



Saratoga Station

Kent Patterson: A Life Well Travelled - Benjamin Turon

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of long-time fellow Empire State Passenger Association and Rail Passengers Association member Kent J. Patterson, aged 70, who passed away on August 8th, 2025, after a short illness. His beloved partner Shelley, brother Michael, and mother Barbara, were by his side during his hospice care. His family said that his rail advocacy and his community meant a tremendous amount to him—a source of strength for him over the past trying months.



"Ken was an active ESPA member and RPA Council Representative who annually helped schedule our Day on the Hill appointments with NY Congressional staff. I will miss his positive attitude, train knowledge and willingness to work for better passenger rail service," said ESPA Executive Director Steve Strauss who paid his respects during the after-interment shiva period held at Kent's brother's apartment, which was well attended by friends and family. His family greatly appreciated the ESPA and Metro-North folk who attended the graveside ceremony in Westchester.

Kent was raised and attended high school in Dobbs Ferry before embarking on a 37-year railroad career. As a child, Kent recalled watching trains on New York Central's Putnam Division. His brother, Michael, attributed Kent's interest in trains to riding on elevated subway lines with their grandfather. After a brief job with Amtrak in Washington DC, Kent worked for Penn-Central as a signal tower operator, and its successor railroads: Conrail and MTA's Metro-North.

Kent was an active writer, with articles published in several publications, multiple times in Trains magazine and Passenger Train Journal. He had two pictorial books to his credit: Rails around Westchester County and Westchester County Airport, part of Arcadia Publishing's 'Image' historical series. On Amazon.com, where both titles are available, reader's reviews complemented these works as being "very well organized and informative—enjoyable surveys of local transportation history".

Kent had multiple hobbies that included oil painting, photography, horseback riding, and travel across North America and Europe. A snowbird, Kent made his annual migration by train between the cold of Westchester and the sun of Florida, providing trip reports on the ups and downs, and the amusements and curiosities, of Amtrak long-distance service and the host freight railroads.

All of us at ESPA will greatly miss Kent, who was our organization's primary outreach to many mayors and other local officials across the state. For years he manned the registration table while managing the paperwork at our annual Schenectady meeting, his happy face and distinctive voice welcoming attendees.

Rest in peace, Kent! You are greatly missed but well-remembered.

New York State Ridership Stats

Route	FY' YTD October - September										Sep. '25
	Sep '25	Sep '24	Sep '19	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	Customer OTP
Empire Service	105,400 106% of 2019 #	112,700	99,600	1,351,200 111% of 2019 #	1,358,600	1,245,600	1,019,000	613,200	655,000	1,214,200	81.1%
Maple Leaf	32,800 113% of 2019 #	39,300	29,900	464,400 119% of 2019 #	506,600	452,700	385,000	245,100	231,100	389,800	75.8%
Adirondack	5,900 62% of 2019 #	5,300	9,600	83,900 71% of 2019 #	69,200	24,700	0	0	44,200	117,500	52.8%
Ethan Allen Exp.	6,500 176% of 2019 #	6,700	3,700	85,300 169% of 2019 #	89,000	86,600	63,400	12,500	23,300	50,500	46.0%
Lake Shore Lim.	28,000 98% of 2019 #	29,700	28,600	382,900 107% of 2019 #	398,400	351,000	319,300	168,300	220,200	357,700	78.2%

Data Source - Amtrak Monthly Performance Reports

NYS Route Definitions

Empire Service - Passengers On New York To Albany-Rensselaer Trains & Passengers Solely On Other Trains Between New York & Albany-Rensselaer

Maple Leaf - Passengers On West of Albany To Syracuse- Buffalo - Niagara Falls - Toronto Trains

Adirondack - Passengers On Train North Of Albany To Montreal **Ethan Allen Express** - Passengers On Train North Of Albany to Burlington

Lake Shore Limited - Passengers On New York/Boston - Albany - Buffalo - Cleveland - Chicago Train

Adding Overnight Service To The Empire Corridor? - Opinion By Benjamin Turon

How can Amtrak frequency be increased north and west of the Capital District, without incurring billions in capital improvements to the tracks of host railroads CSX and CPKC? The answer could be a new "Empire Overnight" service.

