

Rolling Hills Transit COVID-19 Safety Protocol for Drivers

For bus transit operators, potential sources of exposure include having close contact with a bus passenger with COVID-19, by contacting surfaces touched or handled by a person with COVID-19, or by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

To keep drivers as safe as possible we are implementing and recommending the following based on FTA, CDC and CTAA protocols:

Based on guidance from the CDC drivers should (if applicable) close doors/windows between driver/passenger compartments before bringing the rider on board and use open windows (weather permitting) or the ventilation system in non-recirculated mode to allow for proper and safe ventilation/air circulation within the vehicle.

CTAA recommends the social/physical distancing of passengers both between the passenger and driver, and between passengers within a vehicle. CTAA recommends following the CDC's minimum 6-foot distance guidance between passengers and drivers to ensure maximum protection against virus transmission. RHT practices social distancing on buses. This is noted with signage on bus seats.

A Federal Mask Mandate was issued and went into effect on February 1, 2021. The order states that passengers must wear a mask covering their nose and mouth, while in transit in the United States, except for brief periods, such as to eat, drink or take medication. Where possible, it is advisable for systems to offer masks to passengers seeking to board without one. The only exceptions are:

- A child under the age of 2 years.
- A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act ([42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.](#)).^[9]
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.

Operators must use best efforts to ensure that any person on the conveyance wears a mask when boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel. Best efforts include:

- Boarding only those persons who wear masks;
- Instructing persons that Federal law requires wearing a mask on the conveyance and failure to comply constitutes a violation of Federal law;
- Monitoring persons onboard the conveyance for anyone who is not wearing a mask and seeking compliance from such persons.

- At the earliest opportunity, removing any person who refuses to comply from the premises of the transportation hub; and
- Providing persons with prominent and adequate notice to facilitate awareness and compliance with the requirement of this order to wear a mask; best practices may include, if feasible, advance notifications on digital platforms, such as on apps, websites, or email; posted signage in multiple languages with illustrations; printing the requirement on transit tickets; or other methods as appropriate.

Wheelchair securement cannot be done effectively without a driver coming into direct contact with the passenger. CTAA has issued a set of guidelines for wheelchair securement. For drivers securing passengers in wheelchairs, agencies must provide top-level personal protective equipment including, but not limited to, gloves, masks/shields as well as requiring passengers in wheelchairs to wear masks. In addition the following recommendations have been made:

- Ask passengers to turn their head towards the window (if possible) as the driver secures their wheelchair.
- Ask passengers to not speak to driver as driver secures wheelchairs.
- Drivers will not speak to passenger as they secure passenger.
- Sanitize securement belts
- Establish process for promoting social distancing.

The following are general guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting transit vehicles.

At a minimum, clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces in the vehicle at the beginning and/or end of each shift and midday/shift. Ensure that cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly, including the provision of adequate ventilation when chemicals are in use. Doors and windows should remain open when cleaning the vehicle. When cleaning and disinfecting, individuals should wear disposable gloves compatible with the products being used as well as any other PPE required according to the product manufacturer's instructions.

For hard non-porous surfaces within the interior of the vehicle such as door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles, clean with detergent or soap and water if the surfaces are visibly dirty, prior to disinfectant application. For disinfection of hard, non-porous surfaces, appropriate disinfectants include:

- Antimicrobial products. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- For soft or porous surfaces such as fabric seats, remove any visible contamination, if present, and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. For frequently touched electronic surfaces, such as tablets or touch screens used in the vehicle, remove visible dirt, then disinfect following the manufacturer's instructions for

all cleaning and disinfection products. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect.

Gloves and any other disposable PPE used for cleaning and disinfecting the vehicle should be removed and disposed of after cleaning. After removal of gloves and PPE wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

General Reminders

- The FTA Mask Mandate requires all driver and passengers (unless exempt) to wear a mask. If you have asked a rider to wear a mask and they refuse you may refuse the ride. If they state they have an exemption please complete the ride and call dispatch.
- Request passengers avoid standing or sitting within 6 feet of the bus driver and other passengers.
- Avoid touching surfaces often touched by bus passengers.
- Use gloves if required to touch surfaces that may be contaminated.
- Use gloves and face shields when loading/unloading wheelchair passengers.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, including surfaces in the driver cockpit commonly touched by the operator.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Key times to clean hands in general include:
 - Before, during, and after preparing food
 - Before eating food
 - After using the toilet
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Additional times to clean hands on the job include:
 - Before and after work shifts
 - Before and after work breaks
 - After touching frequently touched surfaces, such as fare boxes and handrails
 - After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- As a good general hygiene practice work uniforms/clothes worn during cleaning and disinfecting should be laundered afterwards using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely. Wash hands after handling laundry.