



Department  
for Transport

From the Secretary of State  
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Dear Colleague

### **Guidance for transport operators**

The transport sector has done an excellent job of keeping Britain moving amid the challenges of recent weeks. You have enabled key workers on the frontline of the fight against coronavirus to get to work, and have kept critical supplies moving. These efforts have undoubtedly helped to save lives. On behalf of the Government, I want to thank you and your staff for your commitment to continuing to deliver vital services.

On Sunday, the Prime Minister set out the Government's roadmap for easing lockdown conditions. As a first step, anyone who can't work from home is being asked to return to work. Transport will obviously play a fundamental role in facilitating this, but as now, operators will need to be following COVID-guidance.

I understand that managing an increase in passengers while maintaining social distancing measures will be challenging for the industry. To help to manage demand on public transport we are encouraging the public to consider alternatives, including cycling or walking or using a car where they have access to one.

For some people public transport will be the only option, so to help you understand how to provide safe workplaces and services for both your staff and your passengers, the Government has today published new guidance for transport operators. Alongside this we have also published guidance for passengers, with information about how they can travel safely. Thank you to those of you who contributed to this work. You can find both the operator and passenger guidance attached.

In the operator guidance you will find more information on

- Maintaining social distancing for workers and passengers.
- Workforce planning and protecting workers.

- Keeping public and private areas and modes of transport clean to prevent transmission of the virus.
- Keeping workers and passengers informed of the latest coronavirus related safety procedures.
- Advice on how to manage passengers when demand exceeds capacity.

The guidance recommends that people using and working on the transport network should keep a social distance of at least two metres between each other. In situations where this may not be possible, for example, when boarding or alighting or at busier times of day, it stipulates that passengers and staff should try and minimise the time spent within two metres of others.

Where social distancing isn't possible and contact is likely to be made with those outside an individual's household, or where staff are working in an enclosed space, the Government's advice is that wearing a face covering may be beneficial as a precautionary measure. The Government is therefore recommending that people wear a face covering when using public transport. Evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect the wearer, but may provide protection for others they come into close contact with if the wearer is infected but has not developed symptoms.

A face covering is not the same as a surgical face mask worn as part of personal protective equipment (PPE) used by healthcare workers and is also not the same as the PPE used to manage risks like dust and spray in an industrial context.

If face coverings are needed, employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely; further detail on this is included in the guidance.

Of course, it is critically important that transport services remain accessible. When implementing this guidance it is crucial that priority seating and access to wheelchair spaces are maintained and assistance continues to be provided if needed. I would also ask that operators make sure their staff recognise the need to be flexible - for example, it may not be possible for some disabled people to social distance themselves if they travel with a personal assistant, or if they are visually impaired they may not be able to see if they are two metres from everyone.

I would like to highlight that in addition to this guidance published by my department, there is a range of other guidance available, including guidance on [safer workplaces](#) and [social distancing](#). Together all the Government-issued guidance is intended to help organisations and the public prepare for the next phase. Please use these resources where appropriate to help inform your planning. You will be best-placed to translate this guidance into processes that work best for your business, employees and customers. As you develop your plans please considering working with local authorities and

others to ensure your plans are consistent with other plans being developed in your area.

The Department of Health and Social Care continues to evaluate the latest scientific evidence and my department is in close contact with them. Should our advice change in line with emerging evidence and best practice, we will contact you immediately.

As the Prime Minister set out, this is just an initial step in the country's ongoing effort to defeat the virus. While we will not make any further changes until it is safe to do so, we will of course be working closely with you to plan and prepare as we approach further milestones.

Finally, I would like to thank you, your organisations and all your employees for your tireless efforts. Once again, please pass on my gratitude and thanks to your wider teams.

**Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP**

**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT**