



COVID-19: General Guidance for Vehicle Operators

This document provides general guidance and safety precautions to help nonemergency vehicle operators protect themselves and their passengers, and to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Medical facility contractors who provide transport for patients should follow their company's guidelines. For updated COVID-19 general information, see [What You Need to Know Now About COVID-19](#) or visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and search for "What You Need to Know Now About COVID-19."

NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) licensed drivers are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination. For a full list of eligible groups, visit nyc.gov/covidvaccinedistribution. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Getting vaccinated is the most important way to protect yourself from severe COVID-19 illness, hospitalization and death. For information on COVID-19 vaccines, visit nyc.gov/covidvaccine. To find a vaccination site and make an appointment, visit vaccinefinder.nyc.gov. If you need assistance making an appointment at a City-run vaccination site, call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).

Keep in mind these key prevention measures to stop COVID-19 transmission, even if you, your employees or passengers have received a COVID-19 vaccine:

- **Stay home if you are sick.**
 - Monitor your health and stay home if you are sick or test positive for COVID-19, except for getting essential medical care (including [COVID-19 testing](#)) and other essential needs.
 - If you had or may have had COVID-19, stay home until **all** the following are true:
 - It has been at least 10 days since your symptoms started
 - You have not had a fever for the last 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing drugs
 - Your overall health has improved
 - If you tested positive for COVID-19 by a swab or saliva test but never had symptoms, stay home for 10 days from the date you were tested.
 - You should also stay home if you were recently in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, or recently travelled and are subject to New York State (NYS) travel quarantine. For more information, see the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (NYC Health Department) guidance on [Traveling During COVID-19](#) or visit the [NYS Travel Advisory website](#).

- **Keep physical distance.**
 - Stay at least 6 feet away from others, when possible.
 - Ask passengers to sit in the back of the vehicle to create physical distance. If the vehicle has a partition, close the partition before picking up passengers. If the vehicle does not have a partition, consider putting up a clear, plastic barrier between the front and back of the vehicle. **The barrier should not affect rearview mirror visibility.** For vehicles licensed by the TLC, drivers should follow TLC guidance on partition installation.
 - Only transport passengers who are in the same party. Group rides (also known as shared or pooled rides) are not permitted (except for paratransit vehicles).
 - Use the vehicle's vents to bring in fresh outside air and lower the windows. Avoid using the recirculated air option.

- **Wear a face covering.**
 - NYS law requires everyone ages 2 and older who can medically tolerate a face covering to:
 - Wear one when in public if they are unable to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others
 - Wear one at all times while riding on public transportation, including taxi and other for-hire vehicles
 - Vehicle operators must wear a face covering whenever someone else is in the vehicle with them, unless medically unable to do so. Clients and other passengers should also wear a face covering when in the vehicle.
 - Consider the following in choosing a face covering:
 - Wear a face covering that snugly covers your nose and mouth, without slipping.
 - Do not use a face covering with an exhalation valve as it allows unfiltered, exhaled air to escape.
 - Use a face covering with two or three layers of tightly woven fabric to better prevent unfiltered air from passing through.
 - Wearing two face coverings (a cloth face covering over a disposable mask) can provide additional protection by increasing the number of layers of material and making for a snugger fit. See the NYC Health Department's guidance on [How to Wear Two Face Coverings](#). Workers can also consider using a higher-grade mask, like a KN95 mask.
 - For more information on face coverings, see [FAQ About Face Coverings](#).

- **Practice healthy personal hygiene.**
 - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you handle money or a passenger's bags, use the bathroom, blow your nose, cough or sneeze. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your arm when sneezing or coughing. Do not use your hands.
- Have tissues and hand sanitizer available in your vehicle for passengers.
- Encourage touchless payment options. Minimize the handling of cash and credit cards.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Do not shake hands or offer bottled water, gum or other items to passengers.

Get tested for COVID-19.

- It is important for people who interact with others outside the home to get tested regularly, even if they have no symptoms. This is especially important for people with jobs where 6 feet of distance cannot be maintained, such as vehicle operators.
- Visit nyc.gov/covidtest to find a testing site. Many sites provide no-cost testing.
- It is especially important to get tested if you:
 - Have symptoms
 - Were in close contact with someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19 or had symptoms of COVID-19
 - Were recently at a large gathering
 - Are planning to visit someone at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness

Clean and disinfect your vehicle routinely.

- Pay special attention to surfaces and objects that are touched often by passengers, such as door handles, window buttons, locks, payment machines, arm rests, seat cushions, buckles and seat belts. Wipe down surfaces you frequently touch, such as the steering wheel, radio buttons, turn indicators and cup holders.
- Remove visible dirt and grime first, then use a regular disinfectant product (for example, bleach, peroxide or alcohol-based multipurpose products) that is appropriate for the surface to remove germs. Disinfectants are the most effective on clean surfaces. Read and follow the labels on the cleaning and disinfectant products.
- Wear disposable gloves and any other appropriate protective gear when cleaning and disinfecting. Throw gloves in the trash after use, and wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Keep the vehicle doors open while cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait until all surfaces have dried before accepting passengers.
- For additional information about cleaning and disinfecting, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and look for [General Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-Health Care Settings](#) on the [Guidance for Businesses and Schools](#) web page.

Separate facts from fear and guard against stigma.

- The COVID-19 public health emergency is no excuse to spread racism and discrimination. It is illegal to discriminate against passengers or prospective passengers due to race, nation of origin or other identities.

- If you are being harassed or discriminated against due to your race, nation of origin or other identities, contact the NYC Commission on Human Rights by calling **311** and saying “human rights,” or by visiting nyc.gov/cchr and clicking on “Report Discrimination.”

Take care of yourself and your family.

- It is natural to feel overwhelmed, sad, anxious and afraid, or to experience other symptoms of distress, such as trouble sleeping. To lower stress and manage the situation, try to stay positive and focus on strengths.
- Enjoy the outdoors and get some exercise but remember to follow the key prevention measures to stop COVID-19 transmission listed above.
- Visit the app library at nyc.gov/nycwell for online health and emotional well-being tools.
- **NYC Well:** Free mental health support, available 24/7 for brief counseling and referrals. Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text "WELL" to 65173 or chat online at nyc.gov/nycwell.
- **NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline:** Trained professionals who are there to listen, support and refer to care if needed. Call 844-863-9314 between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on any day of the week.
- **NYC Health + Hospitals:** Provides health care to New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status or ability to pay. Call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692) or **311**.

For more information:

- Visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus for COVID-19 information.
- Text "COVID" to 692-692 for real-time updates. Message and data rates may apply.
- Visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and see the [Posters and Flyers](#) web page for signs you can post for passengers in the back seat.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

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