

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR TAXI AND RIDESHARE DRIVERS

Last revised: April 9, 2021

This information is intended to help taxi and rideshare drivers reduce the risk of exposure to illnesses including COVID-19.

PROTECTING DRIVERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

SAFETY PLAN

- A [safety plan](#) must be implemented by each taxi/rideshare driver that outlines all public health measures. The safety plan must be posted in a conspicuous place in each taxi/rideshare where it is most likely to come to the attention of employees/drivers and clients.
- At a minimum, the safety plan shall include information on screening, physical distancing, masks or face coverings, cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and object and the wearing of personal protective equipment.
- For more information on preparing your safety plan, please see provincial guidance called "[Develop your COVID-19 workplace safety plan](#)".

SCREENING

- **All employees/drivers must be actively screened before attending work.** Please see the letter of [instruction](#) from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) medical officer of health for direction on screening employees/drivers. Employees/drivers must stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, seek testing, and self-isolate.
- **Clients must be screened via passive screening requirements.**
- The Province of Ontario has implemented a [website for all categories of screening](#).
- Post [screening signs](#) at all entrances of the workplace and in drivers' vehicles.

USE OF MASKS, FACE COVERINGS AND EYE PROTECTION

- The use of masks or [face coverings](#) is required in all indoor public spaces as per provincial law and SMDHU public health direction. See SMDHU [letter of instruction](#) for more information.
- Owners/operators of taxis and rideshares must have policies in place to restrict people from entering if they are not wearing a mask or face covering. More information is available [here](#).
- Drivers must wear eye protection (e.g. face shields) in addition to a mask if they are required to come within 2 metres (6 feet) of a customer not wearing a mask or face covering that properly covers their nose, mouth and chin and if not otherwise protected by a physical barrier such as Plexiglas.
- Post signs in a visible location that remind people to wear a mask or face covering. Example signage can be found [here](#).

PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

- Passengers should only travel in the same vehicle as people they live with.
- Avoid shared rides so passengers are not travelling with individuals unknown to them.
- Ask passengers to sit in the back seat to maintain [physical distance](#).
- When there are four or more passengers, it is recommended that a larger vehicle with more seating be used (such as a mini-van), or multiple vehicles so that individuals do not sit next to the driver.
- If for physical reasons a person is unable to sit in the back seat they may sit in the front seat but both the driver and the passenger must wear a mask or face covering.
- Consider installing a Plexiglas divider between the front and back seats.

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TRANSPORTING PASSENGERS TO A COVID-19 ASSESSMENT CENTRE OR HEALTHCARE FACILITY, OR ANY PERSON WHO IS SICK

- If the passenger is being transported to or from an assessment centre, hospital or other healthcare setting, and/or is displaying respiratory symptoms, it is recommended they wear a mask or face covering if possible. If the passenger is not able to wear a mask or face covering, the driver must wear eye protection (e.g. face shield) in addition to a mask.
- Avoid using the recirculated air option for the car's ventilation during passenger transport; use the car's vents to bring in fresh outside air and/or lower the vehicle windows.
- Consider asking passengers to handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop-off.
- Thoroughly [disinfect](#) vehicle regularly. See below for more information on cleaning and disinfection.

HAND HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

- [Wash your hands regularly](#) with soap and water for at least 15 seconds and have [alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#) containing 60-90% alcohol content available for drivers and passengers.
- When on the job, clean hands:
 - before and after work shifts;
 - before and after work breaks;
 - after handling passengers' personal belongings if unavoidable;
 - between rides and after handling/exchanging money;
 - after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings;
 - before wearing and after removing cold-weather gloves; and
 - before and after pumping gas.
- [Sneeze and cough](#) into your elbow or use single-use tissues followed by hand hygiene.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

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.
- 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 healthcare settings); and
 - After transporting passengers who display respiratory symptoms (e.g. coughing, sneezing).
- Make sure that [environmental cleaning and disinfection](#) of vehicles is performed on a routine and consistent basis.
- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
- 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.

Please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit if you have any questions at 1-877-721-7520 Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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REFERENCES

Toronto Public Health. (2020). 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) [Guidance for Taxi/Ride Share Employers, Drivers, Vehicle Owners Fact Sheet]. City of Toronto. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-reopening-recovery-rebuild/covid-19-reopening-guidelines-for-businesses-organizations/covid-19-guidance-taxis-ride-shares/>

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>