

COVID-19 Guidance

Public Transportation Providers

Masking

Masks are required on public transportation, with some exceptions, including young children and people with certain disabilities.

- Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) have issued orders requiring the use of face masks by operators and passengers of public transportation.
- For a full list of exceptions, see [details of the CDC order](#) and the [ODH order](#).

Planning

- Review the [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) and the [Resuming Business Toolkit](#) for guidelines and recommendations that all employers can use to protect their employees.
- Identify an on-site workplace coordinator responsible for COVID-19 assessment and control. Notify all workers that any COVID-19 concerns should be directed to the identified coordinator.
 - When developing plans, include all employees in the workplace, for example, staff, utility employees, relief employees, janitorial staff, supervisory staff, and operators.
- Provide training and other administrative policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- If contractors are employed in the workplace, develop plans to communicate with the contracting company regarding modifications to work processes.

Environment

- Consider making foot-traffic single direction in narrow or confined passenger areas to encourage single-file movement at a 6-foot distance.
- Create physical distance between transit facility employees, operators, and passengers.
 - Implement a system to maintain a space of 6 feet between people in all areas, including employee break areas. This could include use of physical partitions or visual cues, such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs.

- Use Plexiglas barriers for ticket sales and drivers.
- Limit the number of people in the vehicle.
- Consider using separate doors for entering and exiting the vehicle, if possible, based on layout, to facilitate single direction foot traffic.
- Post signs and reminders at entry doors and in strategic places providing instruction on prevention methods. Signs should be accessible for people with disabilities, easy to understand, and may include infographics or language for non-English speakers, as needed.
- Establish additional hand sanitization stations at transportation hubs and stations and on vehicles.
- Encourage tap-and-pay or electronic payment systems to limit handling of cash and credit cards. If this is not possible, ensure that cash and/or cards are handled with care by operators, either through changing gloves between each transaction or using hand sanitizer between passengers.
- Move electronic payment terminals/credit card readers farther away from operators to increase the distance between the operators and passengers.
- Where possible, establish physical barriers between operators and passengers. Use strip curtains, plastic barriers, or similar materials to create impermeable partitions.
- Control heating, ventilation, and air conditioning so the maximum amount of fresh air is delivered to occupied spaces. If possible, increase filter efficiency of HVAC units to the highest functional level. Portable high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units may be considered to remove contaminants from the air in poorly ventilated areas. Consider the use of natural ventilation (i.e., opening windows) to increase outdoor air dilution of indoor air, when environmental conditions allow.
- Enhance sanitization procedures for high-touch surfaces, using disinfectants approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Also frequently clean employee break/rest areas and other common areas.
 - High-touch areas could include driver areas, door handles, poles, grab bars, handrails, seats, arm rests, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, and adjacent walls and windows.
 - Other such areas could include digital interfaces (such as touchscreens and fingerprint scanners), fareboxes, kiosks, ticket machines, turnstiles, benches, garbage cans, payphones, restroom surfaces, wheelchair handles, motorized carts, elevator buttons, maps, and communication system devices.
- Provide employees access to soap, clean running water, and drying materials or alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol. Provide disposable disinfectant wipes so that employees can wipe down commonly touched surfaces. Provide employees tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles.

- Implement policies and procedures to provide sufficient opportunities for employees to frequently clean hands and to ensure transit vehicles and facilities are appropriately cleaned. At minimum, employees should clean hands:
 - Before, during, and after preparing food.
 - Before eating food.
 - After using the bathroom.
 - After nose blowing, coughing, or sneezing.
 - Before and after work shifts.
 - Before and after work breaks.
 - After touching frequently touched surfaces or handling passengers' items.
- Close or limit access to common areas where employees are likely to congregate and interact, such as break rooms, parking lots, and in entrance/exit areas.

Employee illness

- Develop policies that encourage sick employees to stay at home without fear of reprisals, and ensure employees are aware of these policies.
- Consider conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks (e.g., symptom and/or temperature screening) of employees on scheduled workdays.
 - [Screening options](#) could include having employees self-screen prior to arriving at work or having on-site screening by taking an employees' temperatures and assessing other potential [symptoms](#) prior to beginning work. (See [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#).)
 - If done on site, make sure employees can maintain at least 6 feet of distance while waiting for screening. Make screenings as private as possible and maintain the confidentiality of medical status and history.
 - Immediately separate employees who report with or develop symptoms at work and arrange for private transport home. These employees should self-isolate and contact their healthcare provider immediately.
 - Close off any areas used for prolonged periods of time by the sick person.
 - Perform [cleaning and disinfection](#) after anyone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 has been in the workplace. Focus especially on frequently touched surfaces. If others do not have access to these areas or items, wait 24 hours (or as long as possible) before cleaning and disinfecting.
 - Employees who test positive for COVID-19 should immediately notify their employer of their results.
 - Sick employees should follow [CDC recommended steps](#) to self-isolate or seek care. Employees should not return to work until they meet the criteria to [discontinue home isolation](#), in consultation with healthcare providers.

Guidance for paratransit operators when no alternative transportation is available and it is necessary to transport a passenger who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19, or who has had [close contact](#) in the past two weeks with someone confirmed to have COVID-19:

- Contact your employer to discuss your concerns if you feel unsafe transporting the passenger or if you are at [increased risk of severe illness](#).
- Follow the CDC recommendations for [transporting known or suspected persons with COVID-19 using non-emergency vehicle services](#).
- If available, turn on the rear exhaust ventilation in addition to supplying outside air through the front vents.
- Ensure the passenger wears a cloth mask, if appropriate. Wearing cloth masks may be difficult for individuals with physical, sensory, cognitive, or behavioral impairments, and is not recommended for children younger than 2 or for anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth mask without assistance.
- After transporting the passenger, [clean and disinfect](#) the vehicle and [wash your hands](#).

Updated March 25, 2021.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.