

Guideline for Social Distancing on Passenger Transport

Context and Purpose

The Queensland Health Home Confinement, Movement and Gathering Direction (Direction) requires that 'A person who is leaving their principal place of residence must practice social distancing while outside their principal place of residence, to the extent reasonably practicable'. Queensland Health references social distancing to include keeping at least 1.5 metres away from others as much as practicable.

This guideline intends to provide clarity to the providers of Passenger Transport, as well as customers, regarding the application of the social distancing requirements whilst on the passenger transport network.

For the purposes of this guideline, Passenger Transport includes Public and Personalised transport. Public transport is an essential service and includes services for urban bus, school bus, train, ferry and tram across SEQ and Regional Queensland. Personalised transport includes taxis, limousines and ride-share vehicles.

Please note: The driver of a public transportation vehicle is not responsible for the decisions that individuals make around leaving their homes.

Public Transport

It is not practical to provide a defined distance for physical separation while travelling on public transport services.

Customers will need to take personal responsibility and apply common sense to support social distancing measures.

The following principles should be applied across all public transport:

Principle 1 – Support social distancing where practicable to minimise risks to community health

In line with the Direction, Delivery Partners and customers should ensure that to the extent practicable, space is maintained between customers from different household groups to minimise risks to community health.

Customers should continue to board at the rear door of multi-door bus fleet, unless requiring assistance.

The front seats on buses should continue to be left vacant, to maximise the distance between staff and customers.

Designated space for staff should be maintained on ferries.

Depending on the mode of public transport, it may be necessary to provide specific information for Delivery Partner staff or customers about how to maximise social distancing on services, stops or stations. If providing specific information, it should be consistent with any relevant health directives and these principles.

Principle 2 – Managing peak period travel

Where possible, Delivery Partners are expected to schedule larger vehicles at peak periods on busier routes to meet travel demand whilst supporting social distancing recommendations.

Customers will be encouraged to travel outside of peak periods to manage demand across the public transport network.

It may be necessary for public transport staff to limit the number of customers from different household groups at stops or stations and while on-board services.

Delivery Partners should prioritise available capacity to customers with special needs, vulnerable people or unaccompanied children.

Principle 3 – Cleaning and personal hygiene

Existing measures that are currently in place to support the health and wellbeing of staff and customers should continue, including:

- regular sanitisation of vehicles
- frequent cleaning of hands with liquid soap and water or alcohol based hand rub in line with health guidelines
- rear door boarding on multi-door bus fleet (where possible)
- cashless operations on go card enabled services

Staff or customers may choose to wear face masks, but there is currently no requirement to do so.

School Services

Following the re-commencement of regular schooling, children attending school classes will be exempt from the requirements for social distancing.

While travelling to and from school on dedicated school transport services (which transport only school children), these services are not required to include any specific measures for social distancing.

Personalised Transport (taxis, limousines and ride-share)

Passengers should choose seating positions that maximise the distance between themselves and the driver.

For example:

- a single passenger should use the rear passenger-side seat;
- avoid having three passengers in the back of a vehicle – depending on size of the vehicle; and
- multiple passengers should use the rear seats first, with the front passenger seat only used when no other seats are available.

Guideline Review

Additional measures may be introduced in line with Queensland Health advice to support the transition to full recovery of services in the community. As advice changes, we will update this guideline or communicate through contract managers.