

## Procedure on wearing personal protective equipment in the event of a pandemic

**Procedure Owner:**

**Bruno Riendeau**  
Safety & Environment

**Effective date:**

July 8, 2020

### 1 OBJECTIVE

1. Provide information on the protection offered from wearing different type of personal protective equipment.
2. Provide the preventive and hygiene measures to be implemented by employees who wear personal protective equipment and additional measure to take to protect others around you, especially in situations where physical distancing guidelines cannot be maintained.
3. Provide instructions on the use, handling, maintenance and disposal of personal protective equipment.

### 2 SCOPE

This procedure applies:

- During a pandemic with an infectious agent as declared by the World Health Organization; or a state of health emergency as declared by a federal, provincial or municipal public health authority.
- To all VIA Rail Canada employees
- To all VIA Rail passengers
- To all contractors, suppliers and visitor accessing a VIA Rail owned property.

### 3 DEFINITIONS

<b>Employees</b>	All employees, including full-time, part-time, contracted employees, consultants and students / interns that work from time to time for VIA Rail.
<b>Self-monitoring</b>	Monitor yourself for symptoms of contamination by an infectious agent (e.g. COVID-19) <i>Note: Symptoms of infectious agents are those determined by the Public Health Agency of Canada.</i>
<b>Travelers</b>	Travelers that are presenting themselves at a railway station for travel in a VIA Rail train (exclude an employee of the company who works on board the railway equipment)
<b>Contractor</b>	All contractors that come on site on VIA property, maintenance centers, stations, and offices to render services or deliver goods.
<b>Pandemic</b>	Outbreak of any disease, such as typhoid or influenza, on a large or global scale



## 4 ROLES & RESPONSABILITIES

- Employees**
- Follow the recommendations, procedures and guidelines of public health agencies and the employer to ensure your health and safety and that of others;
  - Contact your supervisor immediately and follow the self-isolation procedure if you develop symptoms associated with an infectious agent (e.g., VIDOC-19);
  - Implement preventive and hygienic measures;
  - Understand and apply these instructions when wearing personal protective equipment.
- Immediate supervisor**
- Ensure that employees wear the necessary PPE when required
  - Communicate these instructions to all employees.
- Contractor/Visitor**
- Follow the recommendations, procedures and guidelines of public health agencies and the employer to ensure your health and safety and that of others;
  - Contact your VIA Rail Representative immediately and implement applicable preventive and hygienic measures;
  - Ensure that you know and understand the protection offered and the risks associated with wearing PPE; and
  - Understand and apply these instructions when wearing personal protective equipment.
  - Ensure to have the proper PPE required

## 5 GUIDELINES

### 5.1 Preventive and hygiene measures to be prioritized before applying PPE

1. All employees must apply the following preventive and hygienic measures as a priority to prevent the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19):
  - **Self-monitoring and self-isolation**
  - **Physical (social) distancing**
  - **Hygiene and sanitary measures**
2. Where all these measures are applied, the wearing of personal protective equipment is not mandatory but optional. Otherwise, PPE must be applied.

*\*Note: Wearing personal protective equipment, e.g. masks, does not replace preventive and hygienic measures, however it reduces the risk of transmission in cases where hygienic measures can't always be applied.*

### 5.2 Understanding how the respiratory infectious disease spreads

1. Viruses are most often spread from a person infected by:
  - a. Breathing droplets generated when you cough or sneeze;
  - b. Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
  - c. Touching an object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands;
  - d. Close contact with an infected person.



## 5.3 Description of the protection offered from wearing Personal Protective Equipment

### 5.3.1 Masks:

1. When properly worn, wearing a mask can reduce the spread of a person's respiratory infectious droplets.

*\* Note: There is no clear evidence that wearing a mask and/or visor will protect you from the virus, but wearing a mask can help protect others around you.*

#### Risks of wearing a mask:

1. Wearing a mask can help prevent the spread of some respiratory diseases, however it can also increase the risk of infection if proper hygiene measures are not applied and it is not worn/handled properly, improperly discarded or washed inappropriately.
2. Masks may also cause other occupational and operational hazards and risks, such as reduced vision, distraction, impact on the ability to communicate clearly, or interference with other PPE.