Several overnight intercity coach frequencies are currently offered by Greyhound, Megabus, and Flixbus between New York City, Montreal, and Buffalo, proof that a market exists for overnight ground transportation in this market. An overnight train could offer current red-eyed motorcoach travellers a greater comfort option — even without sleeping cars — utilizing standard Amtrak business class seating.

As laid out in the now-completed "Empire Corridor Final Tier One Environmental Impact Statement", the addition of each new daytime roundtrip between Albany and Buffalo comes with billions of dollars invested in the CSX mainline.

This civil engineering work consists primarily of constructing hundreds of miles of new, dedicated passenger track alongside the existing double-track line on surplus right-of-way, over a proposed 25-year buildout.

But overnight train service is a short-term answer as most passengers would be asleep!

Slower overnight schedules could run when and where Amtrak and freights mix, allowing the railroad to slot the passenger train along with the flow of freight trains on the existing infrastructure. Currently it takes about 8 hours for an Empire Service train to travel between Penn Station and Buffalo-Depew, so do it in 10. Depart both New York City and Buffalo at 10pm, arriving at 8am the next morning.

If the overnight train travels at the speed of priority intermodal trains full of UPS and FedEx containers, it's hard to see the railroad being justified in asking for hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure improvements to accommodate it. Major capital costs would instead be measured in the millions, mostly in acquiring the new rolling stock for the overnight service.

So, what type of train set? Sleeping cars are likely not practical — unless Amtrak has any spare *Viewliners*.

Amtrak's recent Request for Proposals (RFP) to railcar manufacturers for their replacement of the National Network's Long-Distance fleet is for new bilevel (not single level) equipment with a proposed delivery date is in the 2030s. Keeping service expansion simple and at a low cost — as NYSDOT would be managing and paying for this project — could use "off-the-shelf" equipment by employing a small, dedicated fleet of new Siemens Airo trainsets.



Future Amtrak Airo Business Class



European NightJet Mini-Cabins



This new overnight service could offer wider seats and greater legroom compared to an intercity motorcoach. A Siemens Airo business class car can seat up to 49 passengers with its 1x2 seating layout; a six-car set with one lounge car could seat 245 passengers. The lounge car with table seating would allow for socialization without disturbing fellow passengers. Food and beverage service could be offered with self-service coffee, bottled water, and vending machines, like North Carolina-sponsored Piedmont corridor service.

Between Albany and New York, the overnight trainsets could be coupled to future Airo trainsets of morning and evening Empire Service frequencies to gain access to Penn Station on existing Empire Corridor time slots.

If Amtrak or VIA Rail moved to purchase single level sleeping cars, they could be added to the consist later. As an alternative for starting the service sooner, NYSDOT could also have Amtrak use surplus Amfleet or Horizon coaches on an intern basis. And thinking outside the box, perhaps new cars with European-style individual mini-cabins could be designed for the service.

If New York wants to add additional state-supported Amtrak frequency west of Albany sooner, a new overnight train using off-the-shelf equipment could be the most expedient way.

New Rouses Point Border Inspection Facility Advances - Steve Strauss

In early September, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) announced the award of a construction contract for the new Land Port of Entry project at Rouses Point, New York. The award, valued at \$47.7 million, was made to New York-based Murnane Building Contractors, Inc.

The facility at Rouses Point, to be located immediately adjacent to the international border, replaces the existing inspection port, which is located approximately a half-mile south of the border. The new entry port will be one of only three international rail passenger crossing points in the U.S. It will be the only crossing where rail inspections will be performed in the same facility with pedestrian and vehicular traffic inspections.



Artist Rendition Of New Facility

Construction on the project is anticipated to start this fall, with substantial completion planned for late 2027. When completed, in bound passengers to the U.S. will exit the train with their luggage and proceed to the main inspection area in the new building for clearance and then reboard the train.

The new facility will NOT impact the ongoing planning for the long-sought Pre-Clearance Facility at Montreal's Central Station. When pre-clearance is eventually introduced, in bound trains will continue to make a brief stop at the new Rouses Point location.

