This document provides resources, best practices, and information to help transportation employers understand their rights and responsibilities while operating during COVID-19.

**Overview**

(This is not a legal document and employers are advised to seek legal advice)

Employers and constructors have obligations to protect workers from hazards in the workplace as set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations and the directives coming from the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Workers should raise any concerns to their:
- Manager/supervisor
- Dispatcher
- Joint health and safety committee
- Health and safety representative

This will help ensure the employer has taken all reasonable precautions.

Ontario is currently in the midst of a global pandemic. While the COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly, the legislation and regulations used to govern Ontario’s workplaces are not.

Under Ontario law, employers have the duty to keep workers and environments safe and free of hazards. Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work. If health and safety concerns are not resolved internally, a worker can seek enforcement by filing a complaint with the ministry’s Health and Safety Contact Centre at 1-877-202-0008. Failure of the employer to comply with the OHSA and its regulations could result in a stop-work order upon inspection by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

According to the list of Essential Services by the Province of Ontario, Transportation Services are deemed an essential service.

**Transportation best practices**

The health and safety of workers is a top concern amid the global COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, all parties must place an increased focus on health and safety in order to keep transportation companies operating as an essential service to our country’s economy and continuity of operations.

All measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 should be done in compliance with requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and associated regulations and public health directives issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

In addition, below are a set of resources, tips, and best practices to help employers prevent the spread of COVID-19 for transportation companies.

For more information visit [ihsa.ca/COVID-19](http://ihsa.ca/COVID-19)
Protecting yourself and your co-workers
Coronaviruses (COVID-19) are spread through close contact, including at work. Here are some general helpful tips to help prevent the spread of germs:
• Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
• Sneeze and cough into your sleeve.
• If you use a tissue, discard immediately and wash your hands afterward.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
• Avoid contact with people who are sick.
• Stay home if you are sick.
• Avoid high-touch areas, where possible, or ensure you clean your hands after.
• Where possible, wear gloves when interacting with high-touch areas. Do not touch your face with gloved hands. Take care when removing gloves, and ensure you wash your hands after removing them.
• Wash your clothes as soon as you get home.
• If you are ill, notify your supervisor immediately, complete the self-assessment and follow the instructions you receive.

Physical distancing (two metres)
As advised by the Chief Medical Officer, public health officials, and outlined throughout government communications, physical distancing is required to control the spread of COVID-19.

In order to ensure physical distancing while working, transportation service employers should consider:
• Staggering start/dispatch times for drivers
• Staggering breaks for facility/office employees
• Staggering lunches for facility/office employees
• Restricting the number of people at the terminal and where they are assigned to work
• Controlling location movement (by limiting the potential for workers to gather, including in the warehouse and during the loading and off-loading of trailers)
• Holding meetings in an outside or large space to enable physical distancing and only holding in-person meeting as a last resort of communication
• Limiting unnecessary contact between workers, and between workers and with outside service providers, and encourage physical distancing in all areas (for example, loading docks, in dispatch area, during road side inspections, etc.)

Reporting illness
The symptoms of COVID-19 are like many other illnesses, including the cold and flu. At this time, it is recommended that any worker who has any symptoms related to cold, flu, or COVID-19 should be sent home. In addition, employers should advise these workers to complete the online self-assessment or call either:
• Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000
• Their primary care provider (for example, family physician)

Please note that additional resources, policies, and procedures are being developed to provide additional support in this area.
Transportation services health and safety during COVID-19 con’t

Getting information on infection prevention and control
Employers can contact local public health units for questions on workplace infection prevention and control related to COVID-19 infections. Please note that additional resources, policies, and procedures are being developed to provide additional support in this area.

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development reporting requirements
Employers must report all known positive test results for COVID-19 to:
• The ministry (in writing) within four days
• The joint health and safety representative
• A trade union (if applicable)

Share information
It is important that all parties in a workplace communicate their roles and responsibilities. Employers will need to ensure health and safety policies are updated and posted for all employees to see. Using industry resources, including this one and those listed and linked below, will help to improve employee understanding.

