



## Introduction

This tip sheet is intended for taxi and ride share employers, drivers, and vehicle owners and operators, as an overview of recommended controls to help reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Taxi and ride share services provide an important role during the pandemic. They allow essential workers to get to and from their workplaces, as well as enabling other persons to access vital services such as health providers, pharmacies, and grocery stores.

For general COVID-19 prevention practices for both employers and workers, refer to [Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19](#).

## Consider the Risks

- The risk of contracting COVID-19 increases in situations where people are in closed spaces (with poor ventilation) and crowded places when with people from outside their immediate household. Risk is higher in settings where these factors overlap and/or involve activities such as close-range conversations, singing, shouting or heavy breathing (e.g., during exercising).
- As a taxi or ride share driver, potential sources of exposure include having close contact with a passenger with COVID-19 and touching surfaces that have been touched or handled by a person with COVID-19. The nature of this sector can make it difficult to exercise adequate physical distancing, particularly in smaller vehicles.
- Each workplace is unique. It is important for taxi and ride share employers, drivers, and vehicle owners and operators to assess the risks of COVID-19 for their specific workplace (including each vehicle) and implement appropriate controls. Use multiple [personal preventive practices](#) at once (i.e., use a layered approach) to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.
- Consider the following:
  - How will passengers be screened? It is recommended that drivers screen all passengers for symptoms of COVID-19 before each ride.
  - Does the size of the vehicle allow for physical distancing? Passengers should sit as far away as possible from the driver.
  - How will drivers be interacting with passengers? Limit contact with passengers as much as possible.
  - How close are the physical interactions? The risk of transmission increases with close and frequent contact.
  - How long are the interactions? Evidence indicates that person-to-person spread is more likely with prolonged contact.
  - How will the vehicle be cleaned and disinfected between rides? Ensure that all supplies are available, and that the disinfectant used has a drug identification number (DIN) from Health Canada.
  - In addition to driving passengers to their destination, what other services are provided? Ensure that precautions are in place for all other services provided (e.g., food delivery).
  - Are there any local public health guidelines or requirements that need to be followed for your jurisdiction? Always follow the specific requirements for your geographical location.

## Communication to Workers

- Employers should provide clear information and instruction to their workers about the hazards of COVID-19 and what they need to do to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.



## Information for Passengers

- Use all available means (e.g., booking process, website, social media, telephone messages) to remind passengers about the preventive measures being taken to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Ask passengers if they have any COVID-19 related symptoms and if they are legally required to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19 before entering the vehicle.
- Place signs with information about COVID-19 control measures (e.g., hand hygiene, use of non-medical masks, proper coughing/sneezing etiquette) where it is clearly visible to passengers (e.g., a laminated sheet on the back of the front seat headrests that can be easily seen and disinfected).
- Where applicable, remind passengers who are returning to Canada and are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 that they may not use public transportation to travel to their place of isolation. Public transportation includes taxis and ride-share services. They are required to use private transportation only, such as their private vehicle, to get to their place of isolation. This is especially important for passengers travelling from airports. For additional information please refer to the [Government of Canada](#) website.

## Screening

- Consider asking screening questions to workers, before each work shift, using a [checklist](#) from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) or your local public health authority. If you are a driver who is also an owner-operator, self-screen daily.
- Employees who have COVID-19 symptoms should stay home. If they are at work and develop symptoms, they need to wear a medical mask (or if unavailable a well constructed and well fitting non-medical mask) and return home immediately (preferably not by public transit). They should also contact their local public health authority.
- The most common symptoms are:
  - New or worsening cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Temperature equal to or over 38°C
  - Feeling feverish
  - Chills
  - Fatigue or weakness
  - Muscle or body aches
  - New loss of smell or taste
  - Headache
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting)
  - Feeling very unwell
  - Skin changes or rashes (young children)
- Symptoms can vary person to person and within different age groups.
- Older adults, people of any age with chronic medical conditions, people of any age who are immunocompromised, and those living with obesity are at risk for more severe disease and outcomes from COVID-19.
- Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. Some people have mild or no symptoms.
- Record the names and contact information of all workers and passengers to assist with contact tracing by the local public health authority if needed. Make sure that privacy is protected, and that the information is stored and destroyed in a safe and secure manner according to local privacy requirements.
- Develop procedures for contacting local public health authorities in the event of a positive case. If the case is work-related involving a worker, additional notifications will be required (e.g., the government health and safety regulator and worker compensation board for your province or territory).



## Physical Distancing

- Limit contact with passengers as much as possible.
- Keep the greatest physical distance possible (at least 2 metres) from passengers when you are outside the vehicle.
- Eliminate the use of the front passenger seat to maximize the space between the driver and passenger.
- Ask that passengers sit the greatest distance possible away from the driver when transporting passengers in larger vehicles such as vans.
- Discourage unnecessary physical contact such as handshakes.
- Consider asking passengers if they can handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop-off.
- Take contactless payment if possible. Place the payment machine on a paddle or stick to help maintain distance.
- Whenever possible, individuals should limit group travel to members of their immediate household or work cohort.
- Add markers to floors (at least 2 metres apart) to promote physical distancing for passengers waiting in line at taxi stands.