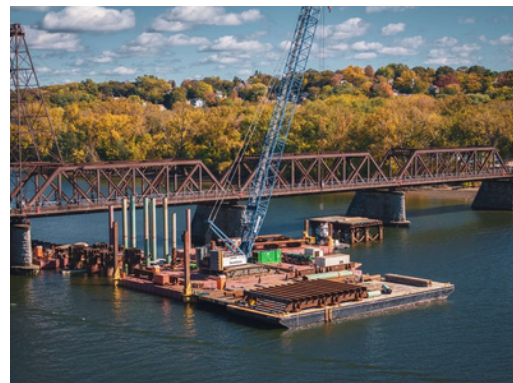
LAB Bridge Replacement Project Well Underway

NYSDOT Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez hosted a press event on the Albany riverfront in late October to highlight the work which is well underway for the replacement of the Livingston Avenue Bridge.

Travelers crossing the Hudson River on the current bridge will see multiple barged-mounted cranes installing the piers for the necessary coffer enclosures for the new bridge foundations. The bridge replacement project is expected to be completed in 2028.



NYSDOT Commissioner Dominguez



Initial Work Underway

Rhinecliff Parking Improvements

Responding to pressure from ESPA and local media about the lack of progress on the Rhinecliff station rehabilitation and improvement project, Amtrak has funded interim resurfacing and striping of the parking areas at the Rhinecliff station.

This action is at least partially the result of a meeting between the NYS Department of Transportation and ESPA where we stressed the need for Amtrak and the State to implement this short-term fix while all parties await the Federal Railroad Administration's review of the NEPA work submitted for the high-level platform and station rehabilitation.



Gary Prophet

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Share Fares provide a group discount of up to 60% off tickets for 8 passengers traveling together on the same reservation. Here's how the discount works: Passenger 1 – full price (or lowest available fare); Groups of 2 – full price (or lowest available fare); Groups of 3 – 15% off all tickets; Groups of 4 – 25% off all tickets; Groups of 5 – 37% off all tickets; Groups of 6 – 47% off all tickets; Groups of 7 – 54% off all tickets; Groups of 8 – 60% off all tickets. 2-day advance purchase required. Other terms & conditions apply.

Visit Amtrak.com; click on 'Deals' at the top, then click on 'Deals & Promotions' and then 'Share Fares'

Reminder...The popular 'I Love New York' 15% Discount continues to be offered for travel to/from all New York State destinations on Empire Corridor trains & the Ethan Allen Express. The current promotional offer is valid through 2026. **NEW...**Reservations must be made at least **1 day** in advance of travel; black-out dates and other restrictions apply. The 15% discount is not available for travel on the Lake Shore Limited.

Visit Amtrak.com; click on 'Deals' at the top, then click on 'Deals & Promotions' and scroll down to the 'See NY & Save 15%' option to take advantage of this great offer.



See New York and
Save 15%



Save on Group
Travel with
Share Fares
Up to 60% Off



Wikipedia

Station Advisories:

- The waiting room (left) of the **Rome, NY** station is currently closed for construction. Passengers can access restrooms and the train platforms via the covered entrance from the parking area.
- Parking at the **Buffalo-Depew, NY** station is currently limited due to the re-construction of the boarding platform. Passengers are encouraged to arrange for pick up and drop-off service, if possible. There are several private lots across from the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, approximately 2.5 miles away. Parking and transportation to the station will be the customer's responsibility.

ESPA Meetings

ESPA members and ALL other interested persons are welcome & encouraged to participate in ESPA Meetings!

Check 'Events' at www.esparail.org for the most current meeting information! Advance registration is required!

Upcoming ESPA Meetings

**Working Group Meeting
Saturday, January 17 12:00n - 3:00pm
Via Zoom**

**2026 ESPA (& RPA) Annual Meeting
Saturday, March 14 11:00n - 4:00pm
DoubleTree Hotel - Schenectady**

Dates, times & locations are subject to change!

