

Stáisiún Uí Chonghaile, Baile Átha Cliath 1, D01 V6V6

Connolly Station, Dublin 1, D01 V6V6

T 01 703 4293 E foi@irishrail.ie W www.irishrail.ie



19th October 2020

Email: [REDACTED]

Re: FOI request IE_FOI_410

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your request dated 19th October 2020 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, which was received on by my office on that date, for records held by Iarnród Éireann.

Request:

- The total amount of complaints Irish Rail has received about Covid-19 measures on trains
- A copy of a sample of the complaints, if it is not practical to provide a copy of all them.

Response:

I, [REDACTED], Decision Maker have now made a final decision to grant your request on 19th October 2020.

You have sought access to the records outlined above and I consider this an appropriate form of access in this case. Accordingly a copy of the records is now enclosed including a copy of the schedule to these records.

Rights of appeal

In the event that you are not happy with this decision you can make an appeal in relation to this matter, you can do so by writing to the FOI Unit, Corporate Communications, Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail, Connolly Station, Amiens St, Dublin 1 or by e-mail to foi@irishrail.ie. You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays, however, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this body.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Officer on [REDACTED] or by email at foi@irishrail.ie

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Decision Maker, Customer Relations, Iarnród Éireann

Freedom of Information Request:
Schedule of Records for IE_FOI_410 : Summary for Decision Making

Record No.	Date of Record	Brief Description	No. of Pages	Decision: Grant/Part Grant/Refuse	Section of Act if applicable	Record Edited/Identify Deletions
1	19.10.2020	IE_FOI_410 Response Document	12	Part Grant	S37 Personal Information	Personal Information of Others

Signed

Freedom of Information / Data Protection Executive

IE_FOI_410 Response Document

The total amount of complaints Irish Rail has received about Covid-19 measures on trains

- June – 176 complaints
- July – 280 complaints
- August – 149 complaints
- September – 86 complaints

A copy of a sample of the complaints, if it is not practical to provide a copy of all them.

- Please find copy of redacted complaints attached.

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: Hi, I'm travelling from Galway to Wexford. When I recently took a train from Westport to Athlone, there was no social distancing measures enforced and most people did not have facemasks on. There was one toilet with no disinfectant wipes available. Will you be properly enforcing social distancing on the trains from now on? I've booked my ticket online in advance, but how will you be enforcing social distancing? I'm concerned because I know how busy the train from Dublin to Galway in particular can be. Thanks, [REDACTED]

Time: 21/07/2020 17:45:25

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: Hello, I've travelled twice on Iarnrod Eireann services in the past 7 days and I am very concerned about the lack of adherence to covid safety regulations on both services. On Saturday 4th July I travelled on the 11 a.m. service from Dublin Heuston to Cork city. Almost every aspect of the covid safety regulations were ignored. Every second seat on the train was available to be sat in. This is in contrast to 1 in 4 seats on other public transport such as city bus services or the luas. Not only that, but the service seemed overbooked which meant that there were passengers sitting on the floor at toilet areas between carriages. I estimate that half of passengers, including myself, were wearing face masks despite this being a requirement for public transport. At no point did an inspector or employee of Iarnrod Eireann so much as check a ticket on the service, not to speak of enforcing the rule around face coverings. A pair of men at one table had a small dog sitting on the table for virtually the entire trip which, covid aside, is a deplorable breach of hygiene. The combination of having so many seats open while not enforcing the wearing of masks meant that I spent three hours sitting directly opposite a man with no face mask, close enough that our knees touched. I am currently on a service from Waterford to Dublin Heuston. Signage at Waterford station stated that masks were a recommendation, not a requirement. Staff checking tickets allowed numerous passengers to board without masks without passing comment. While this train is less crowded than the last, I am the only passenger in this carriage wearing a mask. Again, there has been no member of staff on board checking tickets or advising passengers in relation to masks. I accept that passengers need to take a certain level of responsibility while travelling, Iarnrod Eireann is simply not doing enough to enforce safety. You will be responsible if I, or any other passenger, becomes ill as a result. I am making every effort to ensure safety for my fellow passengers while travelling. I am very disappointed to discover this is not true of Iarnrod Eireann. Yours, [REDACTED]

