

Federal safety guidance to protect drivers and limit the spread of COVID-19 in commercial vehicle operations

From: Transport Canada

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Purpose:

Transport Canada has collaborated with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to develop guidance to help protect drivers and employees working in commercial vehicle operations. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC – Labour Program) has reviewed this guidance document to ensure that it does not contravene Part II of the Canada Labour Code. Building on guidance developed by the Government of Canada and other recognized public health authorities and organizations, this document has been prepared to summarize recommendations made to date to limit the spread of COVID-19 in the context of commercial vehicle operations. It is intended for use by fleet managers and commercial vehicle drivers undertaking local, inter-provincial or inter-territorial, and international activity.

The recommendations and guidance in this document are subject to change as new scientific information emerges and our understanding of COVID-19 evolves, as well as risk-assessments and advice from local and national public health officials. This document was first published in April 2020 and updated in August 2020 to reflect current public health guidance,

including the use of non-medical masks or face coverings. The guidance should be read in conjunction with relevant provincial or territorial and local legislation, regulations and policies. For up-to-date and evolving information regarding COVID-19, please visit the Government of Canada's COVID-19 web site.

About COVID-19:

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold. Symptoms of human coronaviruses can take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus, be very mild or more serious and vary from person to person.

Coronaviruses are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

- respiratory droplets when you cough or sneeze;
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
- touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.

The best way to prevent the spread of infections is to practice good hand and respiratory hygiene, respect physical distancing, wearing a non-medical masks or face covering when physical distancing is not possible and cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces.

For Fleet Managers:

- Minimise the number of vehicles shared by employees to limit the spread of the virus between different users of the same vehicles, where

possible.

- Ensure that drivers have access to approved hard-surface disinfectants, hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment, and other materials needed to practice routine cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces in their trucks and implement recommendations made in these guidelines.

General Advice to Protect Commercial Vehicle Drivers:

- Commercial vehicle operators who are federally regulated for Occupational Health and Safety should ensure that their Hazard Prevention Program is current to address the hazards of COVID-19 in their workplaces, including in truck cabs. This should include developing preventive measures with the participation of their Workplace Health and Safety Committee or Representative. The employees must be provided training on these measures. The Labour Program has posted general information to assist stakeholders in these responsibilities. Additional resources that may be of assistance include: the Government of Canada's Risk-informed decision making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Trucking HR Canada - COVID-19 Resource Guide for Trucking and Logistics Employers.
- Commercial vehicle drivers must diligently self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. Drivers with any of the following symptoms should self-isolate, stay home, and seek advice from a public health professional for information on getting tested:
 - new or worsening cough

- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- temperature equal to or over 38°C
- feeling feverish
- chills
- fatigue or weakness
- muscle or body aches
- new loss of smell or taste
- headache
- gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting)
- feeling very unwell
- Commercial Vehicle Operators should communicate public health recommendations and updates to drivers in a timely manner.
- Maintaining good hand and respiratory hygiene are very important personal practices for all employees that help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:
 - Wash your hands often, and whenever they become soiled, with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
 - If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS) containing at least 60% alcohol. However, ABHS may not be effective when there is organic material on your hands. For this reason, ABHS alone should not be used on visibly soiled hands. Use wipes to remove soil, followed by ABHS.
 - Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.

- Dispose of any tissues you've used as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands immediately afterwards.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Face-to-face meetings should be kept to a minimum and respect physical distancing requirements (i.e. keeping 2 metres apart). To the extent possible, face-to-face meetings should be replaced with conference calls or video conferencing. Interactions with clients should also be kept as short as possible keeping in mind physical distancing requirements. When physical distancing cannot be respected, individuals should wear non-medical masks or face coverings.
- Commercial vehicle drivers should be aware of the public health requirements and advice of the areas they are in and should follow local public health advice (e.g., travel restrictions, wearing of non-medical masks in various settings).
- The Government of Canada has developed the ArriveCAN mobile application (app) for use prior to entering Canada to speed up arrival processing and reduce points of contact at the border. The ArriveCAN app is intended to make it easier for drivers and all individuals entering Canada to provide mandatory information that is required for entry into Canada.

Before Each Trip:

- Commercial vehicle drivers should monitor their health prior to starting a trip. If a driver is experiencing symptoms, even if they are mild, they should stay home and advise their employer so steps can be taken to prevent transmission of infection (refer to Risk-informed decision-

making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic).