ESPA Membership

- ☐ Introductory Membership (\$20.00 for first year)
- ☐ Regular Individual Membership (\$35.00 per year)
- ☐ Student, Senior, Fixed-Income Membership (\$25.00 per year)
- ☐ Family Membership (\$45.00 per year)
- ☐ Sustaining Membership (\$65.00 per year)
- ☐ Patron Membership (\$120.00 per year)
- ☐ Association/Non-Profit Org. (\$300.00 per year)
- ☐ Corporate Membership (\$500.00 per year)
- ☐ Lifetime Membership (\$500.00 One Time)

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Empire Corridor - Effective 12-1-25													
New York – Albany – Utica – Syracuse – Rochester – Buffalo – Niagara Falls													
Train Number	63	69	281	233	283	291	235	49	237	239	241	243	245
Frequency	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	M-F	S&S
New York City	Dp	7:15a	10:20a	11:20a	1:20p	2:19p	3:15p	3:40p	4:45p	5:47p	6:46p	9:24p	10:45p
Yonkers	Dp	7:44a	-	11:44a	1:44p	2:43p	3:39p	-	-	-	7:09p	9:50p	-
Croton-Harmon	Dp	8:03a	11:01a	12:03p	2:03p	3:02p	3:58p	4:26p	5:29p	6:32p	7:28p	10:09p	11:26p
Poughkeepsie	Dp	8:45a	11:43a	12:45p	2:45p	3:44p	4:40p	5:10p	6:10p	7:22p	8:10p	10:51p	12:08p
Rhinecliff	Dp	9:00a	12:00n	1:00p	3:00p	4:00p	4:57p	5:27p	6:22p	7:38p	8:25p	11:07p	12:23a
Hudson	Dp	9:21a	12:25p	1:22p	3:22p	4:21p	5:15p	-	6:43p	7:59p	8:46p	11:27p	12:43a
Albany-Rensselaer	Ar	9:50a	12:50p	1:51p	3:45p	4:49p	5:47p	6:20p	7:10p	8:28p	9:15p	11:50p	1:15a
	Dp	10:10a	11:45a *	1:15p	4:10p	5:04p	-	7:05p	-	-	-	-	-
Schenectady	Dp	10:34a	12:08p	1:39p	4:34p	5:28p	-	7:33p	-	-	-	-	-
Saratoga Springs	Dp	↓	12:35p	↓	↓	5:56p	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Fort Edward	Dp	↓	12:56p	↓	↓	6:17p	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Amsterdam	Dp	10:52a	To	1:57p	4:52p	To	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utica	Dp	11:50a	MTR	2:55p	5:50p	BUR	8:50p	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rome	Dp	12:03p	*Extended	3:11p	6:05p	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Syracuse	Ar	12:57p	Layover	4:02p	6:59p	-	9:51p	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Dp	12:57p	On #69	4:02p	6:59p	-	10:05p	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rochester	Dp	2:13p	At ALB	5:28p	8:15p	-	11:29p	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buffalo-Depew	Ar	3:19p	-	6:34p	9:21p	-	12:29a	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Dp	3:19p	-	6:34p	9:21p	-	12:39a	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buffalo-Exchange	Dp	3:32p	-	6:55p	9:42p	-	To	-	-	-	-	-	-
Niagara Falls, NY	Ar	4:42p	-	7:35p	10:28p	-	CHI	-	-	-	-	-	-
		To TOR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Empire Corridor - Effective 12-1-25													
Niagara Falls – Buffalo – Rochester – Syracuse – Utica – Albany – New York													
Train Number	232	234	236	280	240	238	284	290	48	244	68	64	
Frequency	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	From TOR
Niagara Falls, NY	Dp	-	-	3:52a	-	-	6:47a	-	From	-	-	11:50a	
Buffalo-Exchange	Dp	-	-	4:28a	-	-	7:22a	-	CHI	-	-	12:25p	
Buffalo-Depew	Ar	-	-	4:45a	-	-	7:39a	-	8:53a	-	-	12:36p	
	Dp	-	-	4:45a	-	-	7:39a	-	9:05a	-	-	12:40p	
Rochester	Dp	-	-	5:40a	-	-	8:34a	-	10:06a	-	-	1:34p	
Syracuse	Ar	-	-	6:57a	-	-	9:49a	-	11:28a	-	-	2:44p	
	Dp	-	-	7:06a	-	-	9:59a	-	11:42a	-	-	2:54p	
Rome	Dp	-	-	7:45a	-	-	10:38a	-	-	-	-	3:36p	
Utica	Dp	-	-	7:59a	-	-	10:52a	From	12:42p	-	From	3:53p	
Amsterdam	Dp	-	-	9:01a	-	-	11:54a	BUR	-	-	MTR	4:55p	
Fort Edward	Dp	-	-	↓	-	-	↓	1:00p	↓	-	5:33p	↓	
Saratoga Springs	Dp	-	-	↓	-	-	↓	1:22p	↓	-	6:02p	↓	
Schenectady	Dp	-	-	9:21a	-	-	12:17p	1:58p	2:21p	-	6:38p	5:39p	
Albany-Rensselaer	Ar	-	-	9:42a	-	-	12:39p	2:21p	2:53p	-	7:00p	6:05p *	
	Dp	5:25a	6:50a	8:15a	10:05a	11:15a	12:10p	1:05p	2:48p	4:10p	4:30p	7:40p	
Hudson	Dp	5:47a	7:10a	8:37a	10:28a	11:37a	12:32p	1:28p	3:09p	-	4:52p	8:03p	
Rhinecliff	Dp	6:09a	7:36a	9:00a	10:51a	11:59a	12:54p	1:51p	3:31p	4:55p	5:14p	8:23p	
Poughkeepsie	Dp	-	7:51a	9:15a	11:10a	12:15p	1:10p	2:10p	3:48p	5:13p	5:30p	8:40p	
Croton-Harmon	Dp	7:01a	8:33a	9:54a	11:50a	12:55p	1:50p	2:50p	4:29p	5:53p	6:10p	9:21p	
Yonkers	Dp	-	8:55a	10:16p	-	1:16p	2:11p	3:11p	4:50p	-	-	9:42p	
New York City	Dp	7:45a	9:21a	10:45a	12:45p	1:45p	2:45p	3:45p	5:24p	6:42p	7:05p	10:15p	

