

MSBOA Return to School Roadmap for School Bus Operations

This guidance outlines some potential options for contractors to implement at their school bus terminals when school resumes. While this guidance is only a starting point, contractors are highly encouraged to creatively come up with solutions on how to increase physical space between your staff in order to protect their health and others that they may have contact with. Our goal as an industry is to offer a clean safe ride to our passengers.

Driver Health and Safety

Drivers should wear a mask and vinyl gloves. Face shields should not obstruct vision and can be used in conjunction with a mask or for those that are unable to wear masks due to health conditions.

Consider private daily health screenings for drivers with a temperature check and questionnaire regarding symptoms. While protecting the confidentiality of the document to comply with employment laws, employers could utilize a daily sign off form with these questions:

- Have you or someone in your household been in contact with someone with a confirmed COVID-19 case?
- Do you or anyone in your household have any COVID-19 symptoms (Fever >100.4, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing)?
- Are you currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?
- In the past 14 days, have you been out of the country or have you visited a COVID-19 hotspot?

Drivers should be encouraged to stay home if they are sick, except to get medical care. Policies should be developed for a safe return to work for those who have a positive test or are exhibiting symptoms and address when a test could be required. Refer to CDC guidance [here](#).

Drivers should adhere to practicing physical distancing and staying six feet apart. Consider staggered times to enter terminal to avoid large groups gathering before their route. Discourage community food sharing.

Determine how you will operate during times of high absenteeism by cross training employees and utilizing work from home policies.

Train drivers to do a quick cleaning procedure in the event of a bus breakdown or route deviation to avoid cross contamination issues.

Safe Environment for Students

High touch areas, including the handrail, door assembly, dash, driver compartment and school bus seating, should be wiped down with [EPA registered household disinfectant](#) or with a bleach solution (1/3 cup per 1 gallon of water) following each route.

Students should be encouraged to wear masks. Provide hand sanitizer on the vehicle mounted for students as they enter the vehicle. Develop expectations and discipline guidelines for non-compliance.

Students should be seated with family members or distanced to the fullest extent possible in the exterior seating positions or skip rows when possible.

Roof hatches should be raised (weather permitting) to keep airflow exiting the vehicle.

Students should be loaded from the rear of the vehicle to the front and unloaded from front to rear to prevent incidental contact.

Routes should be limited to under one hour to reduce contact time between students.

Students should be encouraged not to sit in the seat behind the driver. Seats that are to remain open should be visually indicated with tape.

Parents should be educated regarding daily health checks of their students and sign off on guidelines or issue consent to ride the bus.

No water or food/gum/candy should be consumed on the bus.

Students should be educated to maintain social distancing at school bus stops.

Identify students that are medically fragile or may be unable to comply with masking or other social distancing requirements.

Protocol for Terminals

Encourage all staff to practice good hand hygiene. Have hand sanitizer, personal protection equipment and cleaning supplies in stock and ready to be used by staff.

Eliminate shared workspaces. Clean high touch surfaces frequently, if staff must share a computer keyboard to punch in, the area should be wiped down following use.

Consider protocols to alert parents and school administration of a potential exposure and how contact tracing may be implemented.

Review school bus stops to reduce number of students gathering in a single location.

Discuss with school building officials the capability of staggered loading and unloading times to reduce the number of students entering a single entrance or exit at one time.

Consider revamping school bus rules and transportation policies to reflect operational and social changes.

Educate employees. Post information regarding COVID-19 symptoms. Develop and document policies regarding proper cleaning procedures and worker protection. Consider online training and meetings when possible.

Follow [CDC guidance](#) on cleaning procedures following a positive test.

Resources-

Minnesota Department of Health Guidance for Social Distancing in Youth and Student Programs.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/socialdistance.pdf>

CDC Guidance

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/bus-transit-operator.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

OSHA

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>