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. This document describes the requirements operators must comply with under the Reopening Ontario Act.

Measures for All Workplaces, Organizations & Businesses

Review the Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace to plan and implement protocols to keep staff and patrons safe, including:

- **Staff attendance and operations**
  - Employers must ensure staff complete a COVID-19 symptoms screening questionnaire before each work shift.

- **Health screening for staff and patrons**

- **Mask/face coverings for staff and patrons**

- **Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette**
  - Drivers and passengers should wash hands with soap and water or use an hand sanitizer (70 – 90% alcohol concentration) provided hands are not visibly soiled. Remind staff to avoid touching their face, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - 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).

- **Cleaning and disinfection**
  - 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).
  - Employers/vehicle owners should provide all drivers with the appropriate cleaning products/disinfectant wipes for their vehicles.

- **Managing COVID-19 in the workplace**
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.

### Transporting Passengers Safely

- 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.
- 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.
- When there are four or more passengers, use 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 should only travel in the same vehicle with people they live with.
- 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

- 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.

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

References


