
Student Ridership Responsibilities (School Year 2020-2021)

The health and safety of our students, drivers, and transportation attendants remains of the utmost importance. 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 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:

Prior to Boarding the Bus or 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.

Prior to boarding a school bus, van or sedan/cab, parents/guardians will be required to conduct a daily Pre-Arrival Screening at home which involves taking temperatures daily and monitoring for the symptoms identified below. If **any** of the following are true, the parent/guardian must keep the student at home and contact the school nurse for further instructions.

- Fever of 100.4 °F or greater, 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,

If a student experiences the onset of symptoms while being transported to school they should inform their bus driver or bus attendant. Upon arrival at school, the bus driver or attendant will inform your school's Pandemic Coordinator at the school. The student will be accompanied to the Health Room by an adult school member for assessment.

If a student experiences the onset of symptoms while being transported to home they should inform their driver. The parent/guardian should contact their health provider and inform your school's Pandemic Coordinator of the plan for the student.

Boarding the Bus or School Vehicle

Apply hand sanitizer to your child's hands prior to boarding, if possible.

Your driver will 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 District's face covering protocol include:

- disposable surgical masks
- cloth masks
- neck gaiters
- face shields

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

Any student who cannot wear a mask or face shield due to a medical condition, a mental health condition, or disability, or who would be unable to remove a mask without assistance, is not required to wear face coverings. Individuals who are not able to wear face masks should use another type of face covering such as a plastic face shield.

Refusal to wear a mask and follow all rules will result in 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 on the bus, drivers for some routes may wear transparent masks or 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 schedule pick up and drop off time, 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 in every other seat. There will only be one child per seat. 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 bag 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.

Cleaning Protocols

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

COVID-19 Reporting

You are required to report if your child tests positive for COVID-19, if they develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 as outlined above, or have been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to your School Nurse and email transoperations@philasd.org with your child's name, route number and the school he/she attends.

If Transportation Services is notified of a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis of any student or adult who has ridden a school bus or vehicle, the vehicle will be removed immediately from service for cleaning and disinfecting.

If your child comes into contact with another student, a driver or an attendant who tests positive for COVID-19, the Department of Transportation Services will immediately notify your school's Nurse of this event. In addition, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health will advise on contact tracing and the potential need for quarantining of riders based on the amount of time spent with the person who tested positive and their proximity to the person.

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

The Route Operations Report (ROR) sheet has been improved to allow the driver to mark off which students rode the bus, van, or sedan/cab on a given day. This along with the assigned seating will allow quick identification of students who had contact with affected student(s).

Thank you for your assistance to keep everyone safe and healthy. Should you have questions or concerns, please contact the Department of Transportation Services at (215) 400-4350.