

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR TAXI AND RIDESHARE DRIVERS

THIS INFORMATION IS INTENDED TO HELP TAXI AND RIDESHARE DRIVERS REDUCE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO ILLNESSES INCLUDING COVID-19

Reduce the risk of disease in taxi and other rideshare vehicles:

- If possible, maintain [physical distancing](#), request passengers to sit in the back seat (i.e. sit on passenger side in back seat if only one rider). If more than one rider, maintain as much distance as possible. 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 would need to wear a non-medical mask or cloth face covering.
- **NEW:** Effective July 13, 2020, owners or operators of all businesses, organizations and public transit services in Simcoe and Muskoka must have policies in place to restrict people from entering these **indoor** premises if they are not wearing a non-medical mask or face covering. Best efforts shall be made to only allow entry to customers wearing a face covering. Please see the [letter](#) to businesses and organizations with this instruction as well as [guidance](#) to support implementation posted to our website, along with [public signage](#) for printing and displaying.
- Post [signs](#) in a visible location that remind people to wear a face covering.
- Minimize or eliminate shared rides so passengers are not travelling with individuals unknown to them.
- Consider installing Plexiglas divider between the front and back seats.
- If drivers are unwell, they should not drive. Drivers should be aware of COVID-19 [symptoms](#) which include:
 - fever;
 - cough;
 - runny nose;
 - muscle aches and tiredness;
 - difficulty breathing; and
 - less commonly sore throat, headache, and diarrhea.
- If drivers have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, use this [self-assessment tool](#) to help determine how to seek further care. If you need immediate medical attention you should call 911 and tell them your [symptoms](#) and if you [have travelled](#).
- Employees/drivers who have any of the above signs and symptoms should stay home or be sent home immediately if they become ill while working. They should contact a local [assessment centre](#) for potential assessment and testing. They should not return to work until 14 days have passed from the start of their symptoms, unless they have a negative test (in which case, they are to stay home until 24 hours after symptoms resolve).
- Employers should NOT require medical notes from ill employees during this time. We do not support employers requiring staff with upper respiratory infections to be cleared by a physician before returning to work, if the above guidance has been followed.
- Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees/drivers to stay home to care for a sick family member. During this time, employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members.

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. 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.

Practice good infection prevention and control practices to help reduce risk of COVID-19:

- [Wash your hands regularly](#) with soap and water for at least 15 seconds and have an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol for drivers and passengers.

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- 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.
- It is recommended that drivers wear a non-surgical mask (e.g. cloth mask) when not able to maintain physical distancing (6 feet).
- [Sneeze and cough](#) into your sleeve.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Recommendations for routine cleaning and disinfecting 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.

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/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/8d59-Fact-Sheet_Novel-Coronavirus.pdf

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>

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