

**Student Ridership Responsibilities
(School Year 2021-22)**

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 their school 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, your child should not ride the bus and is required to isolate for ten (10) days.

If your child rides a school vehicle with someone who tests positive, your school's Health Services staff will contact you concerning contact tracing and the need to quarantine your child at home for 10 days based on their exposure to a person who tested positive. Close contact is defined as being within six feet of the person for more than 15 minutes within a 48-hour period. A student who is identified as a close contact with a positive case of COVID-19, and is not vaccinated, must quarantine at home for 10 days. However, you may end quarantine after Day 7 and return to school on Day 8 if you remain asymptomatic and receive a negative COVID-19 test between Day 5 and 7. After ending quarantine, you must continue to monitor symptoms until 14 days after initial exposure.

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. The vehicle will be sprayed using an EPA-approved cleaning agent and will sit for 24 hours. After 24 hours, the vehicle will be 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
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New or persistent cough
- New loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

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 child is required to wear a mask when entering, while riding, and when exiting a school bus, van or sedan/cab. A mask is defined as a covering of the nose *and* mouth that is secured with straps that loop over the ears or tie around the back of the head. Acceptable masks may be factory-made; sewn by hand or machine; or created by using materials cut or constructed from household or clothing items like scarves, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. These clothing items in their original forms are not themselves acceptable face coverings. 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 mask
- cloth mask
- face shield
- KN95, N95 or other filtered masks

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.

Additional measures that will be implemented by Transportation Services include the following:

- To assist with contact tracing, students will receive a seating assignment and the driver will maintain a seating chart.
- Children will board 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.
- The seat immediately behind the driver will remain unoccupied when possible.
- 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. 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.