

Interim Recommendations for Drivers in the Taxi and Ride-sharing Industry, such as UBER or The Volunteer Bureau/Transportation (CAB) and Paratransit

Version 2.0 - Update: May 8, 2020

COVID-19 Preventive Measures in the Workplace

These measures apply when sustained community transmission has been confirmed by public health authorities

Based on current knowledge, it is known that the disease can be transmitted by asymptomatic people who are carriers of the disease. Therefore, preventive measures are recommended at all times.

- A. In order to protect the health of employees and of those who come into contact with the workplace, employers and workers are asked to:
1. Encourage the respect of instructions given to drivers who have to self-isolate or who need work-time arrangements.
 2. Advise drivers that they **must not show up to work if they present symptoms** suggestive of COVID-19 (fever (> 38°C) OR recent cough OR exacerbated chronic cough OR respiratory difficulty OR brutal loss of sense of smell without nasal congestion with or without loss of sense of taste OR muscle ache OR headache OR intense fatigue OR important loss of appetite OR throat ache OR diarrhea).
 - a. If a driver starts experiencing symptoms at work, have them wear a procedural mask, or face covering if there are no procedural masks, and have them self-isolate at home. Call 1 877 644-4545. Consult the Self-Care Guide for more details: <https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/en/document-002492/>;
 - b. If there is a client in the vehicle, drop them off as soon as possible.
 3. Upon taking the client's call, find out if they have symptoms (cough or fever or respiratory difficulties) or if they have COVID-19. If they do, apply the measures described in section B regarding the **transportation of symptomatic passengers or passengers with COVID-19**:
 - a. Specify that the information is required to dispatch the right type of vehicle.
 4. **Wash hands** with soap and water or a hydro-alcoholic solution containing more than 60% alcohol, ideally after each client. Have all necessary material readily available in the vehicle (hydro-alcoholic solutions, garbage disposal, disposable tissues or disposable paper towels, etc.): <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html>. Alternatively, it is possible to keep with you (in your work area) a soapy wet cloth, placed in an open waterproof container and changed regularly. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands or gloves. In general, wearing gloves to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 is not recommended, unless otherwise indicated, as this may lead to a false sense of security. Gloves can be contaminated, and therefore contaminate the person who touches their face or contaminate the surfaces touched.

5. Respect and promote **respiratory etiquette**: coughing in the hollow of the bent elbow or in a tissue that is immediately discarded after use, then washing hands as soon as possible.
6. Respect, where possible, measures of **physical distancing** (2 meters):
 - a. If the passenger is not autonomous and needs assistance getting into and out of the vehicle, avoid skin-to-skin contact (**wear long-sleeved clothing**), and wash your hands after having assisted them. A brief interaction (under 15 minutes) within 2 meters of the person does not call for additional measures, **but the total duration of interaction within two meters with anybody must not exceed 15 minutes cumulatively per work shift;**
 - b. Reduce the number of drivers per vehicle and ensure that the same drivers use the same vehicle and keep the same work schedules in order to limit contacts as much as possible;
 - c. Maintain a 2-meter distance between people during work breaks **or during interactions with staff members.**
 - d. Between the driver and their client(s):
 - Install a physical barrier **according to SAAQ directives** between the front seats and the back seats: <https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/documents/publications/installation-cloisons-protection-covid-19.pdf> (in French only);
 - **If installing a physical barrier is not possible because of security reasons, the driver must wear a procedural mask;**
 - Encourage as large a distance as possible;
 - Limit the number of clients or passengers per vehicle in order to respect, where possible, a 2-meter distance between clients;
 - No client on the front passenger seat;
 - Avoid direct contacts with people (handshakes, hugs, greetings).
7. Limit hand-to-hand exchanges of bills, coins, cheques, credit cards, telephones, etc.:
 - a. Where possible, favour card or cellphone payments. Ideally, clients should avoid touching the buttons of the payment terminal, and instead use a payment method that does not involve any contact;
 - b. Keep payment terminals clean. Ideally, the terminal should be disinfected many times a day and when it looks dirty. Cleaning with the usual products, many times a day, is also an alternative. Ensure that the products used are compatible with the terminal, according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
8. Apply **cleaning AND disinfection** measures:
 - a. Clean and disinfect the inside of the vehicle every time there is a change in driver, with the usual products or when there are visible stains;
 - b. Regularly clean the dashboard, steering wheel and gear shift during the work shift with pre-soaked alcohol wipes or a hydro-alcoholic solution;
 - c. Disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched by clients (e.g. inner and outer door handle, inside of the door, seat belt, etc.) with the usual disinfecting products, and do so between each client. **It may be appropriate to wear gloves when disinfecting surfaces to protect hands from potentially irritating products.**

