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3 NJ Transit employees test positive for coronavirus

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Three NJ Transit employees have tested positive for the coronavirus, the agency confirmed Thursday night.

One is a “frontline employee,” spokesperson Nancy Snyder wrote in an email.

“These individuals are in quarantine, receiving appropriate care and will not return to work until they are cleared to do so by their healthcare provider – all of which will help contain the virus,” she said.

The agency was identifying co-workers who had “prolonged contact” with the three, Snyder said.

The employees’ names were not made public, and other information about each case was not immediately available.

Snyder said they “immediately and vigorously cleaned and disinfected the employee workplaces and common areas,” in addition to their policy of disinfecting vehicles every 24 hours.

“The health and safety of our customers and nearly 12,000 employees remains our highest priority,” Snyder wrote.

The agency notified the engineers’ union early Thursday about a conductor who tested positive and was sent home with symptoms Tuesday, according to James P. Brown, general chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers NJ Transit Local.

That union should have been told sooner, Brown told members in an email reviewed by NJ Advance Media.

“I believe they are morally obligated” to alert members more quickly, he wrote. “They also acted in such a manner inconsistent with Governor Murphy’s recommendations.”

In response, Snyder said the agency “has been working closely with union leadership and has been disseminating information as quickly as it can be confirmed.”

The governor’s office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Two NJ Transit employees previously isolated themselves after coming into contact with people who may have been exposed.

Ridership has dropped sharply as the pandemic has spread. NJ Transit recently told the state's Congressional delegation that it's facing a \$1.25 billion shortfall.