Coach Service:

Between All Points - Reservations Required

Cafe Service:

Lite Meals, Sandwiches, Snacks & Beverages
Available For Purchase By All Passengers
On Train #'s 63, 64, 68, 69, 280, 281, 283, 284, 290, 291
And 48 & 49 West Of Albany

No Cafe Service On New York To Albany ONLY Trains

Private Sleeping Car Rooms:

Between All Points On #48 & #49 - Reservations Required

*Extended Layover

On #64 At ALB

Business Class Service:

Between All Points - Reservations Required
(Not Available On #48, #49, #68, #69)

Enhanced Flexible Dining Service:

Complimentary Meals & Beverages For Sleeping Car
Passengers With Exclusive Dining & Lounge Area On #48 & #49

This Information Is Provided By The Empire State Passengers Association (ESPA) As A Public Service.

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Amtrak Schedules Are Subject To Change Without Notice – Always Confirm Times With Amtrak In Advance Of Travel!

Amtrak's Airo Heads East For Testing

Amtrak's first Airo trainset completed testing in Pueblo, CO in mid-October and headed east to Philadelphia's Race Street Yard (adjacent to the 30th Street Station), where the equipment will be based for extensive acceptance testing on the Northeast Corridor. These Siemens-built 6-car Airo trainsets are expected to be introduced into revenue service starting in the Pacific Northwest in later 2026. The Northeast Corridor's dual-mode overhead electric/diesel sets will have 8 car consists and are first expected in 2027. Airo dual-mode trainsets for the Empire Corridor are anticipated by 2031.



Cafe Car (Above) - Business Class (Below)

Both - Amtrak Cascades



Amtrak's First Airo Trainset Heading East Of Harrisburg, PA

Amtrak's Next Gen Acelas Enter Service - Bruce Becker

Amtrak launched its NextGen Acela trainsets into revenue service on August 28, 2025; marking the long-anticipated culmination of efforts by Amtrak and manufacturer Alstom to introduce the new modern, higher speed trains.

Two round trips between Washington and Boston were initially offered, which has been increased to three round trips as of press time. Amtrak plans to have all 28 trainsets available for service by 2027 and they intend to introduce at least one additional frequency each month going forward. The NextGen trains are designated in the Amtrak reservation system, so passengers can choose the new equipment when booking travel.

The new Acelas are operating at speeds of up to 160mph on segments of the Washington to Boston Corridor and are replacing the original 2000-era Acela One trainsets. The NextGen sets provide 25% greater capacity along with a host of upgraded amenities. Business Class & First Class (which include complimentary meals) selectable-in-advance, reserved seating is offered.



Both - Amtrak

