

Coronavirus / COVID-19

Guidance for Community Transport

Last updated on 24 March 2020

This guidance was last updated on 24 March with:

- Advice following the 23 March announcement on stricter social distancing measures.
 - Guidance on using your services to make home delivery of food, goods and medicines.
 - A joint message from CTA and the Trussell Trust about the opportunities for community transport providers to support local foodbanks.
 - Information on our next advice drop-in call for members.
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CTA's approach to supporting our members

As the situation around COVID-19, more commonly known as coronavirus, develops we want to make sure that our members can access the guidance they need to understand any actions or precautions they might need to take.

As a large section of your passengers are older people and/or have long-term conditions, there is naturally concern about how you can best support people in your care.

To keep your service users and those that work and volunteer in community transport as safe as possible CTA has two priorities:

- Firstly, to ensure our members have access to the most up to date information from official sources. Recognising there are multiple sources of information, our aim is to bring it all together in one place on our website. We will update it whenever new information becomes available and inform members when these updates have been made. We will also make the date of any changes clearly visible on our website.
- Secondly, to encourage members to bring issues and questions to us and if we cannot answer them ourselves we will ensure that these are raised with the Department for Transport and other relevant public bodies.

You can find our most up to date guidance at cta.uk.org/covid19-guidance/

The CTA Advice Service

CTA Advice Service: The CTA team are currently working remotely, so to ensure you speak to the right person first time, please email advice@ctauk.org to receive a call back for advice and support. Our advice service operates 10:00 am – 4:00 pm Monday-Friday.

Advice Service Drop-in: due to the changing nature of the situation, our advice team will also be holding a weekly online drop-in where members can join a video call to talk to the team and each other about the latest guidance and ask any questions. [You can find a blog post about what we discussed at our first drop in session here](#) including what one community transport operator is doing to ensure their services continue after this situation has passed and how they're keeping in touch with their passengers to reduce loneliness and isolation.

The next call will be on Friday 27th March, from 11:00 – 12:00. If you're a community transport provider who relies heavily on income from fares, BSSG, and BSOG claims to keep your operations afloat, the dramatic reduction in passenger numbers will be severely affecting your cashflow. For many who deliver services on contracts for things like home-to-school transport and social services support, you are also probably seeing varying approaches from commissioners. If this is you, we would like you to join us on Friday's call. This session will help us to learn more about the issues you are facing and where you need us to help most so we can better represent you and the CT sector. With your input, we can build a more accurate picture of how these changes are affecting community transport. Civil servants in governments across the UK are keen to listen to what CT needs, which is very helpful in getting the support the sector needs to ensure we can deliver community transport long into the future.

If you want to join the next call please email advice@ctauk.org with the subject line 'Covid-19 weekly drop-in'.

Latest Information

UK Government announce stricter social-distancing measures

On Monday 23 March, the UK Government outlined strict new measures to tackle the spread of coronavirus, including a ban on public gatherings of more than two people. [You can find the Government's full guidance on these measures here.](#)

Does this mean I should cancel my usual services?

The latest guidance from the UK Government is to avoid all but essential public transport (if you are a key worker, unable to work from home for example). This undoubtedly means that community transport cannot run the sorts of services they normally would and should not be transporting groups of passengers in their vehicles until the Government's guidance changes.

For members who are running, or considering running, services such as taking individuals to vital medical appointments for example, we would suggest you contact the health setting you would be taking people to for their input.

Can I use my vehicles to deliver shopping, transport food, medicines or other goods?

Many community transport providers are changing their services to support passengers who are self-isolating or staying in their homes due to the most recent Government guidance. This includes taking shopping to those who can't get to the shops, or working with their local foodbank to take deliveries out into the community. If this is something you want to do, and are able to do safely, we've published guidance on using your vehicles for delivery purposes, as well as on working with your local foodbank, which you can find below.

Am I allowed to leave the house to operate/coordinate any services we're running?

According to the Government's guidance, if you operate key public services, such as "charities and workers delivering key front line services" or "sale and delivery, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods" then you are classified as a key worker.

The 23 March guidance from the government on staying at home states that you can travel "too and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home." So if you can work from home, you should, but if you need to operate essential services such as the delivery of food to vulnerable people then you are permitted to travel to and from work.

Please note this is with the proviso that you do not have to self-isolate due to yourself or anyone in your household displaying symptoms of coronavirus or coming into contact with someone who has symptoms, or the virus itself. If anyone involved in running your services should be self-isolating due to these reasons, they should not be coming into work.

Using your services to make home delivery of food, goods and medicines

If you are looking at the possibility of using your vehicles to make home deliveries of food, goods and medicines, whether as part of a wider programme or just on an individual basis, this is something that you can do under the most recent guidance, providing you are doing it safely and legally.

CTA has been working with John Taylor and John Atkins of the TAS Partnership to put together guidance on using community transport services to make home deliveries for those who have no other means of getting what they need. The guidance looks at the legal side of operating these sorts of services on section 19 and 22 permits as well as information on insurance, safety when transporting food, and other practical considerations.

[You can download the advice here.](#)

Opportunities to work with your local foodbank

One avenue where community transport providers could use their services to get food and essential supplies into their community is by working with their local foodbank.