## Physical Barriers

- Install a clear barrier between the front and back seats, if possible. The physical barrier should be made from a non-porous material such as plexiglass than can be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Make sure the barrier does not create a safety hazard, such as reducing the driver's visibility, hindering access to controls, or blocking emergency exit of the vehicle.

## Ventilation

- Increase the amount of fresh outside air entering the vehicle by opening the windows (weather permitting) and setting the ventilation to outside air.
- Avoid using the recirculated air option during passenger transport.

## Personal Hygiene

- Clean your hands after you drop off each fare with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol). You should also sanitize your hands before and after you eat, pump gas, load or unload a passenger's belongings, as well as after you cough or sneeze.
- Encourage passengers to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before entering the vehicle and ask passengers to avoid touching the interior of the vehicle as much as possible.
- Have all necessary material readily available in the vehicle (hand sanitizer, garbage disposal, disposable tissues, or disposable paper towels, etc.).
- Consider placing signs for cough and sneeze etiquette in vehicles where passengers can see this information.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after helping passengers who need assistance.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed or unsanitized hands.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Viruses can remain on objects for a few hours to days depending on the type of surface and environmental conditions.

## Taxi and Ride Share Services



- To promote consistent vehicle disinfecting practices, create and provide a routine vehicle cleaning and disinfecting checklist.
- Clean and disinfect vehicles regularly, paying close attention to surfaces frequently touched by passengers, such as inside and outside door handles, arm rests, seatbelts, payment devices, seats, and buttons for windows and locks.
- Clean and disinfect the inside of the vehicle every time there is a change in driver (if applicable). Examples of surfaces to clean and disinfect include the keys, inside and outside door handles, seats and arm rests, power window and power door controls, turn signal and wiper controls, trunk, seatbelts, glove compartment, radio and climate control buttons, touch screens, dashboard, steering wheel and gear shift.
- Use household or commercial disinfectants to destroy or inactivate viruses and bacteria. The disinfectant used should have a drug identification number (DIN), meaning that it has been approved for use in Canada.
- Workers should be trained on the safe use of the cleaning chemical. Follow the manufacturer's instructions, product's label, and (if applicable) safety data sheet for safe use instructions.
- Provide workers with training on cleaning and disinfecting procedures, adequate supplies, and access to required personal protective equipment, if needed.

### Non-Medical Masks

- It is strongly recommended that drivers always wear a well-constructed and well-fitting non-medical mask when inside the vehicle, and when outside the vehicle if sharing a space with people from outside of their immediate household.
- Passengers should also wear a non-medical mask to help protect the driver and any other passengers in the vehicle.
- Taxi and ride share companies should develop policies regarding non-medical mask use.
- It's important to keep your non-medical mask clean when not in use, or when eating or drinking. Store it in a clean paper or cloth bag. Avoid hanging your non-medical mask from the rear-view mirror of the vehicle. Store clean and dirty masks separately.
- Ensure the requirements for non-medical mask use set by your local public health authority are followed.

### Transporting Passengers with Symptoms to an Essential Health Service

- Develop a policy about whether your business will provide transportation to passengers who have symptoms of COVID-19 and are travelling for an essential health service. Wherever possible, these passengers should avoid public transportation and drive themselves, or have a member of their immediate household or work cohort drive them.
- Determine if your local public health authority provides any specific guidance on this topic.
- If your business is providing these services, conduct a hazard assessment and ensure that all reasonable precautions are implemented to protect the driver. For example, using a larger vehicle to ensure there is adequate physical distancing, avoiding direct physical contact with the passenger and his/her belongings, increasing the ventilation in the vehicle by opening the windows, ensuring the unwell passenger is wearing a medical mask, providing training and the appropriate personal protective equipment to the driver (e.g., a medical mask and eye protection), and ensuring that a thorough cleaning and disinfection of the vehicle occurs before the vehicle is used again.

### COVID Alert App

- Consider installing the COVID Alert App on your phone. This app is designed to let Canadians know whether they may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- The app maintains your privacy; it does not record or share your geographic location.
- To download the app, and to learn more, please go to the [Government of Canada](https://www150.ca.gc/) website.



## Additional Considerations

- This tip sheet provides examples of recommended controls for taxi and ride share services that focused primarily on driving passengers to their destination.
- Additional controls will be required to be implemented by the employer or driver, depending on the specific workplace and the types of services provided. For example, if a driver also provides food delivery services the employer may refer to the CCOHS tip sheet "[Restaurants and Food Services](#)" for additional information on recommended controls regarding home delivery services.
- Taxi and ride share companies may also have office or dispatch staff. Additional controls would need to be implemented to protect these employees from COVID-19. The employer may refer to the CCOHS tip sheet "[Reopening for Business](#)" for additional information.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis, please contact your local hospital, call 911 immediately, or contact a [Crisis Centre in your area](#).**



It is important that mental health resources and support are provided to all workers, including access to an employee assistance program, if available.

For further information on COVID-19, refer to the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#).

Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs.

**Disclaimer:** As public and occupational health and safety information is changing rapidly, local public health authorities should be consulted for specific, regional guidance. This information is not intended to replace medical advice or legislated health and safety obligations. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.