MANDATORY DIRECTIVE:

Public Transit

Issued July 10, 2020
sccgov.org/coronavirus

Revised: December 14, 2020
MANDATORY DIRECTIVE FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT, CARPOOLS, TAXIS, AND RIDESHARE SERVICES

*Please confirm that your facility may open under the State Order. Where there is a difference between the local County Order and the State Order, the more restrictive order must be followed. The State also has specific guidance for certain facilities that must be followed in addition to this mandatory directive.*

Information on the State’s Order and State guidance is available at covid19.ca.gov.

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**On August 28, 2020, the State issued a Statewide Public Health Officer Order (“State Order,” available here) and the Blueprint for a Safer Economy (“Blueprint,” available here). The State Order and Blueprint establish statewide restrictions applicable to each “tier” to which counties are assigned.**

Public transit, carpools, taxis, and rideshare services must follow the mandatory requirements in this Directive and any other applicable County Health Officer Directive, the County Health Officer’s Revised Risk Reduction Order issued on October 5, 2020, the applicable restrictions under the State Order and Blueprint, the State’s COVID-19 Industry Guidance documents, and any applicable health and safety regulations. When there is a difference between these rules, the most restrictive rule must be followed.

**For additional rules that apply to public transit, carpools, taxis, and rideshare services, please see the following COVID-19 Industry Guidance from the State:**

- **Public and Private Passenger Carriers, Transit, and Intercity Passenger Rail:**

Public transit, carpools, taxis, and rideshare services provide important services that allow people to go to work, shop, and get around. It is vital that public transit agencies take steps to minimize...
the risk of COVID-19 transmission for their workers and passengers, and it is equally vital that people who participate in carpools, taxis, or rideshare services take steps to protect everyone inside the vehicle.

This Directive explains the rules for public transit, carpools, taxis, and rideshares. **This Directive is mandatory, and failure to follow it is a violation of the Health Officer’s Order issued on October 5, 2020** ("Order"). Public transit agencies, carpoolers, taxi drivers and passengers, and rideshare drivers and passengers must comply with the Order and all requirements of this Directive. In addition, public transit agencies must complete and submit a Social Distancing Protocol to guide them in implementing safety measures for their vehicles and facilities, and in implementing COVID-19 training measures for their employees.

Note: The term “public transit” as used in this Directive applies to all forms of public transportation, including but not limited to buses, trains, light rail, and paratransit, regardless of whether operated by public agencies or private providers. The term “carpool” refers to an arrangement in which people from different households ride together in the same vehicle to get around. The term “rideshare service” refers to a service in which passengers from a different household than the driver pay to ride in the driver’s private vehicle, usually through an app.

**The Order Issued October 5, 2020**

The Order imposes several restrictions on all businesses and activities to ensure that the County stays as safe as possible, including but not limited to the following:

- **The Social Distancing Protocol:** All businesses and governmental entities that have not already done so must fill out and submit a Revised Social Distancing Protocol under the October 5, 2020 Health Officer Order. **Social Distancing Protocols submitted prior to October 11, 2020 are no longer valid.** The Revised Social Distancing Protocol must be filled out using an updated template, is be available [here](#). The Protocol is submitted under penalty of perjury, meaning that everything written on the form must be truthful and accurate to the best of the signer’s knowledge, and submitting false information is a crime. The Protocol must be distributed to all workers, and it must be accessible to all officials who are enforcing the Order.

- **Signage:** All businesses and governmental entities must print (1) an updated COVID-19 PREPARED Sign and (2) a Social Distancing Protocol Visitor Information Sheet, and both must be posted prominently at all facility entrances. These are available for printing after online submission of the Revised Social Distancing Protocol. The Revised Social Distancing Protocol specifies additional signage requirements.

- **Face Coverings:** Everyone must wear face coverings at all times specified in the California Department of Public Health’s mandatory [Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) (“Face Covering Guidance”) and in any specific directives issued by the County Health Officer. Further, even where not required under State or local guidance
and orders, face coverings should be worn to the maximum extent possible (1) when indoors and not in one’s own residence and (2) whenever outdoors and within six feet of anyone outside one’s own household.

- **Capacity Limitation:** All businesses must comply with the capacity limitations established in the Mandatory Directive on Capacity.

See the Order and the FAQ page for more details.

