

# Ontario Ministry of Transportation In-Car Driver Training Guidance Document to help prevent the spread of COVID-19

As of July 17, 2020, the Ontario government has amended the current emergency order under Stage 2 (O. Reg 263/20) to clarify that driving schools are permitted to provide in-car instruction and clarify requirements under which they may resume instruction.

The emergency order indicates that businesses that provide driving instruction in a motor vehicle may open if they comply with the following conditions:

1. Only one student may be in the motor vehicle.
2. Only one driving instructor may be in the motor vehicle, unless the type of instruction requires more than one driving instructor to be present.
3. Every person in the motor vehicle must wear face covering at all times.
4. The motor vehicle must be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.

To aid with the above requirements, the Ministry of Transportation has prepared the following guidance resource for in-vehicle training.

Ontario has also developed general information on COVID-19 and workplace health and safety for employers and workers. For more information, please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-coronavirus-and-workplace-health-and-safety>.

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) has created a guidance document for in-vehicle safety that provides a set of tips and best practices to help employers and workers prevent the spread of COVID-19 and work together to reopen the province. To view the document, please visit <https://www.ihsa.ca/pdfs/alerts/COVID19/guidance-for-in-vehicle-driver-safety-during-covid-19.pdf>.

## Overview

The health and safety of Ontarians is a top priority for the province, particularly during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak.

Under Ontario law, employers have the duty to keep workers and workplaces safe and free of hazards. Workers have the right to refuse work that they believe is unsafe to themselves or another worker. If a worker refuses to work, their employer must investigate the situation immediately.

Every employer should have a plan for how COVID-19 risks will be controlled in their workplace. For information to help develop a plan, please refer to the guide to developing your workplace COVID-19 safety plan at <https://www.ontario.ca/covidsafety>.

All in-vehicle driver training employers, driving instructors and students are encouraged to continue following public health recommendations to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, including practicing proper hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, maintaining physical distancing of two-metres' distance from others and wearing a face covering (non-medical mask such as a cloth mask) to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when physical distancing may be challenging or not possible:

### **Hand Hygiene:**

- Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds
- Dry your hands with a paper towel, or with your own cloth towel that no one else shares
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- For more information on proper hand hygiene, please visit <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>.

### **Respiratory Etiquette:**

- When coughing or sneezing, all individuals should:
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
  - If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
  - Dispose used tissues in a wastebasket that's lined with a plastic bag
    - The plastic bag makes it safer and easier to empty the wastebasket
    - After emptying the wastebasket, wash your hands
  - For more information on proper respiratory etiquette, please visit <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/C/2013/clincial-office-cough-signage.pdf>.

### **Physical Distancing**

- Everyone in Ontario should practice physical distancing to reduce their exposure to other people – this means you should:
  - Keep a distance of at least 2 metres (approximately 2 arms lengths) from others, as much as possible.

### **Face Coverings**

- It is mandatory that both the instructor and the student wear a face covering when providing in-vehicle instruction. Instructors should use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield), while in the vehicle. This is an important way to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when physical distancing is not possible.
- Face coverings should:
  - Fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
  - Maintain their shape after washing and drying
  - Be made of at least two layers of tightly woven material (such as cotton or linen)
  - Be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping
- Wearing a mask alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19 and should not be used as a substitute for other public health measures, such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing.
- For more information about face coverings, please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks>.

All driving instructors should complete COVID-19 screening at both the start and end of their shift. The screening should address the questions outlined by the COVID-19 Self-Assessment provided by the Government of Ontario and require that people follow the steps advised according to the results. Where possible, it is recommended that the screening process also include a temperature check (fever, a temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher).

Instructors should also ask students to complete a basic COVID-19 screening before entering the vehicle for in-car instruction.

To review the Government of Ontario's self-assessment tool, please visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>.

## Guidance for Employers

- Ensure all driving instructors have been trained on all the company COVID-19 health and safety protocols, including cleaning and disinfection, screening and PPE, including a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield).
- Advise all driving instructors to complete COVID-19 screening both at the beginning and end of their shift.
  - The COVID-19 screening questions should include:
    - Have you tested positive for COVID-19 or had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
    - Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms?
      - Fever
      - New onset of cough
      - Worsening chronic cough

- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Decrease of loss of sense of taste or smell
- Chills
- Headaches
- Unexplained fatigue/malaise/muscle aches (myalgias)
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Runny nose or nasal congestion without other known cause
- For a complete list of symptoms, please visit [http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_reference\\_doc\\_symptoms.pdf](http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf).
- Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?
- Please visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/index.html> for more information
- Ensure all driving instructors have successfully passed the COVID-19 screening and are showing no signs of illness.
  - If the driving instructor does not pass the screening protocol or temperature check, reschedule the in-vehicle driving lesson until such time as the screening requirements are satisfied.
  - If a driving instructor is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms such as, but not limited to, cough, fever or sore throat – even if symptoms are mild – they are encouraged to get tested. They must stay home, self-isolate, and advise their employer and their students so steps can be taken to protect co-workers and/or students who may have been exposed. More details can be found in the COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms from the Ministry of Health at [http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_reference\\_doc\\_symptoms.pdf](http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf).
  - If a driving instructor starts showing symptoms during the training lesson, they should stop training and return to drop off / pick up area.
  - The driving instructor should immediately report to you (employer) if a member of their household has tested positive for COVID-19 and remove themselves from the workplace.
  - Information about Assessment Centres for testing can be found on the Ontario government's <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/index.html>
- Ensure all driving instructors ask their students to complete COVID-19 screening before each in-vehicle driving lesson.
- Ensure all vehicles in which in-vehicle training lessons take place are equipped with alcohol-based hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes.
- Establish a system for frequent cleaning and disinfection of vehicles
- Ensure only one student and one driving instructor are in the vehicle during the in-vehicle lessons (unless the type of instruction requires more than one instructor to be present).

