

Guidance: Considerations Relating to the Use of Face Coverings by Commercial Vehicle Drivers and Motor Carrier, and Intercommunity Bus Passengers

From: Transport Canada

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to offer recommended measures with respect to the use of face coverings by intercommunity bus and motor carrier passengers. This guidance is also applicable to commercial vehicle and intercommunity bus drivers who continue to support essential services to help minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Scope

The guidance and recommendations contained within this document are voluntary and offered for consideration by:

- Motor carrier and intercommunity bus operators;
- Commercial vehicle, motor carrier, and intercommunity bus drivers; and,
- Passengers of motor carriers and intercommunity buses

Transit, private vehicles for hire including taxis and ride-hailing services are not considered in the scope of this guidance.

The intent of this guidance is to limit transmission of COVID-19, recognizing that the use of face coverings helps to protect people in proximity to the wearer of the mask by limiting the spread of respiratory droplets at times when physical distancing (keeping 2 meters distance) is difficult to maintain.

Current Context

In the context of this pandemic, respirators (e.g. N-95 masks) must be conserved for health care workers and others providing direct care to COVID-19 patients. It is extremely important to not divert the supply of this PPE (personal protective equipment) away from where it is needed most (consult guidance available at [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus) for additional recommendations). As such, the use of respirators, outside of healthcare settings or other industries where respirators are routinely used, is not recommended.

Limiting the Spread of COVID-19

The optimal way to prevent airborne transmission is to apply a combination of controls from across the hierarchy of controls, not only PPE, in order to mitigate and/or eliminate hazards drivers and passengers may be exposed to. Canadians are encouraged to continue monitoring and abiding to public health authorities' recommendations such as those published on the [Government of Canada Coronavirus website](https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus).

As outlined in the [Federal safety guidance to protect drivers](#), proven interventions to limit the spread of COVID-19 include: hand washing, regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, and respecting social

distancing by maintaining a 2 meter distance from other people. It is critical that these measures continue.

Use of Face Coverings

As indicated by public health officials, wearing a face covering is another way of covering your mouth and nose to prevent your respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces. A cloth mask or face covering can reduce the chance that others come into contact with respiratory droplets, in the same way that covering cough with tissues or the sleeve can reduce that chance. Instructions on how to make “sew” and “no-sew” cloth face coverings from t-shirt, bandanas, or other cotton-like materials are published on the Public Health Agency of Canada's [about non-medical masks and face coverings page](#).

Face coverings are protective layers of absorbent fabric (such as cotton) that snugly fit over the nose and mouth and are secured to the face with ties or ear loops. These coverings prevent respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces.

Coverings SHOULD:

- Be made of multiple layers of absorbent fabric (such as cotton)
- Cover the mouth and nose without gaps
- Fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- Allow for easy breathing
- Be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- Stay the same shape after machine washing and drying

Coverings SHOULD NOT:

- Be placed on children under the age of 2
- Be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing
- Be made exclusively of plastic sheeting or materials that easily fall apart (e.g. tissues)
- Be shared with others
- Impair vision or interfere with tasks

WARNING SIGNS OF INAPPROPRIATE MASK OR FACE COVERING

- Face covering is made of non-breathable material (e.g., plastic bag)
- Face covering is secured using tape or other inappropriate material
- Passenger/driver is continuously adjusting the face covering

Wearing a face covering can also prevent you from touching your nose and mouth. Remember not to touch or rub your eyes, as this is another route of infection. **Wearing a face covering when in public or other settings is not a replacement for following proven measures such as hand washing and physical distancing.**

Recommendations to carriers and operators

To complement ongoing risk reduction measures already undertaken by carriers and operators (e.g. limiting the capacity in buses, enhanced cleaning protocols, rear-door boarding, and the use of barriers to support physical distancing), Transport Canada recommends the following voluntary guidance, to be implemented at the discretion of the commercial vehicle, intercommunity bus, or motor carrier operator. These recommendations are intended to complement other guidance from federal, provincial/territorial and local public health officials:

- consider notifying passengers when purchasing their pass/ticket at the counter or online that they should wear facial coverings for the entire duration of their travel, and to follow recommendations from public health officials (e.g. stay home, physical distancing, hand-washing);
- remind passengers, through the use of posters and announcements, at bus terminals, stations and inside buses, social media platforms and websites that passengers should consider wearing face coverings to avoid putting the safety of others at risk;
- where operationally feasible and appropriate, confirm with passengers prior to boarding that they are aware of the recommendation by public health officials of the benefits to wearing a face covering while in public or using public transportation.

Motor carrier drivers may also consider encouraging passengers to wear face coverings when boarding and throughout their trip, unless they have pre-existing conditions that may prevent them from doing so. If operationally feasible and appropriate, some motor carriers / operators may consider denying boarding to passengers who refuse to wear face coverings without a valid justification for doing so when physical distancing measures cannot be respected.

Note: These recommendations should be treated as voluntary measures. Passengers should refer to the local motor carrier and bus operator for specific measures regarding face coverings or other measures to reduce the risk of transmission.

Recommendations on the use of face coverings by commercial vehicle drivers and motor carrier, and intercommunity bus

passengers

The [Government of Canada Coronavirus website \(Canada.ca/coronavirus\)](https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus) is updated with information on the measures you should take when putting on a mask/covering or taking it off, such as hand washing. There is also information on how to properly wash cloth masks or safely dispose of other masks (such as dust masks).

When physical distancing is not possible in public settings (e.g., at bus stations, rest stops, gas stations, or delivery locations), wearing a face covering is one way to protect those around you.

When wearing a face covering, passengers and drivers should take the following precautions to protect themselves:

- face covering should be well-fitted (non-gaping) to cover the mouth and nose
- avoid touching your face mask while using it
- change a cloth mask as soon as it gets damp or soiled
- put the soiled mask directly into a washing machine, or a bag that can be emptied into a washing machine and then dispose of the bag
- cloth masks can be laundered with other items using a hot cycle, and then dried thoroughly
- non-medical masks that cannot be washed should be discarded and replaced as soon as they get damp, soiled or crumpled
- dispose of masks properly in a lined garbage bin
- do not leave discarded masks in vehicles.

Please remember that face coverings will not prevent COVID-19 spread without consistent and strict adherence to good hygiene and public health measures, including the guidance outlined in the *Federal Safety Guidance to Protect Drivers and Limit the Spread of COVID-19 in Commercial Vehicle Operations*.

Note: This guidance document sets out general recommendations for passengers. Passengers should refer to the local motor carrier and bus operators for specific measures regarding face coverings or other measures to reduce the risk of transmission.

📍 Did you find this information helpful?

📍 Transport Canada is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation. In response, we have issued some **transportation-related measures and guidance**. Please check if any of these measures apply to you.

You may experience longer than usual wait times or partial service interruptions. If you cannot get through, please **contact us by email**.

For information on COVID-19 updates, please visit **Canada.ca/coronavirus**.

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