



# PUBLIC HEALTH MEMO

## COVID-19

April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### COVID-19: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS

The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving quickly, and this guidance is subject to change. Please visit the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit website ([www.wechu.org](http://www.wechu.org)) regularly for updates and additional information. To receive timely and relevant email updates please subscribe through the wechu.org website.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that spreads from person to person (close contact) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread through direct contact with a contaminated surface when a person touches the surface and then transfers the virus to their mouth, nose, and eyes when touching their face. Symptoms of COVID-19 range from mild to severe and most commonly include fever, cough or difficulty breathing. It is possible that people infected with COVID-19 may be infectious before showing significant symptoms. However, based on currently available data, the people who have symptoms are causing the majority of virus spread. Those at highest risk for COVID-19 include those with travel history or those with close contact to a confirmed case of COVID-19. Close contact is defined as:

- A person who provided direct care for the person (case). This can include household members, healthcare workers, or other caregivers, or
- Someone who had other similar close physical contact or
- Someone who lived with or otherwise had close, prolonged contact (within 2 metres) with the person while they were ill.

#### TRANSIT SYSTEMS:

Many residents of Windsor and Essex County rely on public transit for their essential transportation needs such as going to work, picking up groceries, or picking up medicines.

Maintaining a safe transit system is a priority at all times. As we continue to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic it is important to ensure all measures are in place to protect our transit employees and the public who rely on public transit. Recommendations for the transit system include:

- Use appropriate message to remind people not to take transit if they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19,
- Use appropriate measures to protect transit driver by ensuring adequate space or barriers between the rider and the driver,
- Develop a plan for how to support the needs of an accessible rider (someone in a wheel chair) that needs to use the front entrance,
- Use the back door for entrance and exit of passengers for all other riders,
- Keep some windows open (when possible) for better air circulation within the bus,
- Limit the number of passengers and seating or block off seating sections to allow physical distance. At a minimum, block off every other seat.
- Clean all high touch areas, including handrails, bars and pull chords at the end of each route,
- Clean and disinfect internal facing windows on a regular basis.



- Clean and disinfect the inside and outside of all bus shelters on a regular basis,
- Consider adding extra buses to reduce rider volume on specific routes, if necessary. This would allow for proper physical distancing.

#### **FOR RIDERS:**

- ✓ **DO NOT take public transit if you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.**
- ✓ Allow space to maintain physical distancing from each other and the driver. If the bus is too crowded, wait for the next one.
- ✓ **DO NOT** touch any surfaces in the bus shelter while you wait for the bus.
- ✓ Maintain a 2 metre distance from others while waiting for the bus.
- ✓ Allow passengers to exit the bus before you enter and keep a 2 metre distance at all times.
- ✓ Keep and use an alcohol based hand sanitizer to clean your hands before and after entering the bus.
- ✓ Avoid touching your mouth, eyes or nose with unclean hands.
- ✓ Enter and exit through the rear door of the bus.
- ✓ Distance yourself from the driver and others while on the bus (2 metres).
- ✓ Consider changing your commute time to less busy times.
- ✓ Consider other forms of transportation such as walking or biking if reasonable.
- ✓ Maintain a log of the date, time and bus route in the event you need this information.
- ✓ Wearing a facial covering/non-medical mask in the community has not been proven to protect the person wearing the mask; however, it can be considered an additional measure you can take to protect others around you when physical distancing is not possible.
- ✓ **Remember wearing a mask is not a substitute for physical distancing and hand washing.**