



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Infection Prevention & Control Measures for Client Transportation

Interim Guidance

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<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>

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Cleaning and Disinfection of Medical Transport Vehicles During COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a novel coronavirus, which is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing or direct contact with someone who is sick with COVID-19. This virus can survive on some surfaces that ill clients have recently touched. Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to those for influenza or other respiratory illnesses. The most common symptoms include fever, cough, and extreme tiredness. Symptoms of more serious illness include difficulty breathing. Others may have very mild illness.

FNHA recognizes that during a pandemic, Public Health officials may recommend that the public limit non-essential travel to slow the spread of the disease. Additionally, First Nations may use discretion in determining which non-essential trips will be supported. There is an expectation that medical transportation will continue to be provided for urgent trips, such as clients traveling for dialysis, OAT, cancer treatment, or other urgent and emergent purposes. BCEHS services to rural and remote communities will be maintained.

Prior to transporting a client with symptoms of a respiratory illness, ensure appropriate precautions are in place. If possible, dedicate a medical transport vehicle and driver for the transportation of individuals with respiratory illness to minimize exposure.

Transport Requirements

- Driver to wear procedure mask with all client encounters to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 infection from driver to clients at a time when no symptoms of illness are recognized, but the virus can be transmitted.
- Don mask appropriately to avoid vision impairment. Contact Workplace Health if mask causes vision impairment to discuss alternatives.
- Ask the client to perform hand hygiene. If possible, have clients with respiratory symptoms put on a mask. Once the mask is in position, ask the client to perform hand hygiene again. A mask is important as it prevents the droplet spread of the virus from a symptomatic client to those around them.
- Instruct the client to use respiratory etiquette (coughing or sneezing into tissues or a flexed elbow) and apply to hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing, or touching one's face.
- Seat the client and escort at least a 2m distance from driver if possible.
- The client's escort should assist the client with entering and exiting the vehicle. If the driver will be in direct contact with the symptomatic client, the driver must wear PPE according to Contact and Droplet precautions (a procedure mask, gown, gloves and eye protection).
 - In the event that the driver and/or client escort is required to wear the above-mentioned PPE, appropriate training/instructions should be provided for donning and doffing.
- Only transport one symptomatic client (and their escort) at a time to maintain isolation of the client.

Supplies

Stock each medical transport vehicle with:

- At least two bottles of alcohol-based hand rub (60%-90% alcohol) - one for the driver and one for the client
- Procedure masks
- Garbage bin with liners and lid
- Supplies for cleaning and disinfecting
 - Cleaning and disinfection products
 - Disposable gloves
 - Gowns
 - Eye protection
 - Paper towels

Cleaning and Disinfection

(Note: please refer to your vehicle's and equipment's manufacturer instructions to determine what cleaning agents can be selected with the below recommendations to avoid damage)

Clean and disinfect vehicles after each client. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as:

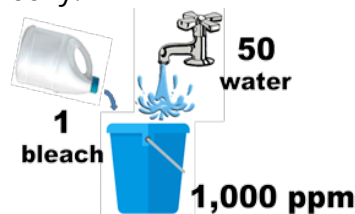
- Seats/seat back
- Door handles
- Overhead grab handles/railings
- Windows
- Lock buttons
- Seat belts/buckles
- Center console
- Arm rests

To reduce the spread of infection, both cleaning and disinfection are important to ensure that viruses are eliminated.

Cleaning refers to the removal of visible dirt, grime and impurities. Cleaning does not kill viruses but helps remove them from the surface. Cleaning should be conducted prior to disinfecting surfaces, especially if the surface is visibly soiled.

Disinfecting refers to using chemical to eliminate viruses on surfaces. This is most effective after surfaces are cleaned.

- Use a **disinfectant** that has a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and a virucidal claim follow the instructions on the label to disinfect effectively, or
 - Prepare a bleach water solution that is **1 part bleach and 50 parts water**. This solution can be kept in a labelled spray bottle. Prepare a new solution daily.



Examples of cleaning and disinfecting agents: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID-19_MOH_BCCDC_EnvironmentalCleaning.pdf

Cleaning and Disinfection Steps

1. Identify areas to be cleaned and disinfected.
2. Put on disposable gloves. Direct contact with body fluids should be avoided. During cleaning, avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, and mouth). When cleaning a vehicle after transport of a suspected COVID-19 case, also put on a procedural mask, gown, and eye protection. Closed shoes/boots should be worn at all times. For putting on PPE, please refer to http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_MOH_BCCDC_Donning.pdf
3. Clean visibly soiled surfaces with detergent/cleaner. Ensure only disposable cloths, such as paper towels or wipes, are used. Clean from low risk areas of contamination toward high risk.
 - a. If body fluids are present (nose/mouth excretions, blood, vomit, diarrhea, etc.) use paper towels to absorb prior to cleaning. Place used paper towels in garbage bin.
4. Apply the disinfectant to the surface and leave on as per manufacturers' instructions. (Some solutions may require the disinfectant to be left on the surface for a certain amount of time to be effective.) Allow to air dry with adequate ventilation.
5. Remove gloves, gown, perform hand hygiene, and remove eye protection and mask, and dispose in garbage bin. For steps in taking PPE off, please refer to http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_MOH_BCCDC_Doffing.pdf
6. Perform hand hygiene following cleaning and disinfection.

NOTE: Concerns regarding unprotected exposure should be directed to your employer.

Sources

BC Centre for Disease Control. Environmental Cleaning and Disinfectants for Physician's Offices. http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID-19_MOH_BCCDC_EnvironmentalCleaning.pdf

PHAC - Annex: Environmental Sanitation Practices for Airlines to Control the Spread of Novel Coronavirus

Provincial Infection Control Network of British Columbia. Environmental cleaning for prevention and control of infections in all healthcare settings and programs <https://www.picnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/British-Columbia-Best-Practices-for-Environmental-Cleaning-for-Prevention-and-Control-of-Infections-in-All-Healthcare-Settings-and-Programs.pdf>

Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331215/WHO-2019-nCov-IPCPPE_use-2020.1-eng.pdf

WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) technical guidance: Points of entry and mass gatherings <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/points-of-entry-and-mass-gatherings>