

COVID-19 Guidance for Taxi and Ride Share Vehicles

The following recommendations for taxis, water taxis and ride share employers, drivers and vehicle owners are intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Updated information about COVID-19 can be found in Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#) and [Guidance for Workplaces, Businesses and Employers](#).

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 in taxi/ride share vehicles

Actively encourage sick employees/drivers to stay home

- Remind employees/drivers to stay at home and not come to work/drive their work vehicle if they are sick.
- Develop an attendance policy for staff to ensure staff do not come to work sick. For more information, refer to Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19 Guidance for Employers, Workplaces and Business](#)
- It is strongly recommended that all staff complete a COVID-19 [symptoms screening questionnaire](#) before each work shift. The questions can be completed on a paper-based questionnaire, asked directly to employees and answers recorded, or completed online. Staff should check their own temperature daily prior to coming into work.
- Employees/drivers who have COVID-19 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. If they have COVID-19 symptoms, they should also be encouraged to [get tested](#).
- Employees/drivers who are confirmed cases or determined by Toronto Public Health (TPH) to be a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 should not work/drive a work vehicle for 14 days.
- Employees/drivers who are being managed by TPH (e.g. they are a confirmed case of COVID-19 or a household contact of a confirmed case) should follow TPH instructions to determine when they can return work. Employees/drivers should also report to their Occupational Health and Safety Department prior to returning to work.
- Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees/drivers to stay home to care for a sick family member. During the pandemic, employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members.
- Refer to TPHs [COVID-19 Guidance for Employers, Workplaces and Business](#) for more information.

Practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette by drivers and passengers

- Drivers and passengers should [wash hands](#) with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70 – 90% alcohol concentration) provided hands are not visibly soiled. Washing hands with soap and water is preferred if hands are visibly dirty. Remind staff to avoid touching their face, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Drivers and passengers should [cover their cough](#) or sneeze with a tissue.
- Monitor supplies to ensure adequate amounts of liquid soap, paper towel, hand sanitizer, tissues and no-touch waste receptacles with lined plastic bags for driver and passenger use in every vehicle. Ensure supplies are maintained.
- Use hand sanitizer after handling money or helping with a passenger's personal items.
- Post signs 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

- Review Public Health Ontario's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings fact sheet](#).
- Refer to [Health Canada's lists of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- Frequently touched surfaces are most likely to be contaminated with the virus that causes COVID-19. Examples of high-touch surfaces in vehicles vehicle door handles and frames, arm rest, windows and controls, clear hard plastic barriers, keys, seatbelt buckles, steering wheel, gearshift, signal levers, ventilation and radio controls.
- 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

- Promote prevention measures to passengers on reducing risk to drivers and themselves on your website and through outgoing telephone messages. [Posters](#) can be posted in the vehicle.

Revised July 31, 2020

- Consider installing plastic screens or plexiglass shields as a physical barrier between the driver and passenger in the back seat. Ensure that these barriers do not create any new safety hazards such as visual obstructions for the driver.
- Ask passengers to sit in the back seat to maintain physical distance.
- It is recommended that when there are four or more passengers that a larger vehicle with more seating, such as a mini-van, or multiple vehicles be used so that individuals do not sit next to the driver. Passengers travelling in the same vehicle should be part of the same social circle.
- In ground vehicles, consider minimizing shared rides so passengers are not travelling with individuals unknown to them.
- It is strongly recommended that drivers wear a [non-medical mask](#) if physical distancing cannot be maintained, and that taxis and ride share companies develop policies regarding non-medical mask use. The City of Toronto [mandatory mask or face covering bylaw](#) does not apply to private transportation.
- Employers must train staff on the [proper use](#) of masks, and [how to safely put on and take off a mask](#). When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of their own infectious respiratory droplets to others. The effectiveness of non-medical masks in protecting the wearer from respiratory droplets from others is uncertain.
- Use the vehicle climate control system and windows to improve fresh air intake/air circulation. Increased airflow can reduce contaminant build up. Avoid using the recirculated air option during passenger transport.
- If the passenger is being transported to or from a hospital or other health care setting and/or is displaying respiratory symptoms, open the car windows. If the passenger has a mask or face covering, it is recommended that they wear it, if possible.

Additional Measures for Water Taxis

- In addition to the above recommendations:
 - Prior to boarding, ensure passengers waiting in lines are spaced two metres/six feet apart. There should be markings on the ground, indicating spacing, if possible.
 - Vessel operators should post screening [signs](#) advising passengers that they cannot board if they have any symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Passengers with symptoms of COVID-19 should be directed to an [assessment centre](#) for testing as soon as possible, and to [self-isolate](#) at home until their results are available.
 - For shared rides, passengers from different households should be seated two metres/six feet apart. If this is not possible, minimize shared rides. Seating should be marked to ensure they are two metres/six feet apart.

Taxi and ride/shares provide an essential service to many people in Toronto. Toronto Public Health is asking individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or who are COVID-19 positive and [need to travel](#) for essential health care appointments to drive themselves or ask a friend or family member to take them if at all possible.

If an individual needs to take a taxi/ride share, they should follow the guidance above with respect to physical distancing, wearing a mask or face covering, and opening windows. The option of taking a taxi/ride share, if required, is permitted under the Medical Officer of Health's [Class Order](#).

Workplace Health and Safety

Ontario has general information on [COVID-19 and workplace health and safety](#) where employers can learn about their responsibilities and how to protect workers at work. Workers can also get information about [health and safety protections](#) at the workplace.

More information

For more information, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/COVID19 or call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.

References

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