COVID-19: Guidance for Employees Travelling in a Vehicle

Guidance from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) [1] and Public Health Ontario (PHO) [2] suggests that COVID-19 is transmitted from person to person most commonly through respiratory particles that range in size from large droplets to smaller droplets, known as aerosols. COVID-19 can be spread by infected individuals who are symptomatic, pre-symptomatic (before showing symptoms) or asymptomatic (no symptoms). It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

Reminder for all employees:

- If you feel sick, stay home, DO NOT come to campus/work and inform your supervisor.
- If you are coming to campus, or another University site for work, you must complete the University of Guelph COVID-19 Daily Screening Form [3] BEFORE you arrive.
- If you become sick while at work, STOP working, isolate yourself from others, inform your Supervisor, and go home as soon as possible, avoiding public transportation and taking measures to protect others around you.

If you are ill/have symptoms or may have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to campus/work. Ensure that you complete the Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment [4] and follow the direction given. Also complete and submit the University Employee Self Declaration Form [3] and inform your Supervisor of your absence.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 related inquiries, call U of G COVID-19 Call Centre at 519-824-4120 ext. 53906. The call centre will guide you through the reporting process and will connect you with supports from Student Health Services or Occupational Health and Wellness.

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) recognizes the need for some employees to make essential trips to various locations (e.g., research stations) in the course of their work. In order to ensure that physical distancing is practiced during these trips, it is recommended that each employee travels in a vehicle (either their own or the university-owned) without a passenger.

**If travel alone is not possible, and employees must travel together in a vehicle, the following precautionary measures should be followed:**

**What to bring**

- In addition to the tools, parts and/or equipment required for the job, take the following to the trip:
  - Supplied cleaners or disinfectants
  - Disposable gloves for use in cleaning and disinfection
  - Disposable garbage bags
  - Medical masks
  - Eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) for passengers (optional)
  - Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (optional)
  - Tissues (optional)

**Keep Distance**

- Minimize the number of passengers (e.g., the driver and only one passenger in a four door or standard-sized vehicle, including a king cab pickup truck, and two passengers in a van with two benches).
- Maximize the distance between the individuals inside the vehicle.
- The passenger in a four door or standard-sized vehicle should sit in the back seat opposite to the driver.
- Avoid using the recirculated air option for the car’s ventilation. Use the car’s vents to bring in fresh outside air.
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Published on Human Resources (https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr)

- If possible, drive with the windows open to maximize the air flow.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with frequently touched surfaces such as door frame/handles, windows, seatbelt buckles, steering wheel, gearshift, signalling levers, and other vehicle parts before cleaning and disinfection.
- All personnel should handle their own personal bags and belongings during loading and unloading.
- Cohort teams for sharing rides and limit intermixing for team travel.

Note: EHS currently does not recommend the installation of partition as a suitable approach to allowing more persons in University vehicles due to various considerations, including the possibility of the partition obstructing the driver’s visibility and/or giving false sense of security while not providing adequate protection against transmission of COVID-19.

Wear a Medical Mask

- **Everyone inside the vehicle is required to wear a medical mask during each trip.**
- When worn properly, a medical mask can help protect you and others from COVID-19.
- The medical mask should
  - be rated by ASTM as Level 1, 2, or 3
  - completely cover the nose, mouth and chin without gaping
  - allow for easy breathing
  - fit securely to the head
  - fit comfortably to avoid frequent adjustments
- Follow the EHS [COVID-19: Guidance for Using Medical Masks](https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr) [5], including the precautions below:
  - Consistently and strictly adhere to the other precautionary measures described above as the mask alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19.
  - Do not use a medical mask that is ripped, visibly soiled or wet or if the ear loops are damaged.
  - Wash hands immediately before putting it on and immediately after taking it off (in addition to practicing good hand hygiene while wearing it).
  - Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose and mouth when removing their mask and wash hands immediately or use hand sanitizer after removing.
  - Avoid touching the mask while using it.
  - When removing the mask, grasp the ties or ear loops carefully without touching the front of the mask.
  - Replace the mask when it becomes damp.
  - Medical masks are disposable and must be discarded following use. Dispose of the mask properly in a lined garbage bin.
  - Wearing a mask should not be a substitute to proper hand hygiene.
  - If you are feeling sick, stay home, do not attend work and notify your supervisor/manager.
Eye Protection for Passengers (Optional)

- Eye protection (e.g. face shields or googles) against COVID-19 is not required for the majority of UofG work situations. Accordingly, the use of eye protection for those that must work in close contact, within less than 2m of others, will be determined by departments based on operational needs. Please refer to EHS COVID-19: Guidance on Working in Close Contact [6] for details.
- Eye protection will be made available on request to passengers who must travel in a vehicle, as they are likely to be in close contact with another individual (e.g., driver) during the trip.
- Eye protection is not recommended for use by drivers in vehicles.
- Re-usable eye protection must be cleaned and disinfected between uses in accordance with manufacturer's instructions or EHS COVID-19: Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfection of Eye Protection [7].

Hand hygiene

- Immediately before and after each trip, everyone should wash hands [8] with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Dry hands with a paper towel or with cloth towel that no one else will share.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer [9] with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Clean and Disinfect

- Before and after each trip, clean / disinfect [10] the frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle.
Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines on the use of the cleaning / disinfection products and wear disposable gloves if needed (e.g., to avoid skin irritation). The gloves should be removed with care to avoid skin contact with the outside of the glove.

Always wash hands immediately after removing the gloves or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.


Respiratory etiquette when coughing or sneezing

- Cough or sneeze into the elbow or a tissue, even with a face mask on.
- Dispose of any tissues used as soon as possible in a garbage bag.

Resources:

- Public Health Agency of Canada, Main Modes of Transmission [12],
- Public Health Ontario, COVID-19 transmission Through Large Respiratory Droplets and Aerosols, What We Know So Far, [13]
- Public Health Agency of Canada, Prevention and Risks [14].
- United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, What Rideshare, Taxi, Limo, and other Passenger Drivers-for-Hire Need to Know about COVID-19 [15].

Source URL: https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/ehs-14

Links
[3] https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6ih1bNRMHDEU1OR
[7] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/ehs-21
[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9hjmQes72I
[9] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDUJ4CAYhpA