

Guidance for Transport Operators

Issue 9
13/09/21

providing services for
Nottinghamshire County Council



Please take time to read this guidance and refer to the links to government advice. If you would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact Transport & Travel Services, Nottinghamshire County Council.

Based on recent advice from the Government on safer transport measures, this guidance covers six important areas relating to the services you do for the Council:

- 1. Risk Management**
- 2. Mitigation & Prevention**
- 3. Vehicle & Equipment Cleaning**
- 4. Infection Control**
- 5. NHS Test and Trace**
- 6. Workforce testing**
- 7. Stay informed**



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

1. Risk Management

You should undertake a risk assessment about sensible measures to control the risks with your workforce, your vehicles and your services. If you haven't done so already, use a template such as the one recommended by the Health & Safety Executive [available at this link. >>](#)

Risk assessments are required to consider all aspects of what a company does and staff should be involved as much as possible. Risk assessments are important tools to identify sensible measures to control the risk in the workplace and examine the transport services you provide.

A risk assessment will help you decide if you have addressed all necessary points and to ensure adequate control measures to minimise risk and reduce the virus transmission:

- ✓ **Hand Hygiene**
- ✓ **Respiratory Hygiene**
– “catch it and bin it”
- ✓ **Fixed teams or partnering**
- ✓ **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
- ✓ **Cleaning Regimes**
- ✓ **Ventilation**
- ✓ **Asymptomatic Testing**

Further government advice for operators is available at this link. >>



2. Mitigation and Prevention

Operators should consider what suitable mitigations can be implemented on their vehicles.

To inform your risk assessment the following may be considered (note this is not an exhaustive list and not all will be relevant):

- ✓ **Use physical screening if possible, as long as this does not impair visibility or cause other safety issues**
- ✓ **Sitting passengers in the back-left hand seat rather than behind the driver**
- ✓ **Using larger vehicles in your fleet as requested/agreed by Nottinghamshire County Council**
- ✓ **Increasing ventilation where possible – windows, skylights**
- ✓ **Regularly cleaning the inside of vehicles - it is essential that this is done between trips**
- ✓ **Keeping crews together, rather than mixing multiple staff on shifts**
- ✓ **Clear signage in workplace and in vehicles for your staff**
- ✓ **Sitting passengers' side by side and not face-to-face (in taxis or smaller vehicles)**
- ✓ **Escorts should avoid physical contact with young people if at all possible and try to minimise face-to-face contact**
- ✓ **If handling cash, to reduce contact, consider installing a hopper, or encourage payment by 'contactless' methods.**



Boarding & Alighting

There may be situations where it is not possible to keep a suitable distance from passengers, for example when they are boarding or alighting. Your risk assessment may include measures which you put in place to manage boarding and alighting where larger groups of passengers utilise the vehicle, such as mainstream home to school transport. You may for instance introduce a system of using different entrances/exits or erecting plastic screens around the cab.



Passengers with confirmed or suspected COVID-19

If there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in any of your passengers DO NOT transport them:

- ✓ **Think of your personal hygiene and that of your passengers**
- ✓ **Report to your manager immediately**
- ✓ **Report to the relevant school**
- ✓ **Report to NCC Transport & Travel Services**



3. Vehicle and Equipment Cleaning

You should have implemented a revised cleaning procedure to a much higher standard than normal.

Cleaning should focus on the main areas of the vehicle which receive the most regular contact from passengers including:

- ✓ **Door handles (inside and out)**
- ✓ **Handrails or grab rails**
- ✓ **Head rests**
- ✓ **Seat backs**
- ✓ **Seat belts (tongue/buckle/webbing)**
- ✓ **Windows.**



If you operate wheelchair accessible vehicles, the securing equipment and webbing should also be cleaned before and after every use, along with all the lift operating handset and rails.

The areas which are constantly touched by drivers and escorts should also be separately cleaned – these include items such as steering wheel, gear stick, handbrake, controls, handles and switches etc.