- Ensure every driving instructor in the vehicle is always wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield).
- Provide driving instructors with a daily log sheet of all instructor/student training to facilitate contact tracing if needed
- Provide each driving instructor with a daily log sheet to track the cleaning and disinfecting of the vehicle before and after each student.
- Ensure that any physical barriers or vehicle modifications are compliant with all applicable federal and provincial legislation and do not interfere with, or affect, the safe operation of the vehicle.
- Install plastic seat covers on both driver and passenger seats and ensure that these are cleaned as part of the cleaning and disinfecting of the vehicle.

## Guidance for Driving Instructors

- Discuss with your employer if accommodations may be needed including due to underlying health conditions that may place you at greater risk.
- Complete COVID-19 screening at both the start and end of each shift.
  - If you do not pass the COVID-19 screening, inform your employer immediately.
    - The COVID-19 screening questions should include:
      - Have you tested positive for COVID-19 or had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
      - Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms?
        - Fever
        - New onset of cough
        - Worsening chronic cough
        - Shortness of breath
        - Difficulty breathing
        - Sore throat
        - Difficulty swallowing
        - Decrease of loss of sense of taste or smell
        - Chills
        - Headaches
        - Unexplained fatigue/malaise/muscle aches (myalgias)
        - Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
        - Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
        - Runny nose or nasal congestion without other known cause
        - For a complete list of symptoms, please visit [http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_reference\\_doc\\_symptoms.pdf](http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf).
      - Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?
      - Please visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/index.html> more information
  - If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms such as, but not limited to, cough, fever or sore throat – even if symptoms are mild – you are encouraged to get

tested. Stay home, self-isolate, and follow public health direction. Advise your employer so steps can be taken to protect co-workers and/or students who may have been exposed. If symptoms start showing during the training lesson, stop training and return to drop off / pick up area. Immediately report to your employer if you or a member of your household has tested positive for COVID-19 and leave the workplace.

- For information about Assessment Centres for testing, please visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/index.html>.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces both inside and outside of the vehicle before and after every student's driver training lesson.
  - Examples include, but are not limited to, the door handles and latches, steering wheel, levers, dashboard, all buttons, and radio controls, seats and seatbelts and anything generally touched with your hands. See IHSA's instructional video on Cleaning and Sanitizing Commercial Motor Vehicles.
  - Ensure adequate ventilation while cleaning by keeping the doors open and when possible allow time for the vehicle to air out before driving (10 minutes).
  - Additional information about cleaning and disinfecting can be found here: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>
- Ensure that only one student is in the vehicle at a time.
- Wear a face covering at all times when in the instruction vehicle.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield) while delivering the in-vehicle training lessons.
- Ensure that containers for disposal of used masks or face coverings and cleaning supplies are available in the vehicle.
- Ensure the vehicle is always equipped with hand sanitizer, wipes and disinfectant spray.
- Keep windows open while driving when it is safe to do so to provide ventilation.
- Avoid touching any surfaces the student may have touched.
  - If, in order to demonstrate driving techniques, you touch anything that the student may have touched or may come into contact with, those surfaces or objects should be disinfected immediately, and you should use hand sanitizer.
- Keep a daily log sheet of all student training to facilitate contract tracing and provide a copy of your daily log sheet to your employer.
- Keep a daily log sheet of the cleaning/disinfecting procedures completed before and after each student enters the vehicle for their training lesson.

## **Guidance for Driving Students**

- Students should complete COVID-19 screening before each in-vehicle driving lesson.
  - If the student does not pass the screening protocol, the in-vehicle lesson should be rescheduled until such time as the screening requirements are satisfied.

- If a student is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms such as, but not limited to, cough, fever or sore throat – even if symptoms are mild – they must stay home, self-isolate, and advise their driving instructor so steps can be taken to protect the driving instructor and any other workers or students who may have been exposed. Anyone experiencing symptoms is encouraged to get tested. More details can be found in the COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms from the Ministry of Health.
- If a student starts showing symptoms during the training lesson, the driving instructor should stop the lesson and return to drop off / pick up area.
- Students must always wear a face covering while in the motor vehicle.
- If a student is taking the driving training as part of their work, their employer is responsible for ensuring they wear appropriate PPE.

**Sources:**

Information for this document was obtained from a similar document created in partnership with Concrete Ontario, the Truck Training Schools of Ontario (TTSAO), the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) and other leading industry stakeholders. Additional sources include recommendations provided by the Government of Canada, the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and the Ministry of Health as listed on the Ontario.ca website for COVID-19.