

Guidance to drivers who transport passengers while reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission

COVID-19 is a virus that is spread mainly from person-to-person via respiratory droplets when an infected person breathes, talks, coughs or sneezes. For drivers, potential sources of exposure include having close contact with passengers with COVID-19, or touching surfaces recently touched by a person with COVID-19. Drivers of these vehicles may find it difficult to be 2 metres physically distanced from their passengers, particularly in smaller vehicles.

The measures outlined in this guidance document are intended to provide drivers with the information to protect themselves from exposure to COVID-19 while transporting potentially or confirmed COVID-19 positive passengers as safely as possible. If drivers strictly follow this advice, then the risk of their exposure to COVID-19 is decreased significantly and there should be no requirement for isolation. However, if all measures are not followed, then the risk of exposure to the virus is increased and with this, the chance that isolation will be required increases.

Guidance for Drivers

When transporting any passenger, particularly if COVID-19 illness is possible, the following guidance is recommended:

- Plan the shortest possible route; no unnecessary stops.
- Use the largest vehicle available.
- Only transport people who share a household, keeping numbers low.
- Passengers remain 2 metres distanced from driver, seated in back row/seat.
- If unable to distance 2m, it is recommended to install a physical [barrier](#) between front and back seats (e.g., plexiglass or temporary clear vinyl) to add additional protection between the driver and passengers.
- Mandatory masking for both passenger and driver while in the vehicle and outside the vehicle for the entire trip. Well fitted, three-layered masks are required.
- Drivers may wear eye protection such as a face shield or goggles, in addition to the mask (as long as they do not create a driving hazard).
- Drivers should change non-medical masks frequently-especially when moist or worn for an extended period of time. [Follow public health advice for storing, cleaning and disposing of masks \(if applicable\)](#).
- Avoid physical contact with passengers or their baggage.
- Provide a supply of hand sanitizer for use by drivers and passengers when entering and leaving the vehicle.
- Drivers and passengers should not eat or drink in the vehicle, as it involves removing masks.
- Keep windows open during transport when possible, and front vents open to bring fresh air in from outside. Do not use recycled air option. Air conditioning can be used as long as air is not recirculated. Air out vehicle at end of trip, before next passenger.
- Clean and disinfect the back- seat area between passengers.
- Garbage bags should be available for passenger use if needed. These should be tied and disposed of after each passenger.

- Commercial vehicles or Designated Volunteer Vehicles will follow their [WorkSafe NB Guidance for Operational Plans](#).
- Post plastic-covered [signage](#) in back row(s) to remind passengers about public health guidance.
- Use no-contact payment or exchange payment outside of the vehicle, if applicable.
- Passengers handle their own bags for pick-up and drop-off.
- Vaccinations are strongly recommended by public health to protect against COVID-19, especially for persons with a higher chance of exposure to persons infected with the virus, including taxi or other drivers. Vaccines are now available in New Brunswick, and drivers may book appointments through [regional health authority clinics](#) or through their local pharmacy.

How to clean your vehicle after transporting a passenger

Before starting to clean the vehicle, open all windows to let it air out. Don't forget to put on a mask and gloves before beginning the cleaning process.

Coronaviruses are one of the easiest types of viruses to kill with approved disinfectants and following label directions. Always clean surfaces with soap and water, or similar cleaning product before using disinfectants. If available, choose products that clean and disinfect all at once, such as wipes or commercial disinfectant solutions.

While most disinfectants will work against coronavirus, Health Canada has developed a [list of hard-surface disinfectants](#) that have broad-spectrum viricidal action. It is best to use a product that is registered in Canada with a Drug Identification Number (DIN). If an approved disinfectant isn't available, use a [diluted bleach solution](#) (on bleach-compatible surfaces), or an alcohol solution with at least 70% alcohol.

- **For hard non-porous surfaces** within the interior of the vehicle (i.e. hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles), clean with soap and water if the surfaces are visibly dirty before using disinfectant.
- **For soft or porous surfaces** such as fabric seats, remove any visible dirt, if present. Clean with appropriate soft-surface cleaners.
- **For frequently touched electronic surfaces**, (i.e. tablets or touch screens used in the vehicle), remove visible dirt. Disinfect following the manufacturer's instructions. If no guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect. (Spray on cloth, then wipe screen; do not spray electronics.) A plastic covering may be placed over the keypad to protect the device from frequent disinfection. If used, this covering must be disinfected after each passenger use.
- **Gloves** used for cleaning and disinfecting the vehicle should be removed and disposed of after cleaning. Wash hands immediately after removal of gloves with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

A layered approach of protective measures, including distancing, masking, enhanced cleaning, is the best approach to make the drive as safe as possible for both drivers and passengers.