Posting of policies
All employers need to post and communicate COVID-19 policies to all employees. These policies should cover how the company will address:
• The sanitization of tractors, trailers, offices, warehouse, and common facilities
• How employees report illnesses
• How to ensure physical distancing
• How work will be scheduled and vehicles will be dispatched to promote physical distancing

Track and monitor your workforce
Due to the time it takes for symptoms of COVID-19 to develop, it is important to track where employees have worked, and specifically, where drivers have delivered to or stopped at while on route during their work day. If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the local public health unit will ask employers to provide information on where the employee worked as well as the contact information of any other employee who may have been exposed. Employers will track information and Public Health Units will respond.

Transportation health and safety best practices
Below are some specific work-related tips and recommendations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the context of transportation related activities, including commercial vehicle operations. Remember to refer to and follow your company’s standard operating procedures in addition to the support materials listed below.

General best practices
• Minimize the number of vehicles shared by employees where possible to limit the spread of the virus.
• Ensure drivers have access to appropriate disinfectants, hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment, and other materials needed to clean high-touch surfaces in their vehicles.
• Drivers must diligently self-monitor for symptoms. Anyone displaying symptoms should self-isolate and stay at home.
• Coronaviruses can be spread by touching an infected area, then touching the mouth, nose, or eyes. Effective hand washing is a key way to prevent the transmission of the virus.
• Practice good hygiene. Health Canada recommends following these basic hygiene practices:
  ◦ Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  ◦ If using hand sanitizers, they must be alcohol based (with greater than 60% alcohol) to be effective.
  ◦ Sneeze or cough into a tissue and discard it, or cough into your elbow or sleeve.

For more information visit ihsa.ca/COVID-19
Transportation services health and safety during COVID-19 con’t

Clean vehicle cab frequently: Cleaning methods should be employed with special attention to frequently touched areas including but not limited to door handles, grab handles, steering wheel, shift lever, touch screen, shift levers, radio and climate controls. Note: If using a shared vehicle, it is important to clean the cab before leaving the terminal.
• Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g., nitrile gloves) when cleaning the cab or touching potentially contaminated surfaces.
• Many non-penetrable surfaces in the cab can be cleaned with detergent and water, or sanitizer wipes if detergent and water are not available.
• Dispose of gloves and other soiled cleaning materials in a sturdy plastic bag as soon as possible. Tightly tie the bag and dispose of it immediately.
• Remove garbage from the cab regularly.
• Clean or replace cabin filter if necessary to ensure you are breathing clean air in the vehicle.
• Wash your hands once cleaning is complete.

On-route deliveries: When stopping at a delivery point, drivers should
• Limit the amount of face-to-face contact during deliveries.
• Stay in the cab and wait for cargo to be loaded/unloaded, if possible.
• Use technology to communicate with shippers/receivers.
• Wait in a separate designated area if one is available to avoid close contact with others.
• Wear gloves when handling any packages.
• Avoid the use of shared pens.
• Ensure that they wash their hands or use a hand sanitizer before returning to the vehicle once the delivery/stop is complete.

Mental health awareness: Drivers normally work long hours and can be away from home for extended periods. With the additional pressure associated with being an essential service to our country’s business continuity, there is the risk of additional stress and/or feelings of anxiety generated from long work hours in an isolated environment, uncertainty of changes with COVID-19, long periods of time away from family and friends, lack of physical exercise, feelings of disrespect from others, and changing road and weather conditions.

While working, the following controls can be used to support positive mental health:
• Know the facts and ensure that you are receiving up-to-date information from reliable sources (credible news outlets, company management, etc.) and avoid rumours and gossip.
• Reach out to your network. Social distancing is imperative for reducing the spread of the virus, but can also cause feelings of isolation, depression, and loneliness. During rest stops or while waiting for shipments to be loaded or unloaded, use this opportunity to check in with family and friends.
• Eat healthy and avoid the temptation to have comfort foods/snacks.
• Practice self-care while on the road.
  ◦ During your rest breaks, try deep breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, or meditation in your cab.
  ◦ Use your break times to read or listen to something that has nothing to do with COVID-19.
  ◦ Try detoxing from the digital world while on break by avoiding social media.
  ◦ Remind yourself that you are making a difference and helping the economy and people by providing an essential service.
• Practice defensive driving techniques and ensure you properly plan your trip to avoid potential weather systems, construction zones, etc.
• Get sufficient rest.
• Take walks for fresh air while still practicing social distancing.
• Monitor your personal well-being. If you feel that you need help, remember that it is ok to ask for it.
  Check with your company supervisor, provincial programs, or your insurance provider to see what resources are available to you. Many companies have confidential, easy-to-access Employee Assistance Programs.

