

Powys County Council

CORPORATE FLEET & TRANSPORT GENERIC GUIDANCE FOR OPERATORS TO UNDERTAKE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT RISK ASSESSMENTS

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These are generic guidance notes to help explain what Powys County Council expects as minimum requirement and should align with your company's Risk Assessment for dealing with the current Covid-19 situation in the workplace.

This guidance is not exhaustive and is not likely to cover all scenarios. The contractor should consider their own unique circumstances and take appropriate action to mitigate the circumstances. This includes risk assessing staff for underlying health conditions and those who have been advised to shield

What are the hazards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread of COVID-19 Coronavirus
Who might be harmed and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Contractors • Drivers • Passenger Assistants • Passengers • Vulnerable groups – Elderly, Pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions • Anyone else who physically comes in contact with you in relation to your business
Existing Control Measures	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?
<p>General Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand washing facilities with soap and water in place. • Drying of hands, preferably with disposable paper towels rather than blown air hand dryers. • Gel sanitisers in any area where washing facilities not readily available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees to be reminded on a regular basis to wash their hands for 20 seconds with water and soap and the importance of proper drying with disposable towels or blown air hand dryers. They will also be reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues – follow Catch it, Bin it, and Kill it – and to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. • Tissues should be made available throughout the workplace including in all vehicles. • Posters on Hand washing and drying to be placed around the contractors buildings including in toilets, locker rooms and restrooms. • Rigorous checks should be carried out by managers to ensure that the necessary procedures are being followed.

<p>General School Transport Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever practical, allocate the same bus to a specific school run every day • Driver exits bus at every stop • hand gel placed at front of bus and to be used by every pupil as they board (or equivalent to be supplied by themselves if they have a skin condition etc) • Contractors staff to be screened and assessed for any underlying health conditions or for those that have been advised to shield. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners to have a dedicated seat allocated to them - loading from the rear to the front to reduce the risk of learners passing each other • Parents are to be reminded that they will not allow their child/ren to attend school if they display symptoms of Covid 19 or if their child does not follow additional specific school bus 'rules' or acts in a way that puts drivers, passenger assistants or others at increased risk of contracting Covid-19 • Learners will be encouraged not allowed to congregate at bus stops and should practice social distancing when waiting for the bus. • Face masks can be worn to prevent virus spreading not to protect wearer of the mask
<p>Cleaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly by multiple users – door handles, seat backs, seat belts and WTORS (Wheelchair Tiedown and Occupant Restraint Systems)etc. – particularly in areas of high use using appropriate cleaning products and methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning of all vehicles must take place after each journey. This must include cleaning all hard surfaces regularly touched by service users – hand rails, seat tops, seat belts (including webbing), door handles, and any WTORS equipment used if transporting a wheelchair user.
<p>Social Distancing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Distancing – reducing the number of persons in any work area to comply with the 2-metre gap recommended by Welsh Government • Taking steps to review work schedules including start & finish times/shift patterns to reduce number of workers on Fleet at any one time. • Ensuring sufficient rest breaks for staff. • Social distancing also to be adhered to in any canteen and smoking area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing rules must be followed as far as it is practicable to do so. This may result in operator's vehicles carrying fewer service users on each journey to ensure that the 2 metre rule is being adhered to. • Management checks to be conducted to ensure this is adhered to. • Operator's vehicle windows should be opened for ventilation whilst travelling.
<p>Wearing Gloves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where Risk Assessment identifies wearing of gloves as a requirement of the job, an adequate supply of these should be provided. Staff should be instructed on how to remove gloves carefully to reduce contamination and how to dispose of them safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to be reminded that wearing of gloves is not a substitute for good hand hygiene, wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, dry thoroughly after removing gloves, or in the absence of soap and water, the use of Hand Gel is recommended.

<p>PPE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present guidance on the use of PPE (personal protective equipment) to protect against COVID-19 relates to health care settings. However it should also be used by transport personnel who will come into close contact with service users. • It is a legislative requirement that employers provide the necessary PPE to undertake tasks safely. • PPE is equipment that will protect the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks, face shields and protective gloves should be used when coming into close contact with individuals who may not be in control of their own actions such as sneezing and coughing. • Please refer to individual risk assessments in these cases and pay particular attention to safe use and disposal. This is to ensure, as far as possibly practicable, the safety of drivers and PA's.
<p>Symptoms of Covid-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough or a high temperature in the workplace they should be sent home and advised to follow the self isolating guidance. • Those reporting loss of smell or taste should also be sent home to self-isolate. Managers will maintain regular contact with staff members during this time. • If advised that a member of staff or public has developed Covid-19 and was recently on your vehicle, the management team at PCC Corporate Fleet & Transport should be informed immediately by calling 01597 826678 in order to track and trace other service users who may have come into contact with a potentially infectious person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of internal communication channels and cascading of messages through managers should be carried out regularly to reassure and support employees in a fast changing situation. • Managers should offer support to staff who are affected by Coronavirus or have a family member affected.
<p>Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management will promote mental health & wellbeing awareness to staff during the Coronavirus outbreak and will offer whatever support they can to help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communication of mental health information and an open door policy for those who need additional support.

Further Advice:

1. Loading and unloading of vulnerable passengers and wheelchair users.

The loading and unloading of vulnerable passengers and those using wheelchairs maybe an example of not being able to comply with the 2 metre social distancing measures as recommended in the Welsh Governments Physical Distancing Guidance. In these circumstances, follow any additional risk assessments associated with the individual and continue to sanitise your hands before assisting each passenger.

Some school age passengers may be unable to tell their parents, or the driver or passenger assistant when they are feeling unwell. If they were to contract COVID 19, they may not be in a position to tell anyone, thereby increasing the risk of transmitting the infection. Although children are, on the whole, not seriously affected by COVID 19, they can and do become infected and can therefore pass the infection on to adults.

2. Sanitisation of Vehicles

Operators' vehicles would need to be sanitised after each run. Hard surfaces most often touched, such as handrails, seat tops, seatbelts (buckles and webbing) and WTORS equipment used when transporting wheelchairs, would need to be thoroughly cleaned with an antibacterial cleaning agent. Drivers and passenger assistants would need a constant supply of protective gloves, face masks and face shields where necessary. HM Gov are now advising that face coverings should be worn in enclosed public spaces where social distancing is not possible and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet. This is most relevant for short periods indoors in crowded areas, for example, on public transport or in some shops. Face coverings may also help passengers feel at ease whilst being transported, however in some cases children may be scared by a face covering and this would need to be addressed on an individual basis and form part of their risk assessment.

3. Protecting vulnerable staff

In accordance with the government guidance notice, staff who have clinical conditions which put them at a higher risk of illness from COVID 19 and are therefore being particularly stringent in following social distancing measures (shielding themselves), or members of staff who live with or are caring for these persons "***should not be expected to attend the workplace***".

4. Further Guidance:

<https://gov.wales/taking-all-reasonable-measures-maintain-physical-distancing-workplace>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb96cd6d3bf7f5d3a907e58/working-safely-during-covid-19-vehicles-240520.pdf>

<https://iosh.com/media/7934/returning-safely-to-schools.pdf>