



March 27, 2020

Guidance for Transit Agencies COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Public transportation is an essential element of our critical infrastructure and necessary to support required trips to work and healthcare for those that must travel during this unprecedented time.

Public transportation agencies around the Commonwealth have been working very diligently in order to maintain operations and ensure the health and safety of their customers and employees.

Some examples of the types of actions that have already been taken include:

- Extensive cleaning of transit vehicles and facilities
- Elimination of fares to reduce high-touch areas and maintain more social distancing for transit vehicle operators
- Use of rear-door-only boarding and spreading out passengers on the bus to ensure spacing
- Adding additional vehicles to higher volume routes to ensure appropriate passenger loads
- Skipping stops if vehicles are already at a capacity that would ensure social distancing

Recommended guidance:

- Continue to communicate to the public that they should not take transit if they are sick. Message: if you are showing symptoms, please use an alternate mode of transportation.
- Transit use should be limited to essential trips only – trips to work for essential workers and to meet essential personal needs (e.g., grocery store and medical trips, but not if you are sick).
- Transit agencies should closely monitor employee absenteeism and direct employees not to come to work if they are sick.
- Transit agencies should suspend fare collection for fixed-route services, where practical, to reduce the interaction with transit operators and to limit contact with high-touch surfaces.
- Use rear-door boarding, where possible, to increase separation on buses.
- Limit vehicle capacity to ensure that passengers maintain at least 6' spacing from other passengers, or approximately 20% of vehicle capacity. Some examples of vehicle loads include:
 - 15 Passenger BOC – 3 passengers

- 40' Transit Bus – 10 passengers
- Transit agencies may elect to cordon off seats or portions of vehicles, as well as skip stops if vehicles are already at capacity, in order to adhere to these guidelines.
- As transit agencies consider modifications to service, agencies should prioritize routes that serve medical facilities, employment centers that are critical to the supply chain, access to core needs (e.g., grocery stores, food banks, and schools or other places where meals are provided), and lifeline services for the most vulnerable populations.
- Transit agencies should continue to track their expenses and lost revenue throughout the state of emergency.