In addition, all public transit, carpool, taxi, and rideshare services businesses must comply with the following directives.

**Public Transit: Face Coverings**

All personnel and passengers must comply with the State’s Face Covering Guidance at all times when using public transit, including while riding or waiting for public transit. If the pickup/drop-off location has transit agency personnel onsite, the personnel must be tasked with enforcing this requirement.

NOTE: Transit agencies may not require people specifically exempted from wearing face coverings to wear face coverings while using their services.

**Public Transit: Social Distancing Measures**

While using public transit, passengers must, to the maximum extent feasible, maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from everyone who is not in their household. To ensure that passengers are able to maintain this social distancing, transit agencies must:

- Reduce maximum occupancy onboard transit vehicles to ensure that everyone is able to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from people not in their household. Where possible, use additional transit vehicles to support excess capacity on busy lines and ensure physical distancing of passengers.

- Frequently remind passengers to sit at least 6 feet away from all passengers outside their household.

- Allow sufficient time for the boarding and disembarking process so that crowds do not form at the doors and passengers can enter or exit the vehicle with at least 6 feet of social distance between each person or each household group.

- Use spacing tools (such as lines of tape on the ground) at passenger pickup/drop-off locations to show passengers where to stand to maintain at least 6 feet of social distance while they wait.

- Instruct agency personnel to maintain at least 6 feet of social distance from passengers.
and other personnel whenever feasible. NOTE: If a passenger with a physical disability requires assistance entering or exiting the transit vehicle or securing themselves in their seat, agency personnel should provide whatever assistance they would provide under normal circumstances, even if that means coming within 6 feet of the passenger. Personnel must clean their hands with hand sanitizer before and after assisting passengers in this fashion.

- Bus drivers should ask passengers to enter and exit through rear entry doors in addition to front doors, if possible.

**Public Transit: Sanitization and Hygiene Measures**

Transit agencies must take the following sanitization and hygiene measures to ensure that each transit vehicle and passenger pickup/drop-off location is as clean and safe as possible for agency personnel and passengers:

- Transit agencies must equip stations, transit offices, transit vehicles, and passenger vehicles with proper sanitization products, including hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes. Hand sanitizer must be available to passengers on all transit vehicles, including in each train car.

- All agency personnel must be provided with access to handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitizer when at transit stations or facilities. All transit vehicles must be equipped with proper sanitization products, including hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes, for use by agency personnel while operating the vehicles. Agency personnel must be instructed to clean their hands frequently throughout the workday by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or if soap and water are not available, by using hand sanitizer—including before and after eating, after using the bathroom, after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing, before and after work shifts, before and after work breaks, after touching frequently touched surfaces (such as fareboxes and handrails), before and after assisting passengers, and after putting on/touching/removing face coverings.

- Transit stations and vehicles must be regularly sanitized in accordance with the CDC’s Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces. This sanitization must occur regularly throughout the day.
  - At transit stations, sanitization must include all high-traffic areas (including but not limited to restrooms, stairways, and areas of ingress/egress) and high-touch surfaces (including but not limited to handrails, elevator buttons, kiosks, ticket machines, turnstiles, benches, doorknobs, and seating areas).
  - Within transit vehicles, sanitization must include all high-touch surfaces (including but not limited to seats, arm rests, door handles, seatbelt buckles, light and air controls, walls and windows, grab handles, pull-cords, and buttons used by
passengers to request a stop). All areas of the driver’s cab must be cleaned between shifts or users, whichever is more frequent.

- When safe to do so, and when the weather allows, vehicle windows should be left open to allow for maximum airflow.

- Passengers must be encouraged to purchase tickets and add value to transit and rail cards online to minimize the need for use of machines at the station.

- If safe to do so, any indoor pickup/drop-off locations (e.g., enclosed bus stops) must be closed and outdoor alternatives used instead.

- All agency personnel must be instructed to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or fabric or, if not possible, to cough or sneeze into the sleeve or elbow (but not into hands).

- All agency personnel must be instructed not to report to work if they feel or recently felt feverish, have or recently had a cough, or have or recently had other COVID-19 symptoms (which include shortness of breath, chills, night sweats, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, muscle or body aches, headaches, confusion, or loss of sense of taste/smell).

