



COVID-19 Requirements for Transportation Services

Transportation companies help community members, seniors and other vulnerable residents get to grocery and drug stores, doctors' appointments and medical services (e.g., dialysis). This type of transportation can be risky:

- Residents from long-term care, retirement homes, congregate living, etc. can be older, frailer or have pre-existing health conditions.
- Drivers and passengers are in a confined space with limited ventilation.
- Drivers can transport passengers who might be sick, but not showing symptoms of illness including COVID-19.
- There are many commonly touched surfaces that need frequent cleaning.

This resource outlines required infection control practices for taxi, shuttle, senior's ride program drivers and managers to reduce the risk of exposure to illnesses including COVID-19.

1. Screen for and report illness

- Make drivers aware of COVID-19 symptoms including fever, cough, runny nose, muscle aches and tiredness, difficulty breathing, sore throat, headache and diarrhea. Have all drivers do the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#) prior to their shift to monitor symptoms and help determine how to seek further care. **Call the Health Unit's COVID-19 Intake Line at 613-732-3629 ext. 977 or RC VTAC at 1-844-727-6404 for direction regarding testing.**
- Any employees who have symptoms related to cold, flu or COVID-19 should self-isolate and not report for work. If they become ill while working, they must be sent home immediately.

2. Wear a surgical mask or cloth face covering

- Clean surgical masks or if unavailable, other face coverings like cloth masks, should always be worn by drivers and passengers, especially when in close contact such as helping a passenger in and out of the vehicle, and while driving. See [Mask Use for Non-Health Care Workers](#)
- Drivers should avoid handling or touching the mask, except to remove and dispose of it. Reusable masks should be washed in detergent and hot water after the shift.
- Replace a soiled, dirty or moist mask with a clean one as often as needed during the shift.



3. Limit contact through physical distancing

The COVID-19 virus can spread to people who are within 2 metres (6 feet) of a person with COVID-19 when that person coughs or sneezes, or through direct contact with that person's saliva or mucous. People can transmit the virus even if they do not have symptoms. To ensure physical distancing:

- Request all passengers to sit alone in the back seat, on the passenger side unless travelling with another person.
- Keep a distance of 2 meters (6 feet) from the passenger when outside the vehicle.
- Avoid close contact with passengers. Consider asking them to handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop off when possible.
- Consider installing a Plexiglass divider between the front and back seats.
- Keep windows open to encourage air flow. Avoid using the recirculated air option for the vehicle's ventilation; use the car's vents to bring in fresh outside air.
- Avoid handling money, if possible. Consider wearing disposable gloves if you must collect money from customers. Use one pair of gloves per customer and throw them away after. Wash or use hand sanitizer between gloving.
- Limit unnecessary contact between drivers, such as in the dispatch area or office. Hold meetings with drivers only when needed, and in a large area or outside where physical distancing is possible.

4. Clean and disinfect vehicles after each client encounter

- Clean and disinfect all high-touch surfaces (handrails, car door handles, arm rests, buttons for windows and locks, seatbelts) **after each passenger**.
- Pay special attention after transporting medical patients (e.g., to and from hospital and other health care settings) and after transporting passengers who have respiratory symptoms (e.g., coughing, sneezing).
- Use only [approved disinfectants](#) that have the 8-digit Drug Identification Number (DIN) that confirms it is approved for use in Canada. See [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#).
- Carry out at least twice daily cleaning of railings, ramps, doors and doorway area, steering wheel, seats, windows, driver and surrounding passenger areas.
- Ensure each driver or assigned vehicle is well-stocked with hand sanitizer, disposable gloves, masks, disinfectant, paper towels, cleaning instructions, and a garbage receptacle with clean bags.
- Discard disinfectant wipes if they become dry and don't use on heavily soiled surfaces. Clean surfaces with soap and water first, then disinfect with disinfectant wipes.
- Garbage receptacles should be lined with a plastic bag, and bags safely disposed of at the end of the shift, or more often as needed.



5. Protect yourself and your co-workers

COVID-19 can live on surfaces for hours to days based on surface studies. There are many ways drivers can help others to not get sick.

- Wear clean clothing each work day. After each shift, clothing must be washed with normal detergent and warm water and dried at a high temperature.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- Train drivers on proper [hand washing](#) and [hand rubbing practices](#).
- Provide access to soap, clean running water under pressure and drying materials, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has at least 70% alcohol.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or arm, not a hand. Dispose of tissues immediately in a lined garbage receptacle.
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 70% alcohol):
 - Before, during and after preparing food
 - Before eating food
 - Before and after using the toilet
 - After blowing the nose, coughing or sneezing
- Wash or sanitize hands:
 - Before and after work and breaks
 - After handling passengers' belongings, if unavoidable
 - Between rides and after handling money
 - After handling pens, clipboards, touch screens
 - Before and after pumping gas
 - After putting on, touching or removing face coverings

If you require assistance related to cleaning practices or wearing personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, etc.) contact the Health Unit at 613-732-3629.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-emergency Transport Vehicles](#).

IHSA. [Transportation services health and safety during COVID-19](#)

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Taxi and Rideshare Drivers.

Current as of June 15, 2020.