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Returning to Work: Rideshare, Taxi, Limo, and other Passenger Drivers-for-Hire

Guidance Document

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Overview

With stay at home and shelter-in-place restrictions beginning to lift, Rideshare, Taxi, Limo and other Passenger Driver-for-Hire companies are faced with difficult questions that must be addressed as they transition back to normal operations, such as:

- How can businesses or individual vehicle owners protect drivers and passengers from the disease during passenger transport?
- How can individual vehicle owners protect other parties during off-hours personal use of rideshare vehicles?

What should an Employer or individual vehicle owner do to protect drivers and passengers during passenger transport?

Rideshare, Taxi, Limo and other Passenger Driver-for-Hire companies should continually monitor global (World Health Organization (WHO)), federal (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)), state, and local guidelines for changes in recommendations, disinfection strategies, employee protections and other best management practices.

Employers should also consider developing a team of professionals to monitor, assess, and implement new strategies as they become available. In addition, employers should consider the following strategies for reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission during passenger transport in regards to physical distancing, ventilation, enhanced cleaning practices, use of public restrooms during the course of a driving shift, personal hygiene, employee wellness, personal protective equipment (COVID-19 related protective equipment should include face coverings/masks and/or face shields for close contact activities, regular work gloves) training, waste, laundering, and communication.

Tips to Return to Normal Business Operations:

Communication

- At minimum, follow the CDC Guidance for Rideshare, Taxi, Limo and other Passenger Drivers-for-Hire.
- Develop a response plan for communicating to your employees of the facts of SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID-19 disease.
- Ensure drivers have face coverings and consider policies and communications that strongly suggest passengers should also wear face coverings.
- Do not let anyone symptomatic go to work. Work with your health providers for support and guidance.
 - Monitor employees' wellness. If they are not feeling well, they should stay home/go home and call a supervisor. Revisit your leave or sick program to allow for time off.
- Provide up-to-date information about COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2 and local, state and federal guidelines.
 - Have your human resources engage for health and wellness programs.
 - Provide additional information for employee and family use (i.e., EAP).

Vehicle cleaning/disinfecting, vehicle configuration, social distancing, and personal hygiene practices

- Drivers shall clean and disinfect their shared vehicles and equipment.
 - At start and end of shifts, use disinfecting wipes/supplies to routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle and other work equipment, including:
 - Keys;
 - Steering wheel (including buttons, horn);



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- All levers - on the steering wheel or seat;
- All buttons - on radio, dashboard, window regulator, etc.;
- All handles - door handles used: both inside and outside (e.g., driver, passenger, cargo), of glove compartment door;
- Seat belt buckle;
- Fuel cap;
- Mobile devices;
- All other work equipment touched (e.g., pencils).
- Between passenger trips, use cleaning wipes to clean any frequently touched surfaces in the passenger area of the vehicle (door handles, window regulator, etc.).
- Consider covering porous seats with a snug, non-porous cover that can be disinfected.
- Provide disposable nitrile gloves and closable trash bags or containers for use in vehicles when cleaning and disinfecting vehicles.
- Use EPA-Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2.
- Provide hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) to all drivers for use in vehicles:
 - Before and after using the toilet, taking breaks, and/or eating;
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
 - After handling passengers' personal belongings, if unavoidable;
 - Between rides and after handling/exchanging money;
 - After putting on, touching or removing face coverings;
 - Before wearing and after removing cold-weather gloves;
 - Before and after pumping gas.
- Consider providing hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) in the passenger area of the vehicle and ask passengers to use it upon entering the vehicle, before handling/exchanging money, or after coughing/sneezing.
- Assist drivers with identifying locations restrooms during the course of a driving shift for washing hands. Hands should be washed for at least 20 seconds using soap and water.
- Avoid providing pooled rides or picking up multiple passengers who would not otherwise be riding together on the same route.
- Avoid close contact (being within 6 feet) with passengers, when possible.
- Avoid exchanging money with customers, and requiring signatures, if feasible. Encourage app-based or contactless credit card payments.
- Tell the passenger to sit in the back seat; do not let passengers sit in the front seat.
- When possible, require passengers to sit six feet from the driver. When transporting passengers in larger vehicles such as vans and buses, require passengers to also sit six feet from others.
 - See graphics below for recommended seating configuration based on various vehicle types.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from passengers when you are outside the vehicle.
- Consider asking passengers to handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop-off.
 - If a passenger leaves an item behind, consider removing and placing into a plastic or paper bag and move it to the trunk if possible. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after handling.
- 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.