For more information visit ihsa.ca/COVID-19
Transportation services health and safety during COVID-19 con’t

Fueling practices: When fueling a vehicle, always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves) when handling the pumping handle, gas cap, and any other parts of the vehicle. Ensure that you use disinfectant wipes to clean the pump handle and payment keypad before beginning the fuelling process. Caution should be taken when touching the service station door handles, pay machines, or handling any automotive products that may be required when performing vehicle maintenance such as topping up key washer fluids or motor oil.

Inspection procedures: Drivers may be required to stop at an inspection station or be subject to a roadside inspection.
• Stay in the vehicle at all times unless instructed by the inspector.
• Should you be instructed to exit the vehicle, maintain physical distancing at all times.
• Try to stay upwind/crosswind from the inspector when speaking with them.
• Wear proper PPE (gloves) at all times if you are required to exit the vehicle.
• Ensure that you use disinfectant wipes with any areas of the vehicle you come into contact with (i.e. door handles).
• If you are required to sign the inspection paperwork, use your own pen.
• Ask if the inspector would like to visually review the documents through the window:
  ◦ Suggest that you can hold the documents up to the window for the inspector to review which will allow the inspector to get the information they need without physical contact.
  ◦ Suggest that they take photos if necessary.
• Wipe down any areas of concern with disinfectant wipes.

Handling and receiving packages: If you are required to handle any packages, always ensure that you are maintaining physical distancing from others and wearing appropriate PPE such as gloves. As part of the handling of these packages avoid the use of shared materials with others (i.e. pens, clipboards, etc.) and clean your vehicle in any areas that may have been exposed by others loading and unloading packages. If possible, use technology (i.e. scanning devices) for confirmation of delivery.
• Preference would be for contactless delivery. For example: the delivery driver leaving the package on the doorstep (no signature required).
• Request the driver place the package down rather than handing the item directly to you to maintain physical distancing.
• Avoid the use of shared materials. Canada Post and many other delivery services have implemented policies where they no longer request signatures. However, there may be instances where proof of receipt (signature) is still needed. In these cases:
  ◦ Use your own pen when signing for the delivery and avoid the use of shared pens.
  ◦ If you are required to use a stylus or your finger to sign for receipt of the delivery, wipe down the keypad before use.
• Open the package outside. To limit any potential contamination from the package:
  ◦ Wear PPE such as gloves when handling or opening the package.
  ◦ Upon opening the delivery immediately dispose of the packaging and the used gloves.
  ◦ Wash your hands immediately after cleaning and sanitizing the potentially exposed areas.
• Clean and sanitize exposed areas. If the package was brought into your home or place of employment such as table tops, counters, or floor area (where it was placed), etc.
• Wash your hands immediately after cleaning and sanitizing the potentially exposed areas.

For more information visit ihsa.ca/COVID-19
Handling documentation, reports, and paperwork: Transport companies and drivers should

- Use technology for communication as much as possible (e.g., text messaging and mobile phones) rather than having in-person conversations.
- Where possible, use technology to send and receive paperwork (e.g., scanning equipment and electronic proof of delivery).
- Not share pens, and request that others use their own pen or stylus when signing. If required to share, use disinfectant wipes to clean pens and styluses.
- Use PPE (i.e. gloves) when exchanging paperwork or clipboards.
- Regularly disinfect any areas that you are frequently in contact with or are used by other people (e.g., tables, desks, tablets, pens, door handles).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Once any cleaning is complete, remove gloves, dispose of them, and ensure you wash your hands.

Rest stops and breaks: Transport drivers will need to stop at rest stops to refuel, for meal breaks, washroom facilities, and off-duty time.