: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: 1. I would like to query the continuing disruption of weekday services of trains on the Northern Commuter line from Drogheda to Dublin which remain in place following the 8th of June. I urge the restoration of these trains as soon as possible. Please bear in mind not all workers work to a 9-5 schedule. I can get no information of the likelihood of a return to full schedule. As I have been required to return to work, the hours which include late hours travel to/from Dun Laoghaire, I have been forced to start driving. The cancellation of trains (including Enterprise service) during a period of two hours in the late morning (9am-11.14am) and late evening (7.30pm-9.46pm) has made it extremely difficult to travel by train. It would mean an increase to about five hours a day to normal commuting time, which is unsustainable, as I work with fixed hours of attendance and to fixed public opening hours. 2. I am the holder of an annual tax saver ticket (which I have not used since the 13th of March). I have been unable to get information on the proposed extension to annual tickets announced in May. Because of the lack of information I cannot make an informed decision about my travel arrangements. Because of service cancellations (see above) I already have had to incur extra expense by being forced into car travel full time. Even though I would like to travel by train on some days when I work early I feel I will lose on any extension now if I use the ticket on any journey. I continue to pay for my annual ticket but do not want to go about cancelling it until I know what Irish Rail intends doing with the extension. No information is forthcoming as to whether this will be a blanket extension or dependant of personal ticket usage. My preferred option is to use the train for travel but the lack of clarity has made this impossible. Can a decision be made about this with TFI as soon as possible? I would also query this announcement being made before sanction was forthcoming from TFI - which seems to be the situation. Please clarify.

Time: 26/07/2020 07:56:00

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: I am really upset. I bought my daughter a seat on the train from Galway to Dublin on the basis that it would be safe and social distancing would be adhered to as seats are prebooked. My daughter and her two friends are sitting on the floor of the train even though they got on at Galway. This goes against all the social distancing that we are all trying to keep. Can you give me any comfort as to way this happened or is this something I should highlight to the media so people understand the real risks of travelling by train. [REDACTED]

Customer Name: [REDACTED]

Customer Called: 10:15am

Duration Of Call: 12 Minutes

Customer Contact: [REDACTED]

Travelling: Cork Kent To Dublin Huston

Date: 05/07/2020

Complaint: She Got to Booking Office at 3:30pm Was Closed, Has Free Travel Produced Pass And The Man At the Barrier Told You Have No Problem Getting On As Cant Get Ticket anyway 4:05pm Only Had For People With PreBooked Tickets Cause Train Was Sold Out, She Could Not Book Seat Due to Covid-19.

Face Coverings were Not Worn on the Trains. Multiple People On with No Face covering.

She Wants A Phone Call Back.

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number:

Feedback: Hello I am on the 8.25 am train from cork to Dublin right now. One woman who has sat across from me is not wearing a face mask and coughing everywhere. The Ticketmaster has walked past 4 times and nothing has been said. This woman should not be allowed on the train. No face mask you should not be allowed to board the train. Cases all over the world are spiking and this ignorance should not be tolerated. Everything front line workers have done during this pandemic can be undone through the selfishness of other. Surely it is up to irish rail employees to ensure protocols are being followed. This has been a very uneasy and uncomfortable journey all due to the laziness and selfishness of others not wearing a mask. I work in a hospital and have done all during this pandemic and have seen countless people suffer from this virus and to see this on public transport is not right.

Time: 04/07/2020 10:16:47

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: My daughter is on board the Kerry to Heuston train. She boarded at Killarney Station after midday today. She is wearing a mask and has just messaged to say that the other passengers have chosen to take off masks. I feel deeply concerned as I believed this was a requirement in taking public transport. I would have undertaken to drive her to Dublin rather than having to face such a situation. With deep concern. [REDACTED]

Time: 26/07/2020 13:31:19

Good afternoon,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am requesting a full refund with as little grief as possible.

Yesterday Wednesday the 29th of July. I bought a ticket for a train that was overbooked. After paying full price for a ticket there was no seats available and there was no safety measures in place on response to the covid pandemic.

As I felt my safety was being jeeredise and there was no seats available having being charged full price I think it's only acceptable that a refund is returned.

I sat on the floor which in itself is a safety hazard and was stepped over by a staff member of Irish rail who passed no remarks.