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- Avoid offering free items to passengers, such as water bottles, magazines or mints/candies.
- Avoid contact with vehicle surfaces frequently touched by passengers or other drivers before cleaning and disinfecting them, such as door frame/handles, windows, seatbelt buckles, steering wheel, gearshift, signaling levers, and other vehicle parts.
- If you work for a company that offers a large fleet of vehicles, ask company management for a car/taxi (when applicable) with a partition between driver and passengers, if available.
 - If feasible, construct a transparent (see-through) hard barrier/partition to separate the driver from the passenger compartment of the vehicle.
 - Barriers should divide the driver section of the cabin from passenger seating area to minimize the chance of being exposed to respiratory droplets (for example, from a cough or a sneeze).
 - Barriers must not obstruct windows/windshields and comply with other applicable local traffic authority regulations; they must be completely transparent with no coloring or tinting that would prevent visibility while operating the vehicle.
 - Barriers must not obstruct vehicle controls (parking brakes, vehicle shift stick, etc.).
 - Materials for barriers may include solid plastic or polycarbonate sheeting that are easy to see through and allow for cleaning on routine basis.
- Encourage drivers to wash clothes daily and face coverings daily on the warmest setting possible.
- Encourage drivers to self-monitor for symptoms and take their temperature daily before starting a shift.

Screening and Temperature Check Tips for Employees

- Employees can take their temperature at home or have their temperature taken using an infrared camera and answer a medical questionnaire to evaluate their current physical state before entering any job site.
- Employees, who monitor their temperature at home, should update their supervisor if they have a temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Any employee who has a temperature that exceeds 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should not be able to access the job site until their temperature has broken for a minimum of 72 hours without medication.
- Per the medical questionnaire, any employee who answers “Yes” to any of the three questions will be sent to the secondary evaluation area, where the designated onsite nurse (if available) will assess and determine if they are allowed on the job site.
 - Example Medical Questionnaire
 - Have you, or a person you have been in close contact with, been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days? (close contact is 6 feet or less for more than 10 minutes.)
 - Have you experienced any cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 72 hours (to include fever, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing)?
 - Have you traveled internationally or another hot spot (e.g., New York) in the last 14 days?
- Infrared camera or thermal imaging camera can be used to take your temperature at the job site and allows for accurate information without the need to touch the employee.



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What to do in the event of a COVID-19 illness

- If a COVID-19 case amongst the workforce is identified via testing or suspected based on symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), conduct an enhanced cleaning/disinfecting of the vehicle. At a minimum, using the guidance provided by CDC for Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-emergency Transport Vehicles
 - If possible, air out the vehicle by opening windows as long as possible before cleaning/disinfecting.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting should be done immediately by trained personnel and they must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including face masks and dispose of gloves after use and wash hands and face when complete.
 - Visibly dirty surfaces shall be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water PRIOR to disinfection.
 - For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70 percent alcohol, and EPA-registered disinfectants on List-N should be effective. Recommended bleach solution mixture for [cleaning](#).
- Complete contact tracing for anyone that may have had close contact with the employee/driver (within 6 feet). Contact tracing and sharing of employee or personal information should be done under the guidance of Human Resources and Legal services due to privacy requirements of HIPAA and/or ADA. Use the CDC resources for educating/training staff and [conducting contact tracing](#).
- Employee who tests positive
 - The employee/driver should immediately go home/stay home in isolation.
 - Do not permit the employee/driver to return to work until directed by a healthcare provider. If no direction is given from a healthcare provider, [the employee should not return until](#):
 - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and,
 - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,
 - At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - Employees who are ill with non-COVID-19 related symptoms, shall be sent home for a minimum of 72 hours. Returning to work after 72-hours symptom free without aid of medication.

What should an Employee/Driver do to protect themselves and the customers?

- Educate yourself about the facts of COVID-19.
 - Obtain your information about COVID-19 from credible sources such as the [CDC](#) or [WHO](#).
- If you feel unwell or have any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19 – stay home. **NOTE: Employer HR Policies, HIPPA guidelines and other laws should be followed at all times.**
 - Self-monitor your temperature prior to beginning your driving shift.
- At all times, wear a face covering or something better if you have it. Maintain your face covering and use it during passenger transport.
- Let your employer know if you have concerns about the PPE that may be provided to you and that you are properly instructed on how to use it.
- Ask passengers to use a face covering during transport if they have one.
- Maintain good hygiene practices (washing hands with soap and water) or a hand sanitizer with at [least 60% alcohol](#).
- Consider leaving the windows down between passenger pick-ups.



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- Use good cough and sneeze etiquette while in the vehicle. Carry a towel, if you get the urge to sneeze or cough, cover your nose, mouth and face covering, attempt to delay the urge to sneeze or cough. Wash your hands and face thoroughly before going back to work.
- If you test positive:
 - Stay home and isolate yourself.
 - Contact your supervisor and advise them of your results.
 - Identify to them if you were commuting with others.
 - Who you had come in contact with, or sharing tools or workspaces, at least 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms.

