

# Government of Canada Releases Safety Guidance for Commercial Vehicle Operators in Light of COVID-19



Transport Canada has collaborated with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to develop a list of recommendations and guidance that should be followed in the transportation industry in order to protect drivers and employees working in commercial vehicle operations from infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the COVID-19 disease. This blog sets out a summary of the health and safety guidance released by Transport Canada as of May 1, 2020.

## Prior to Starting a Trip

- Commercial vehicle drivers should continue to monitor their health. In the event a driver experiences an onset of symptoms, Transport Canada has advised that the driver should stay home and advise their employer so steps can be taken to protect co-workers.
- Drivers should routinely clean the interiors of their vehicles with products from approved lists from governing authorities. We note that Health Canada is working with disinfectant manufacturers and industry associations to inform Canadians of the products that can be used to help against the spread of COVID-19.
- Transport Canada has also recommended that drivers regularly clean high-touch surfaces in their vehicles. For example, these high-touch surfaces could include, but are not limited to:
  - Keys or FOBs;
  - Starter button on vehicles with FOBs;
  - Inside and outside door handles;
  - Inside door grab handles, pads and armrests;
  - Steering wheel;
  - Shift lever and console;
  - Dashboard;
  - Power window and power door lock switches;
  - Radio and climate control buttons;
  - Turn signal and wiper stalks;
  - Seat and seat adjuster;
  - Touch screen; and

- Any other parts that are commonly used and that may have been touched.

### **During a Trip**

- Commercial vehicle drivers are encouraged to wash their hands regularly during the course of their trips. The Government of Canada's guideline on how to appropriately wash hands, for example, can be found [here](#).
- Transport Canada also notes that, to the extent possible, social distancing practices should continue to be observed by staying at least two metres (or six feet) away from other people. This includes contact with customers, receiving personnel and those at rest stops.

### **At the End of a Trip**

- Once a trip is complete, commercial truck drivers are reminded to repeat a thorough cleaning of high-touch surfaces with appropriate disinfectants as described above.
- As well, drivers should continue to monitor their health for any COVID-19 related symptoms. Transport Canada has specifically noted that while commercial vehicle drivers are exempt from the 14-day quarantine requirements for business purposes, when off-duty, they should abide by recommendations of local and national public health authorities, including recommendations relating to social distancing.

In addition to the above-noted recommendations for individual stages of a trip, the Government of Canada has provided the following general guidance:

- Fleet managers are encouraged to minimize the number of vehicles shared by employees, where possible, and to ensure that drivers have access to appropriate disinfectants, hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment, and other material needed to clean high-touch surfaces in their trucks.
- Face-to-face meetings should be kept to a minimum and respect social distancing requirements. To the extent possible, face-to-face meetings should be replaced with conference calls or video conferencing. Interactions with clients should also be kept as short as possible, keeping in mind social distancing requirements.
- Commercial vehicle operators should continue to communicate public health recommendations and updates to drivers in a timely manner.

Finally, the Government of Canada notes that the above-noted recommendations and guidance are subject to change, based on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to risk assessments and advice from local and national public health officials. For up-to-date information on COVID-19 and McCarthy Tétrault's perspective on the related legal issues, please visit our COVID-19 hub [here](#).

To view the original article [click here](#)

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*The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.*

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