

COVID-19 Guidance for Taxi/Ride Share Employers, Drivers, Vehicle Owners

The following interim guidance includes recommendations to help reduce the risk of community exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, in taxis and ride shares.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infection caused by a new type of coronavirus. COVID-19 can present as an acute respiratory illness in humans. More information on COVID-19 can be found in the [Toronto Public Health COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#) and [Toronto Public Health Guidance for Workplaces / Businesses and Employers](#).

Preventing respiratory infections (including COVID-19) in taxi/ride share vehicles

Recommendations for employers/drivers/vehicle owners and operators to use now include:

- **Actively encourage sick employees/drivers to stay home:**
 - All employers/employees/drivers should be aware of signs and symptoms of COVID-19, including:
 - fever
 - cough
 - muscle aches and tiredness
 - difficulty breathing
 - and less commonly: sore throat, headache, diarrhea.
 - Employees/drivers who have any of the above signs and symptoms should stay home or be sent home immediately if they become ill while working. They should not return to work until 14 days from symptom onset and no longer feeling unwell.
 - Employers should be flexible with requiring healthcare provider's notes for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness. Healthcare provider notes to validate employee illness or to return to work can put unnecessary strain on healthcare provider offices and medical facilities during this busy time.
 - Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees/drivers to stay home to care for a sick family member. During this time, employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members.
- **Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by drivers and passengers:**
 - Drivers should clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand rub, or to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. Washing hands with soap and water is preferred if hands are visibly dirty.
 - Use alcohol-based hand rub after handling money or providing assistance with a passenger's personal items.
 - Alcohol-based hand rub, tissues, and no-touch disposal receptacles should be available for driver and passenger use in every vehicle. Ensure supplies are maintained.
 - Consider placing signage for [cough and sneeze etiquette](#) and [hand sanitizing](#) in vehicles where the information can be seen by passengers (e.g. in a clear plastic sleeve).

- **Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfection of vehicles:**
 - Frequently touched surfaces are most likely to be contaminated. Examples of high-touch surfaces in vehicles include car door handles, arm rests, buttons for windows and locks, and seatbelts.
 - Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
 - In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned and disinfected at the following times:
 - at least twice per day
 - when visibly dirty
 - after transporting medical patients (e.g. to and from hospital and other health care settings)
 - after transporting passengers who display respiratory symptoms (e.g. coughing, sneezing)
 - Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms it is approved for use in Canada.
 - Disinfectant wipes have combined cleaners and disinfectants in one solution. Disinfectant wipes should be discarded if they become dry and are not recommended for heavily soiled surfaces.
 - Check the expiry date of products you use and always follow manufacturer's instructions.
 - Employers/vehicle owners should provide all drivers with the appropriate cleaning products/disinfectant wipes for their vehicles.

- **Practice additional preventive measures while transporting passengers:**
 - If possible, request that passengers sit in the back seat to maintain physical distance.
 - Consider minimizing shared rides so passengers are not traveling with individuals unknown to them.
 - Drivers do not need to wear a face mask if they are not sick. If they are unwell, they should not drive.
 - If the passenger is being transported to or from a hospital or other health care setting and/or is displaying respiratory symptoms, ensure the windows of the car are open.

More information

For more information, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/covid19 or call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.

References

Toronto Public Health. (2020). 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) [Fact Sheet]. City of Toronto. Retrieved from https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/8d59-Fact-Sheet_Novel-Coronavirus.pdf

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2020). *Interim Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

Public Health Ontario. (2020). *Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings*. Retrieved from <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>