While off work and before returning back to work, employee should at minimum follow most recent [CDC guidelines](#).

What should a Passenger do to protect themselves?

- Passengers in vehicles should follow the same practices of social distancing.
- Use a face covering during the trip.
- No handshake greetings.
- Avoid unnecessary touching of surfaces in the vehicle and carry hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol).
- If you are symptomatic or feel unwell – avoid using a rideshare or taxi, if possible. Notify the driver if you may be feeling unwell prior to entering the vehicle.
- Use good cough/sneeze etiquette when in the vehicle.
- Ask the driver to open vehicle vents and/or windows (do not recirculate the air in the vehicle).

Resources

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/rideshare-drivers-for-hire.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/disinfecting-transport-vehicles.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/contact-tracing.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- Numerous **wellness questionnaire examples** are available online (e.g., https://doh.sd.gov/documents/COVID19/BusinessScreening_Q&A.pdf)
- The EPA has developed a list of disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- [AIHA COVID-19 Resource Center](#)
- American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, Air-conditioning Engineers [ASHRAE COVID-19](#) resource for ventilation
- [EPA-Registered Approved Disinfectant List N](#).
- AIHA's Indoor Environmental Quality Committee developed these guidance documents about reopening and cleaning buildings after closures due to COVID-19: https://aiha-assets.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/AIHA/resources/Public-Resources/RecoveringFromCOVID-19BuildingClosures_GuidanceDocument.FINAL.pdf and https://aiha-assets.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/AIHA/resources/Guidance-Documents/Workplace-Cleaning-for-COVID-19-Guidance-Documents_FINAL.pdf



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About Occupational Health and Safety Professionals

Occupational health and safety (OHS) professionals (also known as industrial hygienists) practice the science of anticipating, recognizing, evaluating,

and controlling workplace conditions that may cause workers' injury or illness. Through a continuous improvement cycle of planning, doing, checking and acting, OHS professionals make sure workplaces are healthy and safe.

Get additional resources at AIHA's Coronavirus Outbreak Resource Center.

https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/consumer-resources/coronavirus_outbreak_resources

Find a qualified industrial hygiene and OEHS professionals near you in our Consultants Listing. <https://www.aiha.org/consultants-directory>.

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These guidance documents were primarily developed for those smaller business that don't have readily available occupational health and safety resources, and designed to help business owners, employers, employees and consumers implement science-backed procedures for limiting the spread of the coronavirus. They are subject to any local, state, or federal directives, laws, or orders about operating a business and should only be used if they do not conflict with any such orders.

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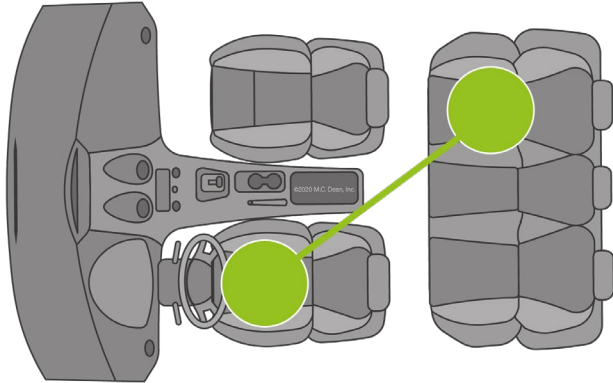


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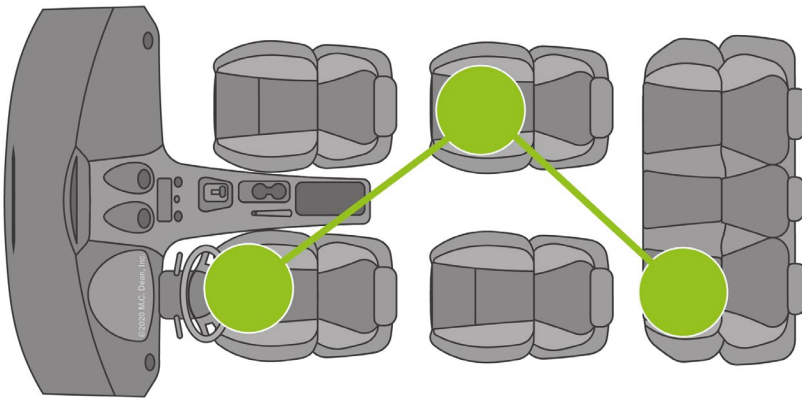
Exhibits for specific areas, items and locations