The booking number is [REDACTED]

The most frustrating part is there was an abundance of available seats in 'first class'

Had I known that little measures were in place for the regular class I would have booked first class. Again, I didn't realise that measures were not being implemented and that overbooking were being taken.

Apologies for what may appear a passive aggressive email, it was just a highly fursytrating, worrying and dissapoibting experience that I paid good, hard earned money for.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: 10:26 Clara to Galway. Overcrowded, anti social behavior, no reinforcement of the mask rule or of drinking on board. No social distancing being maintained. Extremely disappointed as the numbers on board aren't being managed and will be a contributing factor in an impending coronavirus outbreak.

Time: 01/08/2020 10:54:20

Nature of feedback:

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number:

Feedback: To whom it may concern, I am currently commuting home from Wexford to Dublin on your 18:31 train. Usually there is no issues onboard this service however the sheer volume of people you allowed to board your trains is an absolute disgrace during the current pandemic. Usually, there is an Irish Rail staff member on board insuring all government guidelines are adhered too. In this case there was no one to be seen and then thus people attempting to sit wherever they wish and the wearing of masks was not being enforced as per the government mandatory guidelines! Irish Rail you have let the ball drop and completely disregarded the safety of your passengers!!

Time: 03/08/2020 19:58

e: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: I was on the 13:25 service out of Huston traveling to Newbridge. I am disgusted at the lack of compliance with the wearing of facemasks onboard the train in an overly full carriage where the social distance markers were being ignored. I was under the impression that Masks were mandatory, and that this was being enforced. I am also contacting the HSE on this issue because this is a very serious issue due to the continued rise in cases. You're failing in your protection of vulnerable and hugh risk customer. Which I am one of.

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: I am travelling on 05:30 Galway Heuston service, a number of people on board who boarded in Portarlinton not using face covering. I have raised the issue of non compliance with mandatory face covering previously, it especially important now with the restrictions in place in Kildare, Laois and Offaly. What plans have IE in place to ensure passengers are compliant?

[REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number:

Feedback: Didn't feel safe on the train as there were not enough seats. It was not ideal to be in close contact with other passengers who also had to stand. It's a scary time as it is so I never want to travel on a train I paid €20 for, for more than an hour in close proximity with others.

Time: 12/08/2020 13:10:07

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: On board the 11.40 train from Dublin to Galway and again there are many youth having to sit in the corridors and some older people sitting next to people. You've received so many complaints about this happening and people not wearing masks. There are many people not wearing masks and No staff at all checking tickets and for people to wear masks?! I think a refund for all customers on this services is needed and the company is not following the HSE guidelines.. Trains are at capacity over 50% as people are on the floor sitting.. Why is no one monitoring this?!?? This is not safe for people travelling.. Poor service as usual..

Nature of feedback:

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number:

Feedback: I am currently in Coach D on the 14.25 Cork/ Dublin train. There are more than one group of 18 -25 year olds who are sitting on non covid seats in groups of 4. I dont see the point of marking the seats if no one has come through to move them on or fine them. I am disappointed by both the behaviour and lack

of enforcement of rules. Regards [REDACTED]

