



No. SO (EP&C) 1-8/2020
GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
PRIMARY & SECONDARY HEALTHCARE
DEPARTMENT

Dated Lahore the 12th August, 2020

To

1. The Secretary to Govt of Punjab, Transport Department
2. All Commissioners in the Punjab
3. All Deputy Commissioners in the Punjab
4. All Chief Executive District Officers District Health Authorities, Punjab

Subject: **SOPs TO PREVENT COVID-19 SPREAD WHILE RESUMPTION OF URBAN AND LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

On the recommendations of Technical Working Group (TWG), Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) is pleased to issue following 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) for resumption of urban and local public transport including metro bus service, speedo bus service, buses, mini buses, wagons and ride hailing service in the province:

1. Basic Principle

COVID-19 is a highly transmissible disease which spreads through respiratory droplets produced during coughing, sneezing and talking of the infected persons who can be asymptomatic as well. These droplets may contaminate surrounding surfaces and hands. Touching eyes, mouth and nose with contaminated hands may transmit the virus. Public movement and interaction while using local transport including metro bus service, speedo bus service and ride hailing service are prone to close contact, surface sharing and at high risk of infection spread. There is dire need to ensure compliance to COVID-19 prevention key principles in true letter and spirit: -

a. **Hand Hygiene**

- (1) Transport office staff, ticketing staff, transport vehicle crew and passengers should be advised for frequent hand wash with soap and water for 40 seconds or rub with >60% alcohol-based sanitizer for 20 seconds.

- (2) Staff, crew and passengers should be advised to avoid touching surfaces unnecessarily, if touched, practicing hand hygiene is essential, especially after touching shared surfaces like door/gate handles/knobs, standing support pipes/straps, seat belt buckles & latches inside the transport vehicles and furniture, chair arms, tables, computer equipment, audio/video equipment, tools/devices, currency exchange, ticket verification and other communal use items at stations and terminals.
- (3) Principle of "**SANITIZE HANDS AT BOARDING AND ALIGHT**" should be strongly advocated to ensure hand hygiene before riding and immediate on leaving the vehicle.
- (4) Ensure availability of functional wash basin, toilet and soap at bus terminals.
- (5) Maintain sufficient stock of hand sanitizers at bus terminal, transport office, ticket counters and within transport vehicle for provision to staff and passengers as per need.

b. **Respiratory Etiquettes**

- (1) Principle of **NO MASK NO ENTRY** should be strictly implemented. All transport office staff, transport vehicle crew and passengers should wear face mask/covering.
- (2) Avoid touching and exchanging/sharing of face mask/covering.
- (3) Wash/sanitize hands if contaminated while coughing/sneezing or touching mask.
- (4) Maintain sufficient stock of masks at bus terminals, ticket counters and within transport vehicles for provision to staff and passengers.

c. **Physical (Social) Distancing**

- (1) Maintain inter-person spatial distance of 6 feet at platforms, in waiting and ticketing areas of bus stops, bus stations, bus depots, bus terminals. Floor marking for social distancing at entry and waiting area should be practiced.
- (2) Ensure queue management and social distancing discipline while boarding and alight.
- (3) Any unnecessary physical contact, handshake and hugging among passengers and staff must be avoided.



- (4) Limit the passenger occupancy to 50% of total capacity for the transport vehicles where passengers are carried in seats, while up to 40% of total capacity where passengers are allowed to stand inside the vehicle like metro bus service. Depute staff who ensure compliance to the permissible occupancy in metro bus services.
- (5) In case of buses/vehicles with two doors, allow boarding and alighting of passengers through separate doors to maintain social distancing.
- (6) In case of buses/vehicle with single door, allow alighting first then board the passengers. Increase the stopover time of buses on terminals.
- (7) In buses/vehicles having full capacity seats, ensure passengers sit on alternative chairs while leaving adjacent, front, and back seats vacant. Seats numbers to be used should be marked with "X" sign in red or yellow.
- (8) Buses designed for standing travel like metro-bus service. Passengers should be advised to stand at 3 feet distance from other fellow passengers and perch support pipe/strap strongly to maintain balance and absorb shocks without physical contact with fellows.
- (9) Remove additional straps from the support pipes for time being. Floor marking inside busses should be preferred.
- (10) Seats for senior citizens, women and persons with disabilities must be earmarked and should not be used by others.
- (11) Ride hailing services vehicles should carry maximum two passengers.
- (12) Vehicles involved in ride hailing services should also be cleaned and disinfected after every ride.
- (13) Online ticketing should be preferred over walk-in window ticketing.