How to seat passengers in various vehicle types

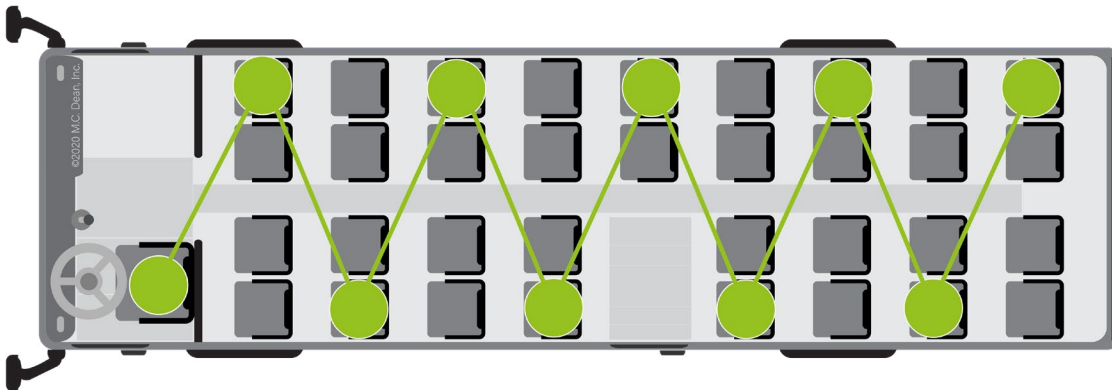
Using a small passenger car



Using an oversized vehicle, such as a van or SUV with a third-row



Using a large van or bus

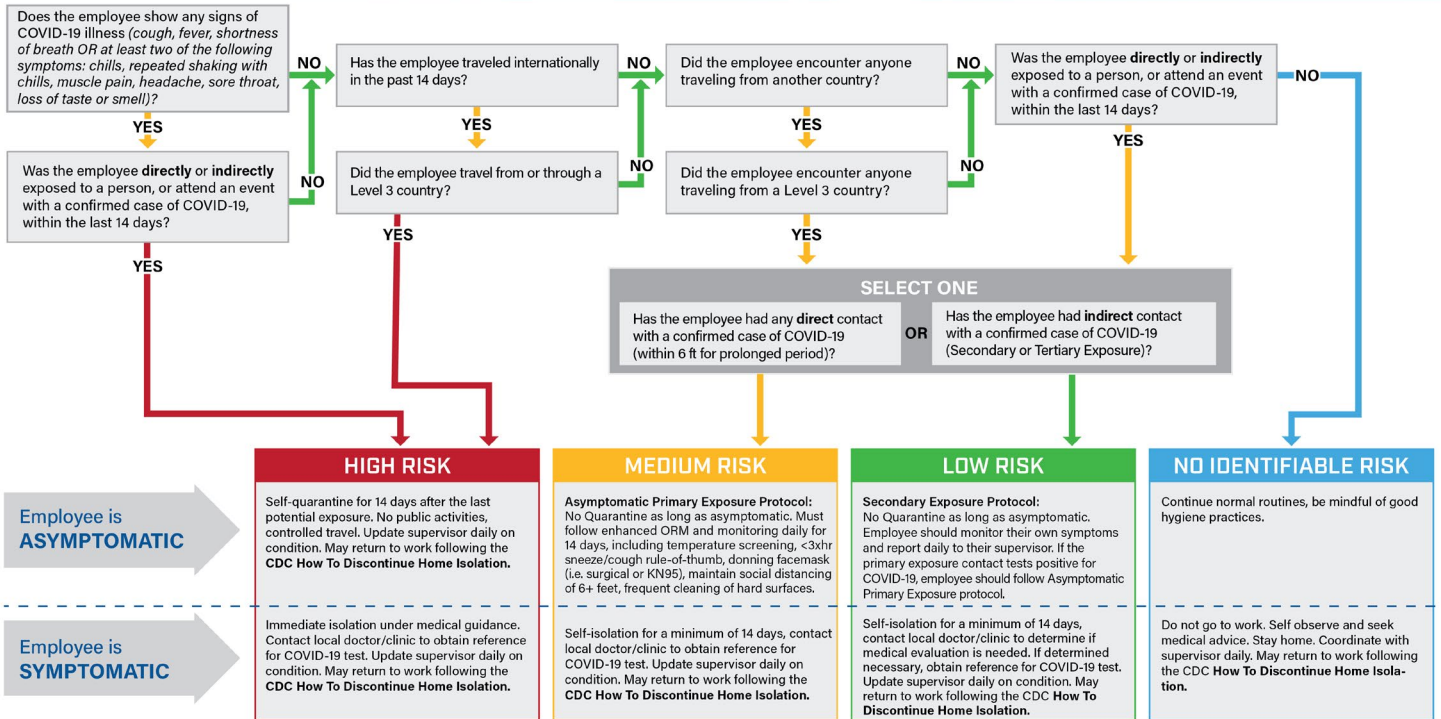


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Decision Tree

COVID-19 | DECISION TREE



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Communication

Display posters through the workspace for employees or post in vehicles for general public.



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