9. Make sure the cabin area is ventilated as often possible, if temperature permits, and do not set the ventilation system to recirculation mode.
10. Remove non-essential objects (e.g. cup holder, newspaper, decor) from the vehicle.
11. Avoid sharing objects with other drivers or with clients (e.g. water bottles, cigarettes, etc.)
12. **Wear long clothing that covers the skin**, given the unpredictable nature of this type of work that involves people for whom it may be difficult to obtain reliable information:
 - After the work shift, wash clothing worn at work with the usual detergent. Clothing can be washed with the family laundry.
13. Posters serving as reminders of the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and social distancing should be installed in strategic areas. Foresee an information and training plan for workers and managers regarding protection and prevention measures. Follow the available on-line training on COVID-19 prevention and protection measures.

B. For the transportation of symptomatic passengers or passengers with COVID-19, certain additional measures apply:

Drivers and vehicles should be dedicated to symptomatic passengers (see symptoms section A, point 2) not requiring an ambulance or passengers with COVID-19, and only for trips between the client's place of residence and the place of medical consultation or hospital centre and designated care setting:

- Ask the client to wear a surgical mask, or if there is no mask, to wear a face cover (any physical barrier covering the mouth and nose);
- Unless it is a paratransit service (see section C), if the client is not autonomous and requires physical assistance to enter and exit the vehicle, ask if an informal caregiver already in contact with this client and who is adequately protected can assist the client, without the driver's help, and can also come on the trip. If this is not possible, the client must take an ambulance;
- The driver must not take the client's personal belongings;
- Physical barriers (solid transparent partition according to SAAQ recommendations: <https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/documents/publications/installation-cloisons-protection-covid-19.pdf>, in French only) are strongly recommended between the back seats and the driver;
- In the absence of a partition between the front and back seats, the driver must wear a procedural mask;
- The driver must maintain at all times a distance of two meters with the client and the person who is accompanying them, where applicable;
- The driver must not have direct physical contact with the passenger;
- If an accidental contact occurs, the driver must wash their hands according to the directives in Section A, point 4;
- The driver must also proceed with the usual cleaning and disinfection of the vehicle and of the physical partition at the end of each trip.

C. For paratransit, certain complementary measures to those in sections A and B apply:

- For all situations where the driver has contact with a client within two meters, **the driver should obligatorily wear a procedural mask and ocular protection (protective eyewear/goggles or visor)**, this includes the anchoring of wheelchairs, assisting with entering and exiting the vehicle, assisting with seatbelt fastening, and any other activities within two meters of the clientele.
- Ocular protection is not necessary for driving. Regarding the procedural mask, it must be worn if a solid partition between the front and back seats cannot be installed for security measures. See the SAAQ directives to that effect: <https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/documents/publications/installation-cloisons-protection-covid-19.pdf> (in French only).
- When picking up a symptomatic person or one with COVID-19, the driver must obligatorily wear an over-garment (lab coat, gown) and gloves, in addition to the procedural mask and ocular protection already worn, given that they will have to assist the client and engage in interactions within two meters. After the transport, remove gloves, ocular protection and procedural (surgical) mask safely¹, and dispose of them in the garbage (if available onsite) or in designated containers or resealable bags, then discard them upon arrival at the taxi station or stand.

¹ Remove gloves, wash hands with a hydro-alcoholic solution, remove ocular protection, wash hands with a hydro-alcoholic solution, remove mask handling it by the elastics without touching the paper and finish by washing hands with a hydro-alcoholic solution.

SAT-COVID-19 Working Group
Institut national de santé publique du Québec

Note: The above recommendations are based on the information available at the time of their drafting. Given that the situation and knowledge on the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) are evolving rapidly, these recommendations are subject to change.

**Interim Recommendations for Drivers in the Taxi and Ride-sharing Industry,
such as UBER or The Volunteer Bureau/Transportation (CAB) and Paratransit**



AUTHOR

SAT-COVID-19 Working Group
Direction des risques biologiques et de la santé au travail
Institut national de santé publique du Québec

© Gouvernement du Québec (2020)

Publication N° 2938 – English version

The French version entitled *Recommandations intérimaires concernant les chauffeurs dans l'industrie du taxi et covoiturage, tel UBER ou Centre d'action bénévole/transport (CAB) et transport adapté* is also available on the website of the Institut national de santé publique du Québec at: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2938-recommandations-chauffeurs-taxi-covoiturage-covid-19>