Time: 20/08/2020 16:49:46

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: Dear Sir/Madam, I travelled from Killarney to Dublin Heuston at 11:39am on Thursday 20th August and was absolutely horrified by the lack of enforcement of mandatory face masks on board. There were multiple passengers sitting close to me in the carriage, who completely disregarded the mandatory wearing of face masks for the entire journey. As a legal requirement under the HEALTH ACT 1947 (SECTION 31A – TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) (COVID-19) (FACE COVERINGS IN CERTAIN PREMISES AND BUSINESSES) REGULATIONS 2020, face masks on transport are mandatory. I felt completely unsafe for the entire journey from Killarney to Dublin, Houston. In particular, there was an individual sitting beside me on the train (they were sitting at a four seater & table) and he refused to wear a mask for the full journey. On the first part of the journey (Killarney to Mallow), an Irish rail worker came through the carriage to ensure that people were wearing face masks. He passed through the carriage once and told this particular passenger to put on the mask. As soon as the Irish Rail worker left, this passenger took the mask off and placed it under his chin for the entire journey, without covering his nose or mouth. Nothing was done about this passenger who was in clear breach of the regulation on mandatory face masks. On the second part of the journey, (Mallow, Cork to Dublin Houston) there was NO Irish rail worker going through the carriages to enforce the mandatory face mask rule and this particular passenger proceeded to disregard the law and travelled the full journey without his mask. If you check the CCTV footage, you will see that a number of passengers on this particular journey, completely disregarded the law on mandatory face masks (I was sitting in carriage [REDACTED]). I am absolutely horrified and disgusted that my health and safety was put at risk by travelling on Irish Rail. As a state owned company, I expected the Covid-19 safety measures to be enforced to a much higher standard and was shocked that nothing was done about these passengers refusing to wear a mask on board. I did not feel safe at all travelling on Irish Rail and am horrified at the lack of enforcement of mandatory face masks on the train. These passengers put my health and everyone else's on the train at great risk. This is an issue that Irish Rail need to address urgently so that other peoples lives are not put at risk whilst travelling. Irish Rail need to enforce the law to a much higher standard and Irish Rail did not do enough to make my journey safe from Killarney to Dublin. I am extremely disappointed and upset by this. For the duration of the entire journey, my health was put at risk due to a lax approach to the mandatory wearing of face masks on board. How are we expected to overcome the Covid -19 pandemic if the law cannot even be enforced by a state owned company? I was not impressed and a lot more needs to be done to protect passengers on the train. This issue needs to be addressed Immediately as passengers are clearly not adhering to the mandatory wearing of face masks on board. Why were these individuals allowed to continue travelling on board without a face mask? Please check the CCTV footage which will provide the evidence for this complaint. It is in the interest of everyone that Irish Rail enforce the mandatory wearing of face masks on board. Please consider this urgently. Thank you

itle: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: I travelled on Sunday 16 August on the 11:40 train Dublin Heuston to Galway with my partner. Myself

and my partner complied with Government guidelines and wore a mask and sanitised hands regularly. To note we travelled to visit family that had recently taken unwell. I was extremely disappointed to see that a high number of the other passengers were not in fact wearing masks. For example the couple in the four seater to the left of us had no masks on for the entire journey and proceeded to cough openly. The group in front of us also did not wear masks and vaped throughout the journey - blowing a large cloud of breath/cigar around the carriage. The large group behind us also did not wear a mask. From Tullamore large crowds proceeded to board the train some with mask some with no mask. I tweeted Irish Rail on twitter to highlight the lack of masks and their response was if I have a problem with it I should write to this forum. My tweet was subtweeted by another passenger which confirmed the large crowds. Again Irish Rail just ignored that tweet. Why was a Irish rail employee not sent on to double check the train? I am requesting a full refund as myself and my partner felt completely unsafe and uncomfortable as you failed to comply with your duties in ensuring all passengers wore masks and followed guidelines. At home I live with my mother who suffered with [REDACTED] due to this I did my utmost to ensure I was protected throughout the journey and believed your services would be run appropriately to protect its passengers this simply was not the case. If a full refund isn't received I will take the matter further.

Time: 19/08/2020 09:06:1

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number:

Feedback: Hi, This is the second time I have had to highlight social distancing measures being completely disregarded because of Iran Road Eireann not supplying enough carriages. On board the 15.15 train from Galway to Heuston after paying full price for my ticket. I pay full price for the ticket and abide by the rules and regulations and covid measures laronroad Eireann rule in order to protect everyone, why is laronroad Eireann not playing there part by providing sufficient carriages. The train is completely packed and we have just departed Ceannt Station in Galway. People are sitting down in the seats with the yellow flyers and disregarding them because there insufficient space to sit down, let alone social distance. People in the high risky category are extremely vulnerable. Social distancing is completely disregarded. People are huddled together between carriages in the doorway. Standing and potentially spreading the virus. This is not good enough. More carriages need to be put on. Friday afternoon and only a few carriages on board!

