



First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Directive

NIHB Medical Transportation and Hygiene for Medical Drivers and Medical Van Operators during COVID-19 Pandemic

Effective: 02/04/2020

Revision : 2

Sheet : 1 of 5

Approval Date:

**Applies
To:**

- Governing Body
Leadership & Operations
- Programs & Services
- Client, Family & Community

Approval Authority: Dr. Tom Wong, Chief Medical Officer, Public Health

This directive is intended to provide recommendations to communities regarding measures to take in providing transportation of clients during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The costs associated with increased cleaning and sanitization measures during a pandemic is an eligible expense under the contribution agreement. Contact the Community Health Director for Personal Protective Equipment supplies and training, if and when deemed appropriate, when following this Directive.

How coronavirus spreads

Human coronaviruses cause infections of the nose, throat and lungs. They are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

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

Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. More serious symptoms include difficulty breathing. COVID-19 symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus.

Drivers, clients, and escorts should at all times:

- **Follow good hand hygiene**, washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if water not available, hand sanitizer (60% alcohol or more) until hands are dry
- **Avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth**, especially with unwashed hands
- **Cough and sneeze** into a tissue, or their sleeve if a tissue is not available, and not their hands. Dispose of tissue in a no-touch waste receptacle and wash their hands afterwards.
- **Maintain social distancing** (2 meters or more)

Sources:

Ontario Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Health Care Settings, 3rd Edition

PHAC. Public health management of cases and contacts associated with novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

PHAC. How to care for a person with COVID-19 at home – Advice for caregivers

PHAC. Annex: Environmental Sanitation Practices for Airlines to Control the Spread of Novel Coronavirus

WHO. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) technical guidance: Points of entry and mass gatherings

Transport Procedures and Safety Precautions

1. Supplies

Ensure each vehicle is **supplied with**:

- Garbage bin with liners and lid; if possible, use a non-touch garbage bin. If not available, individuals should wash their hands after touching the lid.
- Alcohol based hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or more) – at least 2 bottles: one for driver and one for the client(s) and escort(s)
- Disinfectant
- Disposable gloves
- Household soap/detergent
- Paper towels, tissues

If the client is known or suspected to have COVID19 or has a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing the driver shall also have the following available:

- Disposable Gown
- Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
- Medical mask

All drivers, clients and escorts should clean their hands immediately before entering the vehicle, washing with soap and water, or, if water is not immediately available, hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or higher).

It is important to follow proper handwashing techniques recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to protect against the spread of COVID-19:

- Step 1:** Wet hands with warm water.
- Step 2:** Apply soap.
- Step 3:** Wash hands for at least 20 seconds
- Step 4:** Rinse well.
- Step 5:** Dry hands well with paper towel.
- Step 6:** Turn off tap using paper towel.

Please refer to the attached visual fact sheet developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada - *the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Reduce the spread of COVID-19.*

2. Review the following to determine if additional safety precautions are required for drivers, escorts and clients.

For clients who are not suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, do not have a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing, and have not had close contact with someone that is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.

- Follow all precautionary instructions specified by the health professional.
- Drivers, clients and escorts should clean their hands immediately before entering the vehicle, washing with soap and water or, if water is not immediately available, hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or higher).
- Ideally, place client and escort in seat furthest distance from driver to observe a **2 metre distance** (2 arm lengths).

For *suspected or confirmed* COVID-19 clients; OR who have a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing; or clients and escorts who have had close contact with someone that suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19:

Refer all such clients to the nursing station or health centre to confirm advice on how the client should be transported while maintaining isolation and ensuring the most appropriate option available to the community.

If a medical transportation driver is determined to be the most appropriate option for transporting a COVID-19 patient:

- Only transport one client (and their escort) at a time
- Clients and escorts** should follow the guidance of their local health care provider with respect to personal protective equipment.
- At minimum, the **client** should wear a medical mask.
- If the **escort** is a household member and/or has direct contact with the client they should also wear a medical mask.
- Is **driver** directly assisting loading/unloading client into the vehicle?
 - o **No and 2 meter distance can be maintained** ⇒ No mask is required.
 - o **No and 2 meter distance cannot be maintained** ⇒ Wear a medical mask.
 - o **Yes** ⇒ Consult the Community Health Director to access training on how and when to perform hand hygiene and put on a mask, eye protection, gloves and gown.
- Is **driver** able to maintain a 2 metre distance from client?
 - o Yes ⇒ No mask required
 - o No ⇒ Wear a medical mask

Hands should always be washed prior to putting on a mask.

After the Trip:

- The **driver should monitor** themselves for 14 days for any symptoms of COVID-19. Go about their day but avoid crowded places and increase their personal space from others, whenever possible. If they notice symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they are to seek health care advice.

3. Cleaning and Disinfection after transport of each client:

- Wash hands and put on **personal protective equipment**. Always wear closed shoes/boots and disposable gloves. When gloves are removed, they are to be disposed in a no-touch waste receptacle and hands washed.

For suspected or confirmed COVID-19 clients; OR who have a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing; or clients and escorts who have had close contact with someone that suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, the following should be worn when cleaning and disinfecting:

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable gown
- Eye protection
- Medical mask

Consult the Community Health Director to access training on how and when to perform hand hygiene and put on a mask, eye protection, gloves and gown.

- Clean** all frequently touched surfaces to remove visible dirt; use regular household soap or detergent and water.
- Disinfect** all frequently touched surfaces to kill germs and viruses on surfaces; most effective after surfaces are cleaned.
 - Commercial **disinfectant** that has a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and a virucidal claim (removes 99.9 % of viruses, bacteria). Follow the instructions on the label; or
 - Bleach water solution: **one (1) part bleach and nine (9) parts water** in a labelled spray bottle. Prepare new solution daily.
- Alternatively**, a combined cleaner/disinfectant product could be used.

Steps for Cleaning Procedures:

1. Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth.
2. Avoid direct contact with body fluids. If body fluids are present (nose/mouth excretions, blood, vomit, diarrhea, etc.) put on disposable gloves and use paper towels to absorb prior to cleaning.
3. Clean visibly soiled surfaces with detergent/cleaner. Use only disposable cloths (paper towels or wipes).
4. Clean all frequently touched surface.
5. Place used paper towels in garbage bin.
6. Apply disinfectant to the surface as per manufacturers' instructions. Surface should be moist. Allow to air dry.
7. Remove gloves, and any other personal protective equipment, and dispose of them as per recommended protocol. Wash hands after removal of gloves.
8. Dispose of waste daily according to health facility infectious waste disposal procedures.
9. Clean hands, washing with soap and water or hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or higher) if water not available
10. Complete the Cleaning Checklist.

Frequently touched surfaces:

- Seats/seat back
- Door handles
- Overhead grab handles
- Windows
- Lock buttons
- Seat belts/buckles
- Center console
- Arm rests
- Hand sanitizer bottle

Concerns regarding unprotected exposure should be directed to the local health care provider.

Cleaning Checklist

Community name: _____

Vehicle Name: _____

Frequently touched surfaces:

- Door handles (inside and out)
- Lock buttons, window buttons
- Seat belts/buckles
- Center console
- Arm rests
- Hand sanitizer bottle

Date	Time	Cleaned By	Hand rails grab bars		Seats/ Seat back		Walls and windows		Window / lock switches		Other frequently touched surfaces	
			Clean	Sanitize	Clean	Sanitize	Clean	Sanitize	Clean	Sanitize	Clean	Sanitize