

Student Ridership Responsibilities
(School Year 2020-2021) - Last Updated November 2020

In order to provide a safe riding environment for students, the School District of Philadelphia Department of Transportation Services has developed the following requirements for students being transported by school bus, van or sedan/cab. These requirements were developed based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). These protocols, which adhere to the CDC's health, safety and social distancing guidelines for riding school vehicles, are important for protecting all students, drivers, attendants, and staff, and their families.

Please read this document carefully and in its entirety in advance of the start of transportation services for your child. As conditions and public health guidance may change, these guidelines will be updated and communicated to our school communities.

At this time, the following guidelines apply:

COVID-19 Reporting

Parents/guardians of students are required to notify the appropriate District designee immediately if their child experiences symptoms of COVID-19, has a positive COVID-19 test, or has been exposed to an individual with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.

If your child tests positive for COVID-19, you will be contacted by the Department of Public Health of the county in which you reside. The applicable Department(s) of Public Health will advise you concerning contact tracing and the need for your child to isolate for ten (10) days.

If your child rides a school vehicle with someone who tests positive, the applicable Department(s) of Public Health will contact you concerning contact tracing and the need to quarantine your child at home for at least 14 days based on their exposure to a person who tested positive.

It is important that your contact information on file at your child's school is updated to be current and correct.

When Transportation Services is notified of a confirmed COVID-19 case of any student or adult who has ridden a school vehicle, the vehicle will be removed immediately from service for cleaning and disinfecting for 48 hours. The vehicle will be sprayed using an EPA-approved cleaning agent and will sit for 24 hours. After 24 hours, the vehicle will undergo a second treatment with the cleaning agent and all high touch areas will be wiped down before the vehicle is returned to service.

Prior to Boarding the School Bus or Other School Vehicle

A variety of symptoms have been associated with COVID-19, and their impact on health has ranged from mild to severe. Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure to the virus. While we continue to learn more about the virus, at this time, the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are listed below:

Fever of 100.4 °F or greater, or new onset of cough, or shortness of breath unrelated to a pre-existing condition, OR

Two of the following symptoms:

- sore throat,
- chills,
- headache,
- muscle pain,
- loss of taste or smell, OR
- close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

Prior to boarding a school bus, van or sedan/cab, parents/guardians will be required to conduct a daily screening at home which involves taking your child’s temperature daily and monitoring for the symptoms identified above. If any of the above are true, the parent/guardian must keep the student at home and contact the school nurse for further instructions.

Boarding the School Bus or Other School Vehicle

Apply hand sanitizer to your child’s hands prior to boarding the school vehicle, if possible.

Your driver should arrive to pick up/drop off your child at the time listed on the parent transportation notification letter. **Your child is required to wear a mask when entering, while riding, and when exiting a school bus, van or sedan/cab.** Wearing a mask with your child’s *mouth and nose covered* helps reduce the spread of the coronavirus by reducing respiratory droplet transmission between people. Acceptable face coverings, consistent with the School District’s face covering protocol include:

- disposable surgical masks
- cloth masks
- face shields worn with a face mask

Please ensure your child has a second mask secured in a clear, ziploc bag, labeled with his/her name, to ensure that they have a replacement if one becomes unusable. Remember to clean masks and clean face shields daily.

Refusal to wear a mask not due to a medical condition, mental health condition or disability will result in the re-evaluation of the type and method of transportation service for your child.

All drivers and attendants must wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose at all times while in direct contact with your child. The driver's mask may be removed when the vehicle is in operation to facilitate safe operation of the vehicle. Where necessary for the safe transport of the students, drivers and attendants for some routes may wear transparent face shields to facilitate communication with the students on the bus.

Social distancing will be maintained through the following:

- Each student will receive a specific seating assignment, which they will be required to sit in.
- Assignments will be made based on your child's scheduled pick up and drop off times, with assignments starting from the rear of the bus to the front of the bus, to minimize students passing by other students in the aisle.
- Upon arrival at the school, students will disembark the bus or school vehicle beginning with those students who are seated at the front of the vehicle and working toward the back of the vehicle.
- Students will be seated one per bench on a school bus. Children from the same household will be allowed to sit together.
- The seat immediately behind the driver will remain unoccupied.
- Routes that are serviced by sedan/cabs will only have one student assigned to each vehicle; except that children from the same household will be permitted to ride in a sedan/cab together.
- Students will be expected to handle their own book bags and other personal belongings when boarding and unloading, and must keep their belongings next to them in the seat at all times, so that they are the only one to handle them.

Cleaning Protocols

All vehicles transporting students will be cleaned daily using EPA-approved disinfectants. At the conclusion of transporting your child to or from school, drivers will be required to immediately clean and disinfect high touch areas such as the handrails, top of bus seats, and door handles. Details of our cleaning protocols can be found by visiting www.philasd.org/transportation.

Thank you for your assistance to keep everyone safe and healthy. Should you have questions or concerns, please visit our website or contact our office at (215) 400-4350.