- Transit agencies must provide personnel with information on COVID-19 testing locations: www.sccfreetest.org.

- Agency personnel must be encouraged to get tested for COVID-19 at least once a month in accordance with County guidance.

**Public Transit: Signage**

In every passenger compartment of every transit vehicle and at each passenger pickup/drop-off location, signs must be posted prominently with the following instructions for passengers:

- All passengers must wear face coverings while waiting for and riding public transit (except for people who are specifically exempted).

- Passengers must cover their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or fabric or, if not possible, must cough or sneeze into the sleeve or elbow (but not into hands).

- Passengers must not use public transit if they are sick with a fever (subjective or measured), cough, or other COVID-19 symptom (including shortness of breath, chills, night sweats, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, muscle or body aches, headaches, confusion, or loss of sense of taste/smell).

- To the maximum extent feasible, passengers must maintain at least 6 feet social distance from people not in their household, including while waiting in line.
Carpools, Taxis, and Rideshares: Rules for Safe Operation

Carpools, taxis, and rideshares all involve members of different households sitting in close proximity for extended periods. When it is necessary to use them, all drivers and passengers of carpool, taxi, and rideshare vehicles must comply with the following rules:

- **You may not** ride in or drive a carpool, taxi, or rideshare vehicle if you:
  1) Have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 10 days; or
  2) Were exposed in the last 14 days to a person who tested positive for COVID-19.

- Additionally, you are **highly discouraged** from riding in or driving a carpool, taxi, or rideshare vehicle if, in the last 10 days, you have had any COVID-19 symptoms (which include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, night sweats, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, muscle or body aches, headaches, confusion, and loss of sense of taste/smell).

- Only 2 adults may occupy the vehicle at a time. This means that drivers may have only one adult passenger at a time, and they may not pick up a second adult passenger until the first has been dropped off. Drivers may not pick up groups of 2 adults or more.
  1) Note: Drivers may pick up groups of 2 people or more, but only if the group consists solely of one adult passenger and one or more children who live with the adult passenger. For example, a driver could pick up a mother and her child who lives with her, but the driver could not pick up two adult siblings who live together, nor a grandfather and his grandchild who does not live with him.

- Everyone in the vehicle must wear a face covering for the entire ride unless specifically exempted under the Face Covering Guidance. To keep respiratory droplets and aerosols from spreading inside the vehicle, this requirement applies to rideshare and taxi drivers even when they have no passengers. People who are exempt from wearing face coverings under the State’s Face Covering Guidance are strongly encouraged to wear an alternative to a face covering, such as a face shield with a drape.

- Drivers and passengers may have no physical contact with one another. Drivers must not touch passengers’ bags, luggage, or other personal items unless absolutely necessary and must use hand sanitizer before and after touching passengers’ belongings.

- Drivers may not offer amenities such as mints, water bottles, phone chargers, or
magazines to their passengers.

- Passengers must sit in the back of the vehicle. No one may sit in the front passenger seat.
- Two-seater vehicles may not be used as carpool, taxi, or rideshare vehicles.
- After dropping off one passenger and before picking up the next, drivers must disinfect common surfaces (such as door handles, seatbelts, seats, windows, and consoles) using disinfectant wipes or other products effective against COVID-19.
- Drivers and passengers must practice proper hand hygiene before and after every ride. This means washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Windows must be left open in carpool, taxi, and rideshare vehicles to maximize airflow, unless weather conditions would make doing so impractical or unsafe.
- In addition to the above requirements, all carpools, taxis, and rideshares must comply with the rules in the State’s Additional Considerations for Passenger Carriers found in its COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Public and Private Passenger Carriers, Transit, and Intercity Passenger Rail.

**Stay Informed**

For answers to frequently asked questions about this industry and other topics, please see the FAQ page. Please note that this Directive may be updated. For up-to-date information on the Health Officer Order, please visit the County Public Health Department’s website at www.sccgov.org/coronavirus.

**Additional Resources for Transit Agencies and Transit Agency Workers**

- CDC’s Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces
- CDC’s Guidance for Bus Transit Operators
- CDC’s Guidance for Rail Transit Operators
- CDC’s Guidance for Transit Station Workers
- Santa Clara County Public Health Department’s Guidance for Workers
- California Department of Public Health’s Industry Guidance for Public Transit