

Phase Two Guidance **Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance for Public Transit**

During Phase Two, the public and businesses must adopt new behaviors and rigorous safeguards to reduce risk for all. **The following measures must be implemented to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission amongst employees, customers, and the community.** For additional information, see coronavirus.dc.gov/phasetwo.

Please note that any individual experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or who was recently exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, should not use public transit due to the risk of exposing others. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

General Considerations for Public Transit Management for Phase Two

- Public transit services should continue to meet demand to accommodate travel to work and school.
- Assign lanes and prioritize signals for the Lifeline Network bus corridors.
- Continue skip-stop service.
- Reroute or re-prioritize bus routes to areas of high usage.
- Bundle trips and integrate travel modes, including contactless and integrated fare payments through WMATA.

Employees and Customers Should Practice Everyday Prevention Measures

- **Stay at home if you feel unwell** or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Members of the public should not use public transit if ill unless it is absolutely necessary.
- **Practice social distancing.** Stay at least 6 feet from other people when possible.
- **Employees and customers must wear a cloth face covering or mask at all times.**
 - Masks protect the wearer and protect other people
- Customers should handle their own belongings and use contactless payment options when possible.
- Perform frequent hand hygiene (with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub).
 - Key times to perform hand hygiene include:
 - Before eating food;
 - Before and after using the toilet;
 - Before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings;
 - Before and after work shifts and work breaks;
 - After handling/exchanging money;
 - Before and after pumping gas;
 - After handling customers' personal belongings, if unavoidable; and
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Transit operators should carry tissues in their bus/train cockpit. Operators and customers should cover their mouth and nose if they cough or sneeze in the vehicle, perform hand hygiene, and dispose of the tissues in the trash.
- Gloves should be worn only as indicated per routine job responsibilities.
- If customers refuse to comply with safety measures, you may report this concern to management, and/or the authorities, as appropriate.

- If you feel uncomfortable with providing transport to a visibly sick customer for safety reasons, you can choose to refuse transport. However, discrimination against customers on the basis of race, national origin, or other reasons as described in your company's policies, local, state, and federal law, is not allowed.

Employer Considerations to Encourage Employee and Customer Safety

- Provide supplies for employees to allow for frequent hand hygiene (e.g., soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol) in transit vehicles, at workstations and in common areas.
- Install hand sanitizing stations at entrances and in common areas in transit hubs.
- Provide employees with appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g., masks, gloves) and cloth face coverings.
- Implement leave policies that are flexible and non-punitive, and that allow sick employees to stay home. Leave policies are recommended to account for the following circumstances:
 - Employees who report COVID-19 symptoms,
 - Employees who tested positive for COVID-19,
 - Employees who are a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19
 - Employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family member,
 - Employees who were tested for COVID-19 and test results are pending,
- Keep abreast of current law, which has amended both the DC Family and Medical Leave Act and the DC Sick and Safe Leave Law and created whole new categories of leave, like Declared Emergency Leave.
- Learn about and inform your employees about COVID-related leave provided through new federal law, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and all applicable District law relating to sick leave.
- Stagger shifts, start times, and break times as much as possible
- Develop policies and technology options that allow and prioritize contactless transactions that limit or eliminate close contact and the sharing of items between transit operators and customers.
- Educate employees about COVID-19. Refer to coronavirus.dc.gov for more information.
- For additional information specific to Buses and Public Transit, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/index.html

Screening and Monitoring for Symptoms

- Public transit management should perform screening (e.g., symptom questionnaires) of employees daily, prior to starting their shift, over the phone or in person.
 - For **Screening Tool Guidance**, visit coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance
- Place a sign at the staff entrance to inform staff of screening procedures.
- If a worker develops any of symptoms of COVID-19 during the workday, there should be a plan in place for that individual to immediately isolate, notify their supervisor and cease transporting customers and/or leave the facility.

Avoid Close Contact and Reduce Touchpoints

- Avoid contact with surfaces frequently touched by customers. Use gloves if required to touch surfaces contaminated by body fluids.
- Allow for physical distancing. Block off middle seats on trains and buses or otherwise seat

customers to prevent them from sitting directly next to each other to maintain physical distancing guidelines.

- For bus drivers:
 - Consider asking bus customers to enter and exit through rear entry doors and request customers avoid standing or sitting within 6 feet of the bus driver.
 - Consider asking customers to handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop-off. Perform hand hygiene if this is not possible.
- For buses: institute measures to physically separate or force distance greater than 6 feet between bus drivers and customers. These may include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate where they should or should not stand).

Clean and Disinfect

- Public transit management should have a comprehensive plan for cleaning and disinfecting high traffic and high-touch surface areas (e.g., counters, payment kiosks, restrooms, etc.) routinely throughout the day.
- Disinfectant spray or disposable wipes and disposal trash bags should be available in the bus/train cockpit so that surfaces commonly touched by the operator can be wiped down. Follow the directions on the disinfectant product's label.
- If surfaces are visibly dirty, they should be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- At a minimum, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the transportation vehicles at the beginning and end of each shift.
- Scheduling should allow for adequate time to clean and disinfect between shifts.
- For more information about cleaning and disinfection and disinfectants that are effective against the virus that causes COVID-19 see the CDC website:
[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

Building and Ventilation Considerations

- Consider making the following improvements to improve ventilation in facilities (e.g., bus and train stations, office facilities) ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response)):
 - Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors.
 - Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms).
 - Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and provide acceptable indoor air quality for the current occupancy level for each space.
 - Improve central air filtration to the highest compatible with the filter rack, and seal edges of the filter to limit bypass.
 - Increase ventilation rates.
 - Check filters to ensure they are within service life and appropriately installed.
 - Keep systems running longer hours, 24/7 if possible, to enhance air exchanges in the building space.
 - Consult with a specialist to see what works for your building if activities are indoors, increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows or exterior doors if possible.
- If a building was closed for an extended period of time, remember to ensure all water systems are safe to use. For more information, see CDC's Guidance for Reopening

Buildings after Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html).

- Special considerations for buses/trains:
 - Adjust ventilation so that maximum amount of fresh air is delivered to occupied spaces while maintaining humidity at 40-60%, if possible.
 - Avoid recirculation of air.
 - Consider the use of natural ventilation (i.e., opening windows) to increase outdoor air dilution of indoor air, when environmental conditions allow.

Establish a Plan for COVID-19 Exposure

- Establish a plan in the event an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Identify a point of contact at the workplace that an employee can notify if they test positive for COVID-19 and choose to disclose this information.
- If an employee chooses to report to the workplace that they are positive for COVID-19, the workplace should have a notification process to share the following with workers:
 - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - Referral to the Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19, available at coronavirus.dc.gov
 - Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at coronavirus.dc.gov/testing
- Refer to the guidance “*First Steps for Non-Healthcare Employers when Employees Test Positive for COVID-19*” at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.
 - A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, during that person’s infectious period.
 - The infectious period starts two days before symptom onset and typically ends 10 days after symptom onset (or test date for people who do not have symptoms).
- Public transit management must notify DC Health when:
 - An employee who interacts frequently with customers notifies the employer they tested positive for COVID-19 (not before results come back)
- Notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements:
 - Submit a **Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form**.
- An investigator from DC Health will follow up within 48 hours to all appropriately submitted inquiries. Please note this time may increase as cases of COVID-19 increase in the District.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the outbreak evolves. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.