Further government advice on 'deep cleaning' vehicles is available at [this link](#). >>



4. Infection Control

The personal safety of drivers should be considered at all times and more frequent hand washing or sanitising should be taking place in line with Public Health England instructions.

Employers have a responsibility to provide PPE to their employees if their company risk assessment indicates that they should.

Face coverings for staff

Nottinghamshire County Council strongly recommends that all staff wear a face covering when driving or working as an escort on a vehicle. There will be exceptional circumstances when a staff member cannot wear a face covering, or when their task makes it sensible for them not to wear a face covering.

It is important that staff follow the correct guidance on wearing a face covering. Employers should provide staff with the following information:

- ✓ **Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it**
- ✓ **Avoid touching face or the face covering, as this could contaminate it with germs from hands**
- ✓ **Change face covering if it becomes damp or if it's been touched**
- ✓ **Continue to wash or sanitize hands regularly**
- ✓ **Change and wash face covering daily**
- ✓ **If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions - if it's not washable, dispose of it in general waste**
- ✓ **Practise social distancing wherever possible.**

Staff should be made aware that face coverings can prevent some disabled people from accessing oral information and instructions (from staff and fellow passengers).

Please refer to the latest government advice on face coverings, available at this link. >>



Face coverings for passengers

Wearing face coverings is no longer a legal requirement on public transport but the government expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces such as public transport.

On dedicated school transport the government recommends that children and young people aged 11 and over continue to wear a face covering when travelling to secondary school or college. Specific exemptions still apply, including for health, equality or age reasons.

The latest list of exemptions is available at [this link](#). >>

Passenger compliance with the face covering regulations

The aim is to achieve high rates of compliance with wearing face coverings, rather than high rates of enforcement. Operators are encouraged to adopt a strategy of engage, explain, encourage, ensuring they explain the exemptions from the requirements.

Government advice for passengers is available at [this link](#). >>



Remember, face coverings are not a replacement for social distancing and regular handwashing.



Hand washing & hygiene

Ensure you and your staff wash hands for at least 20 seconds (or use hand sanitiser of at least 60% alcohol if hand-washing is not available) **BEFORE** and **AFTER** every contact and every use of PPE. The government advice asks employers to use signs and messages to build awareness of good handwashing techniques and other hygiene behaviours for example around coughing and sneezing.

HOW TO WASH



1 Rub front of hands palm



2 Rub back of hands palm



3 Scrub between fingers



4 Clean fingers



5 Clean fingernails



6 Rub wrists

YOUR HANDS

Driving

Along with enhanced vehicle cleaning measures, ensure your risk assessment sets out good personal hygiene for drivers and passenger assistants including:

- ✓ **Avoid touching your face**
- ✓ **No eating or drinking in the vehicle**
- ✓ **If you have to sneeze, do so into the crook of your elbow**
- ✓ **Wash your hands when you get to your destination.**

If you have to get out of the vehicle en-route, and you cannot wash your hands or do not have a hand sanitiser, avoid touching your face; avoid eating or drinking; and wash your hands as soon as you can.



5. COVID-19 NHS Test and Trace

Operators and their staff are required to follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

All contact tracing will now be done by NHS Test and Trace. Individuals are no longer required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, if any of the following apply:

- ✓ **they are fully vaccinated**
- ✓ **they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months**
- ✓ **they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial**
- ✓ **they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons**

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. Public Health have also strongly advised that drivers and escorts who are unable to limit close contact through social distancing undertake an LFD antigen test every day for the 10 days following their last contact with the confirmed case.

When an individual – children, young people and adults develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test they should follow public health advice on when to self-isolate and what to do. They should not board dedicated transport or public transport if they have symptoms or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19.

