

Recommendations for Managing COVID-19 Exposures in Multi-Passenger Vehicle Operations

This guide provides prevention and mitigation recommendations for mission essential employees to reduce the potential for transmission of COVID-19 infections when multiple passengers must travel in the same vehicle or when a vehicle is used in succession by multiple employees. These recommendations are applicable to planes, helicopters, cars, trucks, fire engines, etc. This document draws on information provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other sources to assist managers and employees in developing and implementing processes to protect the workforce while ensuring continuity of essential operations during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19

How does the COVID-19 virus spread?

Person-to-person spread. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person among people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet), through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can be transmitted into the eyes, nose, and mouths of people who are nearby and/or inhaled into the lungs. In some cases, asymptomatic individuals may be able to spread the virus while having no signs of infection. However, people are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (i.e., experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath).

Indirect transmission. It is possible that a person can become infected with the COVID-19 virus by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. Although this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, recent studies have determined that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable in air for up to three hours and up to 72 hours on some hard surfaces.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure and may include fever (>100.4F), cough, and/or shortness of breath and difficulty breathing. In some cases, asymptomatic individuals may spread the virus while having no signs of infection

PREVENTION

Recommendations Before Vehicle Use:

- Advise employees to [check themselves](#) for symptoms of acute respiratory illness before starting business travel and to notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.

- Plan for one person per vehicle or limit the number of passengers to maximize distancing within the vehicle whenever possible.
- Advise employees to consider COVID-19 risks

Advise essential employees to consider COVID-19 risks and self-identify with their supervisor if they are at high risk for severe illnesses.

- Advise employees to practice social distancing while off duty to minimize exposure to COVID-19 virus.
- Encourage essential employees to monitor their health and report fit and healthy for duty.
- Consider asking questions of employees prior to deployment. Questions may include:
 - Do you have a fever (100.4F / 37.8C or above), feel feverish, or have any other signs or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (cough, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath)? Recommend checking temperature with a non-contact thermometer.
 - Have you had close contact <6ft with (provided direct care to, worked in close proximity to, shared a room with, traveled with, lived in the same household as) a person confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19?

MITIGATION

Recommendations During and After Vehicle Use:

- Thoroughly disinfect all surfaces inside the vehicle, and commonly touched surfaces outside the vehicle BEFORE and AFTER deployment following [CDC guidelines](#).
- Use an [approved disinfectant solution spray or wipes](#) and allow sufficient contact time for the disinfectant to work.
- Instruct passengers to refrain from touching surfaces within the vehicle.
- Encourage operators and passengers to wear cloth face covers within the vehicle.
- Assure adequate ventilation inside the vehicle by opening air vents and windows when possible. Turn on ventilation systems and avoid using recirculated air.
- Wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol when handwashing facilities are not available. Key times to clean hands include:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after using the toilet
- After nose blowing, coughing, or sneezing
- Before and after work shifts
- Before and after work breaks
- After handling another passengers' personal belongings
- After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings
- Before wearing and after removing gloves
- Before and after pumping gas

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