- **Check with dispatch:** While most rest stops are remaining open during the pandemic, they may only have limited services available. Sit down service is now closed but drive-through service is available at most and many have made accommodations for truck drivers. Before stopping for an extended period of time, check with dispatch and see if they can confirm what is available at upcoming rest stops.
- **Pack some snacks:** With the rules changing rapidly you may encounter some rest stops that have closed. Pack some healthy snacks just in case you need to travel further to find a place to eat.
- **Refillable mugs:** Most rest stops (and coffee shops) are no longer allowing reusable mugs to be used. Leave the mug in the cab and purchase your beverage in an over the counter cup.
- **Bring a hygiene bag with you:** Always have a hygiene bag on hand so that you are using your own products at rest stops. Bags can include soap, shampoo, electric razor, toothbrush, toothpaste, small hand towels, deodorant, moisturizer, and any other hygiene or grooming products you may require.
- **Carry hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes with you:** When entering a rest stop ensure that you have disinfectant wipes to use on door handles, faucets, or stalls. Rest stops with showers have longer than normal wait times due to increased proper cleaning of the facilities however, you should still practice safe measures and wipe down any door handles or faucets with disinfectant wipes prior to using.
- **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** Wear proper PPE (gloves) at all times when using the fuel pump and wipe down the pump handle, keypad, or anything else you may come into contact with using disinfectant wipes.
- **Visually look over the cab when leaving the rest stop:** Visually scan your vehicle every time you leave a rest stop to determine if any cleaning is required. Wipe down any areas of concern with disinfectant wipes.

Personal Hygiene – decontamination: Drivers should follow a standard procedure for their own personal decontamination daily.

- Change clothes before entering your personal vehicle or going home: Where possible it is best practice to change your work clothes before going home.
  - Clean clothes should be kept in a separate plastic bag and, if possible, stored in your personal vehicle or locker while you are working
  - Bag all dirty clothes and place in a plastic bag before going home
  - Leave clothes in plastic bag until they are laundered
  - Launder clothes as soon as possible
  - If changing at home try to change in the same pre-identified area of your home (i.e. garage, laundry room etc.) to reduce risk of exposing dirty clothing to other areas of the house
  - Remove your boots or work shoes outside or in the garage in the same spot daily
  - Shower as soon as you return home

For more information visit [ihsa.ca/COVID-19](http://ihsa.ca/COVID-19)
Transportation services health and safety during COVID-19 con’t

Decontaminate (clean) any equipment you have used throughout the day: During the course of the day you may have come into contact with a variety of equipment that requires cleaning (i.e. flashlight, tools, etc.). Ensure you:
  • Clean all equipment with detergent and water followed by disinfectant wipes and then dry with a towel.
  • Place towels in a plastic bag one cleaning is complete.
  • Remove gloves and wash hands once all decontamination (cleaning) of equipment is complete.

COVID-19 government updates
Stay updated with daily government updates:
  • Government of Ontario
  • Government of Canada

Additional resources for the transportation sector:
3. Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) and Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) COVID-19 Updates and Resources: http://cantruck.ca/category/covid-19/

Other transportation specific provincial resources
Note: where possible these pages have been linked directly to COVID-19 specific resource pages.
2. Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association: https://www.apta.ca/
3. BC Trucking Association: https://www.bcstrucking.com/content/covid-19-news-resources-industry
4. Manitoba Trucking Association: https://www.trucking.mb.ca/
5. Quebec Trucking Association: https://www.carrefour-acq.org/articles-nouvelles/page-evolutive-sur-covid-19

Ontario government and agency-issued resources about COVID-19
The Ontario Ministry of Health is providing consistent updates on the provincial government’s response to the outbreak, including:
  • status of cases in Ontario
  • current affected areas
  • symptoms and treatments
  • how to protect yourself and self-isolate
  • updated Ontario news on the virus

Public Health Ontario is providing up-to-date resources on COVID-19, including:
  • links to evolving public health guidelines, position statements and situational updates
  • synopsis of key articles updating on the latest findings related to the virus
  • recommendations for use of personal protective equipment
  • information on infection prevention and control
  • testing information
  • other public resources

For more information visit ihsa.ca/COVID-19
Transportation services health and safety during COVID-19 con’t

Other COVID-19 resources
Health Canada outlines the actions being taken by the Government of Canada to limit spread of the virus, as well as what is happening in provinces and communities across the country. It also maintains a live update of the number of cases by province.

The World Health Organization is updating the latest guidance and information related to the global outbreak and spread beyond Canadian borders.

It also provides the most up-to-date information on:
• current research and development around the virus
• a COVID-19 situation “dashboard”
• emergency preparedness measures
• live media updates on the spread of the virus