- Make sure vehicle interiors are clean and hygienic by cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces.
- The following equipment should be available for cleaning:
 - Personal protective equipment (as required by the operator's health and safety protocol);
 - Disposable cloths;
 - Paper towels and absorbent materials;
 - Waste disposal bags, labels and tape;
 - Cleaning agents; and
 - Disinfectants.
- Cleaning is a critical first step for disinfecting affected surfaces. In general, when cleaning vehicle interiors:
 - Put on disposable, water-proof gloves. Avoid hand contact with the face, especially the nose and eyes. Direct contact with contaminated areas should be avoided.
 - For routine cleaning and disinfection, and for areas potentially contaminated with COVID-19, a hard-surface disinfectant authorized by Health Canada is recommended. For a list of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus (COVID-19), please see Health Canada's website.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the recommended dilution rates, contact times and conditions specific to the surface.
 - Avoid bleach except on simple plastics.

- High touch surfaces in trucks that should be regularly cleaned include but are not limited to:
 - Keys or FOBs;
 - Starter button on vehicles with FOBs;
 - Inside and outside door handles; Inside door grab handles, pads and armrests;
 - Steering wheel;
 - Shift lever and console;
 - Dashboard;
 - Power window and power door lock switches;
 - Radio and climate control buttons;
 - Turn signal and wiper stalks;
 - Seat and Seat adjuster;
 - Touch screen; and
 - Any other parts that are commonly used and that may have been touched (glove compartment, hood, trunk, van panel door handles, pick-up tailgate handle, sleeping areas, for example).
- Dispose of soiled disinfection cloths, disposable gloves and any other items in contact with contaminated surfaces in a waste disposal bag. Seal the waste disposal bag and discard in lined trash bin. Clothing worn during cleaning as well as any reusable cloths used should be stored in a sealed disposable bag until they can be laundered.
- Wash hands when finished using proper hand washing techniques.

During the Trip:

- Commercial vehicle drivers should wash their hands frequently under warm, running water with soap for at least 20 seconds, and avoid touching their faces with unwashed hands. This is especially important after coming in contact with other people or surfaces that may carry the virus. When soap and water is not available, an ABHS containing at least 60% alcohol is recommended.
- Commercial vehicle drivers should follow proper hand hygiene procedures when pumping gas, touching the service station door handles, or handling any automotive products that may be required when performing vehicle maintenance, such as filling windshield washer fluid and adding motor oil. This includes washing their hands or applying ABHS immediately thereafter. If gloves are worn, proper procedures must be followed for putting on and removing/disposing of gloves.
- As much as possible, physical distancing practices should be observed, staying at least two metres (or six feet) away from other people. Commercial vehicle drivers should keep appropriate distances between themselves and others and avoid direct physical contact (including handshaking). This includes contact with customers, receiving personnel and those at rest stops. When indoors or in other situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained or as recommended by local public health authorities, commercial vehicle drivers should wear a non-medical mask or face covering.

At the End of the Trip:

- Repeat a thorough cleaning of high-touch surfaces with appropriate disinfectants as described above.

- Drivers who start to experience symptoms after completing a trip should stay home, self-isolate, and advise their employer so that additional steps can be taken to protect co-workers and other drivers using the truck.
- While commercial vehicle drivers are exempt from the 14-day quarantine/mandatory isolation requirements as identified essential service workers, when off-duty, they:
 - should abide by recommendations of local and national public health authorities, including recommendations relating to physical distancing; and
 - must, during the 14-day period that begins on the day on which they enter Canada, wear a non-medical mask or face-covering if they are in public settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Additional Resources:

- [Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety: Practices for the Use of Masks, Face Coverings and Gloves for Transportation Workers and Passengers in the Road Transportation System](#)
- [Government of Canada Orders in Council, legislative and other measures adopted in response to COVID-19](#)
- [World Health Organization: Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19](#)
- [Government of Canada: Resources for Canadian Businesses](#)
- [Government of Canada: Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

- [Government of Canada: Preventing COVID-19 in the workplace: Employers, employees and essential service workers](#)
- [Canada Post: Practicing social distancing can keep you and other employees safe – March 18 2020](#)
- [Trucking HR Canada - COVID-19 Resource Guide for Trucking and Logistics Employers](#)
- [CUTA COVID-19: Guidance for the Public Transit Industry](#)
- [International Association of Public Transport \(UTIP\): Management of COVID-19 – Guidelines for Public Transport Operators](#)
- [Mental Health Commission of Canada: Choosing sources of information carefully is critical to COVID-19 mental well-being](#)

i Did you find this information helpful?

- i** 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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