d. Cleanliness & Disinfection

- (1) Ensure regular cleanliness and disinfection of bus stations, bus stops, bus depots, bus terminals and transport vehicles.
- (2) Priority areas for frequent cleanliness at terminals and platforms include floor, furniture, equipment, doors (knobs & handles), rest rooms, wash basins, toilets, seat covers, support pipes/straps, etc.



- (3) Carpeting or mat cover of floors is not permissible in offices, ticketing rooms, terminal waiting halls, etc. Leather seat covers should be preferred over fabric.
- (4) Buses/transport vehicles should be cleaned and disinfected by following standard procedure at end of every trip. Vehicle gate/doors, seats, standing support pipes/straps, seat belts (buckles & latches), and floor should be cleaned and disinfected properly.
- (5) Follow standard procedure i.e. clean the surface to make it dirt/dust free then wipe with 1% freshly prepared sodium hypochlorite solution. Fumigation, spray or showering of disinfectant to disinfect vehicles is not recommended.
- (6) Cleanliness and disinfection staff should wear mask and gloves.
- (7) Deploy additional janitorial staff to ensure cleanliness and disinfection of buses/transport vehicles at the end of each trip.
- (8) Ensure adequate ventilation of waiting halls at terminals.
- (9) Ensure regular exchange of fresh air in air-conditioned halls and frequent cleanliness & disinfection of air conditioner filters.
- (10) Windows of transport vehicles should remain open for ventilation.
- (11) Staff engaged in currency exchange/collection and ticketing should use wet sponge to turn leaves while counting currency bills and dispensing tickets. Use of mouth saliva for this purpose is not permissible.
- (12) No sharing of cellphones, pens, stationary, cameras or other devices is allowed unless necessarily required and wiped with alcohol (spirit swab) before sharing.
- (13) Communal towel use at terminal washrooms/toilets is not permissible.
- (14) Ensure continual cleanliness and disinfection of communal use wash basins and toilets. Full time cleaner should be present at the facility to keep it clean and disinfected.
- (15) Ensure adequate arrangements for collection & disposal of waste.

2. Health Status and Awareness

Health status and awareness regarding COVID-19 prevention requires high importance for self-protection and taking care of others.



a. Health Status

- (1) Fever with cough and sore throat are considered symptoms of COVID-19. If anybody is identified/reported with these symptoms, please call 1033 for guidance.
- (2) Ensure temperature checking with thermal scanners at entry points.
- (3) Entrants who suffer from fever and cough should be immediately separated and referred for medical checkup. Management should have liaison with ambulance service (Rescue 1122) to shift the patient when required.

b. Covid-19 Awareness Activities

- (1) Ensure display of awareness materials on COVID-19 prevention at terminal entries, waiting halls, platforms, bus panels, tickets, etc.
- (2) Organize training of transport office staff and vehicle crew to know and monitor compliance of COVID-19 SOPs across all levels of services and routes.
- (3) Awareness messages should be aired through bus audio/video caste player.



CAPTAIN (R) MUHAMMAD USMAN
Secretary

No.& Date Even

A copy is forwarded for information and further necessary action to:

1. Minister for SHC&ME and P&SHC Departments Punjab.
2. Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab.
3. Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Punjab.
4. Secretary, SHC&ME Department, Government of Punjab.
5. Special Secretaries, SHC&ME and P&SHC Departments
6. Additional Secretaries (Tech), SHC&ME and P&SHC Departments.
7. Director General Health Services, Punjab, Lahore.
8. All Divisional Directors Health Services in Punjab.
9. Master File.