Time: 21/08/2020 15:23:01

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number [REDACTED]

Feedback: Just got the 1.40 train from ashtown to cabra on the 7th of August Saturday. A lady in a [REDACTED] and a man in [REDACTED] refusing to wear mask said it to the driver but he just said is not his job. Same attitude on all transport a bloody disgrace

Time: 08/08/2020 13:49:34

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: Train number 616, arrived at Tara street at 5:07, on 6th August 2020, was packed - about 40% of people not wearing masks, people sitting on yellow seat coverings, no social distancing. It is a very scary experience for someone who is immunocompromised like myself to rely on the services of Irish rail to provide safe passage to and from work, and due to over crowding is now left waiting after a 10 hour shift for a less crowded train. Irish rail worker on the platform waved through the train with out batting an eyelid, he seemed to have no bother with what he was seeing. This is disgraceful, as a company you have the obligation (under law) to ensure the safe passage of every traveler. Begin enforcing certain numbers per carriage and the wearing of masks. Disgraceful.

Time: 06/08/2020 17:18:40

[REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: Hello there, I know that you, the person reading this message isn't responsible for this. This is for the heads of Irish rail who apparently only think about profit. How come, that Irishrail keeps selling Train tickets, when This train is already full and some people have to stand? There's currently elderly people standing with me at the moment. We are Like 20 people standing and there's not even enough Space for the required 2meters social distancing. In this pandemic Time this is pretty much unacceptable. So please Irish rail, when your train is

at full Capacity, and by this I mean, the new capacity standard which includes the social distancing, stop selling tickets. Cheers

Feedback: I have been on the Midleton to Cork train numerous times during the lifting of restrictions and your company is not adhering to the mandatory mask wearing policy put in place by the government. It is unsafe, inconsiderate and frankly dangerous to have no follow through on a sign found in a train station.

Time: 17/08/2020 15:55:38

Nature of feedback:

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: Dear Irish Rail, I was in contact with a member of your staff on Facebook Messenger who suggested I send on details of my complaint here. Here are the two messages I sent him. Part 1: Hi Irish Rail, anyone on the 7pm train from Heuston to Cork who can enforce the mask rule? Lots of people on my carriage not wearing one. This is not on. Part 2: Thanks [REDACTED] for your reply. The member of staff who I saw on the train was not wearing [REDACTED] mask properly himself and walked up and down maybe a dozen times during the journey. The people my age (20s) were just chatting, but put on masks on their way out, so I don't believe they in particular had a condition that prevented them from wearing one fully. But I understand that is a consideration to bear in mind. The two women on the other end of the carriage were drinking cans of beer throughout the entire journey and became more and more disruptive as time went on. Again, I doubt this is allowed on trains either, and again, the member of staff I saw turned a blind eye to every one of their 20 pack of cans. I have to voice this as the journey was not only late, but unsafe and uncomfortable for these reasons. I was upset leaving the train for the behaviours that were not addressed by the member of staff and for the fact that [REDACTED] himself did not wear [REDACTED] mask correctly in close

confines. Please [REDACTED] can you pass on this information, it is so disappointing. I'm afraid I will not be able to travel on Irish Rail until Irish Rail can confirm these issues can be rectified. Thank you for your reply, and I would appreciate further feedback on this matter. Have a good day. I was appalled by both occurrences and would like to further feedback on both. To reiterate above, I will not be able to travel with Irish Rail until I know these issues are resolved. Many thanks for your time and attention in this matter, [REDACTED]

Hiya,

Today Aug 11th, I was on the 2:45pm from Wicklow to Dun Laoghaire but had to get off at Bray for my safety because many were not wearing masks and putting others at risk. All cars were close to 100% occupancy following COVID advice so this added to my fear.

The Dart on the other hand were following precautions and had windows for airflow. The Dart isn't available to Wicklow so I'm wondering what will be done to keep passengers safer on the train?

Kind Regards,

First Name: [REDACTED]

Surname: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Feedback: I wish to make a complaint regarding overcrowding on the 17.45 train from Killarney to Mallow. Standing room only. NO WAY TO SOCIALLY DISTANCE. Only 3 carriages in this train from Killarney - on a Sun in Aug! ...in the midst of a pandemic. There are at least 30 people standing in this carriage. All gathered around the doors. Please explain. Contrary to public health guidance. Do not allow this number of people to book if not enough space. Or alternatively put on additional carriages. I would not have taken this train if I knew would be so packed. Please do something about this. I can send you photos to prove. Regards, [REDACTED]