

How To Communicate With Passengers About Coronavirus

As the news focuses more and more on reported cases around the world and within the United States, your customers may call with questions about their trips and how safe they are continuing their plans.

You should communicate with customers that your company takes the health and safety of your passengers seriously. That you are reacting to the Coronavirus with the same precautions and policies adopted during the regular flu season, in accordance with CDC recommendations, such as cleaning and sanitizing buses regularly.

Remind passengers to avoid close contact with people who are sick, avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed/un-sanitized hands, clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and areas and understand the symptoms of the flu. If anyone is experiencing any symptoms, they should not take their trip as planned, but instead seek medical attention.

Remind them that your company will continue to monitor the areas your buses visit. It is not anyone's intention to put any of our millions of passengers at risk.

A Guide For Communicating Health Travel Practices For Travelers

Travelers are encouraged to always exercise healthy travel habits when traveling. During seasons with a higher risk of illness, like U.S. flu season, travelers should adhere even more strongly to healthy travel practices.

[The CDC released new guidance on what bus operators need to know about COVID-19](#) (updated 4/14):

Healthy Travel Practices

- Wash hands often
- Cough into your elbow and sneeze into a tissue
- Consult with a doctor before traveling when sick
- Stay up to date on vaccinations
- Avoid contact with people who are already sick
- Avoid contact with animals while traveling
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Be aware of the [latest travel advisories from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention](#)

COVID-19 "Don'ts"

- Go to work or crowded areas when sick
- Touch your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Use face masks (the CDC does not recommend face masks for general U.S. public to prevent the spread of COVID-19)
- Panic. Get the facts and follow guidance from government sources and health professionals

How To Keep Your Facilities And Buses Clean

Help protect the public health from diseases like the Coronavirus and influenza by following a few personal hygiene best practices and regularly cleaning your operating environment.

It is recommended that vehicles be cleaned and sanitized frequently during these periods of heightened transmission, especially when passengers or operators demonstrate symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Clean frequently touched objects with soap and water and/or alcohol-based cleaners.

These surfaces include:

- Handrails for entering and exiting the vehicle
- Arm Rests
- Seatbelts (if applicable)
- Driver Steering Wheel
- Dash Area
- Head Rests
- Windowsills
- Interior Luggage Racks/Hand holds
- Exterior Luggage Bay Handles
- Restroom Door Handles
- Restroom Handrails

The vehicle should be sprayed when cleaning with Lysol disinfectant spray or similar product. Have Sani-wipes available on the vehicle for operators and passenger's usage.

How the Coronavirus is Spread

The CDC states that coronaviruses and influenza are most spread from an infected person to others through:

- The air by coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

How to Help Protect from the Coronavirus and Influenza

The best way to protect oneself is avoid being exposed to the virus. The CDC always recommends simple everyday preventative steps to help prevent the spread of a respiratory virus, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Get a flu shot
- Understand the symptoms of the flu (elevated fever, body aches, headaches, nausea, etc.)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then throw the tissue away.

The CDC has said Americans should not rely on masks to prevent the contraction of the coronavirus. However, masks can be used to help prevent the spread of the disease by infected persons.

The American Bus Association (ABA) has created a website with links to additional information and resources. Please take a minute to review their website here: <https://www.buses.org/about/consumer-information/coronavirus-facts-not-fears#healthy-travel>.