

COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR TAXI SERVICES, VOLUNTEER DRIVERS, RIDESHARE, AND PASSENGERS

Taxis and rideshares are an essential service to many people in Timiskaming district. The following recommendations are intended to help taxi and rideshare employers, drivers, vehicle owners, and passengers reduce the risk of community exposure to COVID-19.

Public health measures for sharing a ride

When you require a ride from a taxi service or from someone outside your household, follow these steps to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19:

- Passengers should sit in the rear seats to maintain the greatest physical distance possible from the driver. If there is only one passenger, they should sit in the passenger-side rear seat.
- When possible, passengers from multiple households should not travel together in the same ride.
- Wear a mask or face covering at all times during the ride.
- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based sanitizer before and after each ride; after handling items like money, payment cards, door handles and others' luggage (if unavoidable); before and after pumping gas; and before and after putting on, touching, or removing face coverings.
- Follow cough and sneeze etiquette by coughing into a tissue or your elbow and disposing of the tissue into a waste bin after exiting the vehicle.
- Open car windows to allow for airflow.
- If possible, use a touchless payment method such as online pre-pay or credit/debit card tap.

Self-isolation and symptoms

If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, **you and everyone in your household should self-isolate immediately. You should also self-isolate if you are concerned that you have been exposed.** The person with symptoms or possible exposure should get tested at their local Assessment Centre. [Click here for contact details](#). People who are required to be in self-isolation because of illness, recent travel, or as instructed by public health should only leave home for essential health care appointments, such as to obtain a COVID-19 test.

If transporting a passenger to or from a COVID-19 assessment centre or a health care facility and/or if the passenger is displaying respiratory symptoms, drivers and passengers should pay special attention to public health measures and ensure that the windows of the vehicle are open to allow for airflow.

Taxi service employers

- Familiarize yourself with the workplace resources, guidance, safety plan, and required signage. Information for businesses is available on [Timiskaming Health Unit's website](#).
- If possible, install a physical barrier such as a plexiglas window between the front and back seats of the vehicle to protect drivers and passengers.
- Staff must be protected when interacting with unmasked people. Staff can be protected by the use of impermeable barriers, distancing, or eye protection. There are no exemptions when it comes to protecting staff. Businesses may decide to refuse entry to customers who are exempt from wearing a mask if accommodations cannot be provided.
- Communicate with staff regarding COVID-19 updates and your business' safety plan.
- Drivers and other employees should not come into work or give anyone a ride if they have symptoms of COVID-19.

- Provide materials to drivers, including alcohol-based hand sanitizer, tissues, cleaning products, disinfectant wipes, and facemasks.
- Consider placing signage for cough and sneeze etiquette and hand sanitizing in vehicles where it can be seen by passengers.

Cleaning and Disinfecting the Vehicle

- Create a routine vehicle disinfecting checklist for drivers to promote consistent vehicle disinfecting practices. Thoroughly disinfect the vehicle regularly.
- Follow Public Health Ontario's instructions for [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#).
- Frequently-touched surfaces are most likely to be contaminated. Examples include door handles, seats, headrests, armrests, buttons for windows and locks, and seatbelts. Clean these surfaces:
 - at least twice per day, or after every ride if possible;
 - after transporting a passenger to or from a COVID-19 assessment centre or a health care facility and/or if the passenger is displaying respiratory symptoms

Please call Timiskaming Health Unit at 705-647-4305 if you have any questions.