If a member of staff has symptoms or tests positive following a lateral flow test they must book a PCR test either online or by calling 119 and self-isolate. If the PCR test is negative, then the member of staff can stop isolating. If the PCR test is positive the member of staff will be advised how long they need to self-isolate and will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace to identify close contacts.

Operators must continue to operate NCC Contracts even if a member of staff tests positive for COVID-19 or a member of staff is required to self-isolate (not exempt from self-isolating as a close contact). Appropriate staff replacements must be put in place and NCC Transport informed. No transport should be cancelled unless you are informed to do so by NCC Transport.

For information on how to book a test, please use this link >>

For information on COVID-19 symptoms, please use this link >>



6. Workforce testing

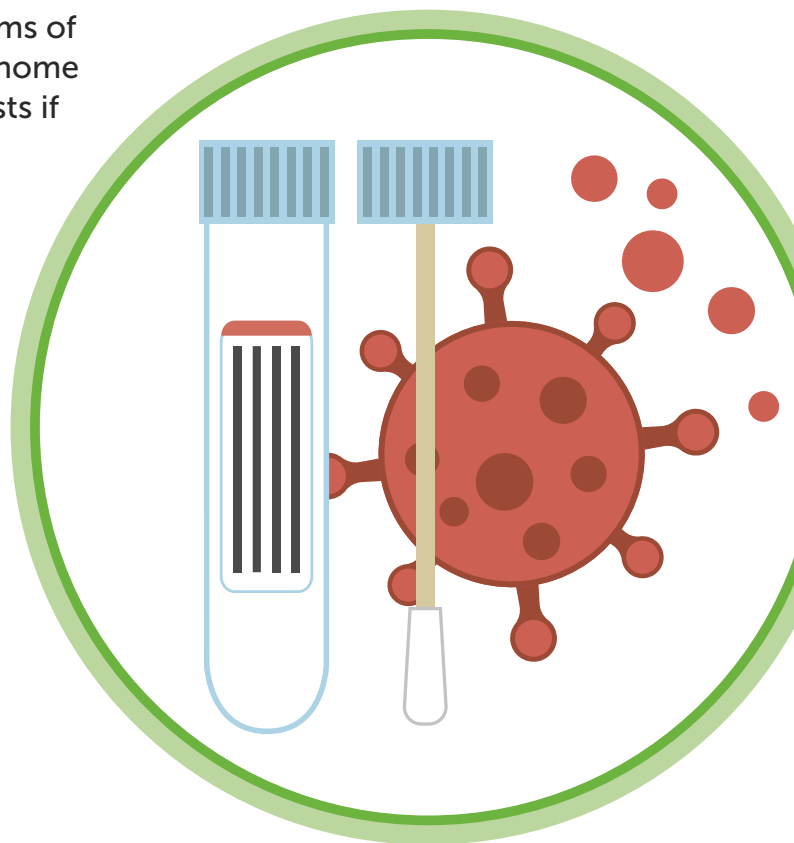
Alongside the vaccination programme, the government has advised that testing forms a critical part of the roadmap to recovery.

All transport operators are encouraged to actively participate in the asymptomatic testing of all transport workers. This testing helps to identify people who may unknowingly risk spreading the virus and thereby prevents workplace outbreaks.

Anyone with coronavirus symptoms can get a free NHS test. Employees who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 can access testing free of charge at home or at a test site. Read guidance on accessing tests if you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 [at this link >>](#)

Employers can also pay an approved provider to provide tests or run a test site for the workplace. Please visit [this link >>](#)

Workplace testing will help identify more positive cases of COVID-19 and ensure those infected isolate. This will reduce the spread of the virus and protect those who cannot work from home and protect our vital services.



7. Stay informed

This summary of the latest guidance is accurate at the time of publication on 13/09/21 and further versions will be issued. However, as a Transport Operator, it is your responsibility to keep up to date with the latest government guidance.

If you would like to discuss this guidance with Transport & Travel Services at Nottinghamshire County Council, please contact us on **0300 500 80 80**.