CTA have been working with the Trussell Trust, a national charity that supports 1,200 foodbank centres which provide emergency food and practical support to people in crisis. Getting involved with your local foodbank is a clear and tangible way that community transport providers can use their resources to get food out into their community, and has the benefit of doing so with the Trust's framework and safeguards in place, as well as in a situation where money doesn't change hands. [Click here to download a letter from CTA and the Trussell Trust with more details about how you can get involved.](#)

What we're working on

We're listening to our members about the support and resources they want to help get them through this difficult period and will be regularly updating our guidance to reflect this. At the moment we are working on guidance looking at places you can go for financial support, as well as providing examples and case studies of the sorts of services detailed above, that community transport providers are currently running.

General information and guidance

Where to go for official guidance

Our advice as your membership body is to always take guidance from the experts. The governments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland will be working closely with the UK Government. Our main references points will be the official advice from the UK Government and NHS England:

- [GOV.UK: latest information and advice](#)
- [NHS: latest information and advice](#)

If you work in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland you may also wish to check if there is any additional advice by public bodies in your nation.

- Wales: gov.wales/coronavirus-covid19
- Scotland: gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/
- Northern Ireland: publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus

General advice for understanding the symptoms

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has coronavirus:

- A cough
- A high temperature
- Shortness of breath

If you are worried about symptoms please call NHS 111 or go to [the NHS 111 coronavirus website](#). Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

Taking precautions

- Wash your hands often, with soap (or soap substitutes) and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. This is particularly important after taking public transport so make sure you remind your passengers of the need to do this.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. You can download a ['Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' poster](#) for your workplace from the NHS.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Cleaning your vehicles

- You may already have procedures in place to ensure the interiors of your vehicles are kept clean. You should consider whether you need to increase the frequency of your cleaning regime and take any additional measures.
- Focus especially on areas of the vehicle which receive the most regular contact with and including:
 - Door handles
 - Handrails
 - Head rests
 - Seat grab handles
 - Seat backs
 - Seat belts (tongue/buckle/webbing.)

- When cleaning your vehicle, there are a few things to bear in mind:
 - Using too much water/liquid can make interior fabrics damp, which will increase the likelihood that germs will collect and thrive. This can be overcome by being careful with the amount of water/disinfectant being used and maintaining adequate ventilation both during cleaning and vehicle operation. Adhesives can also fail with excessive cleaning.
 - Make sure wet floors and surfaces are dried before passengers board.

What to do in the workplace

The latest advice from the government is to work from home if possible. We would encourage this advice to be followed, but understand that this is less easy for community transport providers, so there are a number of precautions to take if you are still working in an office environment:

- Provide clear information using communication channels including posters and email. You may wish to display information in your vehicles for your passengers as well.
- Handwashing facilities should be available and well supplied. More regular handwashing may require more supplies. Provide hand sanitiser, tissues and cleaning products around your buildings for staff and visitors. GOV.UK has published clear and [printable instructions on handwashing techniques](#) which can be displayed around the workplace.
- Cleaning regimes: Viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to eight hours. Frequently clean key areas including keyboards and door handles.
- There is government advice on [social care](#) and [educational settings](#) you may want to review if they apply to your organisation.

What other advice is out there

As mentioned above, it's important to keep up to date with the latest advice – in the first instance make sure you keep up to date with official advice from the Government, and the NHS:

- [GOV.UK: latest information and advice](#)
- [NHS: latest information and advice](#)

NCVO have also produced advice and resources for voluntary organisations concerned about coronavirus including risk management processes and organisational planning:

- [NCVO: latest information and advice](#)

There is also specific advice and information from various other charities:

- [Diabetes UK](#) has provided an updated information page for people living with diabetes.
- [Asthma UK](#) has released a blog post with advice for people with asthma.
- [The British Heart Foundation](#) has published guidance for people with health problems.

- [The National Eczema Society](#) has offered advice on handwashing techniques for people with eczema and other skin conditions.
 - [SignHealth](#) has created British Sign Language (BSL) videos to help deaf BSL users either working in charities or receiving support.
 - [Carers UK](#) has produced recommendations for carers.
 - [Full Fact](#) has generated a fact check page on covid-19 to help dispel any false information.
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Further information

This guidance is not exhaustive, and ultimately it's up to you to follow the advice from the official public bodies and use your own judgement on operating services. We will continue to be monitoring the situation and will update this guidance when new information becomes available.

If you have any specific questions relating to coronavirus and your organisation please email advice@ctauk.org.

Stay in touch with CTA

As we said at the outset, CTA is encouraging members to bring issues and questions to us and if we cannot answer them ourselves we will ensure that these are raised with the Department for Transport and other relevant public bodies

Things you may wish to tell us, include:

- Whether any public bodies you contract with or work with have placed any additional requirements on you in relation to managing risks associated with Covid-19.
 - If you are being given any advice that contradicts anything in the formal, official guidance.
 - If restrictions on operating your services are affecting your ability to fulfil any contractual obligations, which may then impact on your funding.
 - If staff and volunteer absences are affecting your ability to run services.
 - If there is any additional advice you feel you need and cannot find, please email advice@ctauk.org.
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