### 5.3.2 Face Shield


1. Wearing a face shield can reduce the spread of a person's own respiratory droplets, however it is not as effective as the mask.
2. In the event of a mask shortage, the face shield can reduce the spread of droplets.
3. Wearing the face shield with the mask offer an additional protection to minimize the risk of contamination.
4. At the moment, only specific positions within VIA as well as passengers are allowed to use face shields as per established instructions.

#### Risks of wearing a face shield:

1. Wearing a face shield can help prevent the spread of some respiratory diseases, however it can also increase the risk of infection if proper hygiene measures are not applied and it is not worn/handled properly, improperly discarded or washed inappropriately.
2. Face shield may also cause other occupational and operational hazards and risks, such as reduced vision, distraction, impact on the ability to communicate clearly, or interference with other PPE.

### 5.3.3 Gloves

1. When properly worn, the glove protects the user by forming a barrier that prevents potential exposure to infectious diseases such as Covid19.
2. Gloves should only be used when contact with a potentially contaminated person or object is inevitable.

- 
3. In order to be effective and to avoid cross-contamination the gloves must be immediately disposed of once the task is completed.

#### **Risks of wearing gloves:**

1. Wearing gloves can help prevent the spread of some respiratory diseases, however it can also increase the risk of infection if proper hygiene measures are not applied and it is not worn/handled properly, improperly discarded or washed inappropriately.

*\*Note: Employees must ensure that a workplace hazard analysis is conducted to ensure that the PPE chosen does not interfere with required personal protective equipment or cause a secondary hazard.*

### **5.4 Who must wear personal protective equipment and when**

---

#### **5.4.1 Business Resumption Phase 1 (24-58% of normal operations/service level)**

#### **EMPLOYEES**

##### **Masks**

1. All employees must wear a mask, when in the work place, on-board the train or on a site owned or operated by VIA Rail in the following conditions:
  - a. Any time the physical distancing of 2 metres is impossible to maintain and there is no additional mitigation measures in place defined in the physical distancing guidelines;
  - b. When working directly with customers;
  - c. When working directly in contact with a contaminated object/surfaces (e.g. cleaning procedures);
  - d. When moving from one place to another (hallways, elevators, stairs, paths, etc.) and the physical distancing of 2 metres can't be maintained, excluding punctual passing of a person and proper physical distancing can be applied;
  - e. When in an environment designed for work with or in presence of other persons.

*Note: It is a good practice to wear the mask on a continuous basis, as per the instructions in Appendix Y, when in an environment where the physical distancing of 2 m. is subject to be broken frequently, to avoid contamination of the mask from frequent handling, as described in section 5.3.1.*

*Note: Employees must ensure that a job hazard analysis is performed to ensure that the mask does not interfere with required personal protective equipment or cause a secondary hazard.*

Refer to Appendix A for instructions for the use of disposable masks  
Refer to Appendix B for instructions on the use of washable masks



**2. Wearing a mask is not required in the following conditions:**

- a. When physical barriers or other physical distancing measures are in place;
- b. When the person is alone in an environment and there is sufficient time to put a mask on before the physical distancing of 2m. can't be maintained;
- c. If you are working alone with no other person present, however a mask must be readily accessible if the working conditions change;
- d. When in-charge and when operating a locomotive (locomotive engineers or locomotive attendants in the cab of the locomotive);
- e. When eating and drinking;
- f. When travelling alone in a vehicle;
- g. When a medical condition prevents you from wearing a mask or when the mask may interfere with required personal protective equipment or cause a secondary hazard

**Gloves:**

**All employees (in the workplace) must wear gloves when:**

1. Working directly in contact with a contaminated object/surfaces (e.g. cleaning a table; changing a filter).
2. Have a direct contact with a person (e.g. assisting a person to get onboard, give medical assistance).
3. Distribute/use any object or equipment to/with another person (e.g. distributing mask to other persons, use POS equipment).

Note: Refer to Appendix D for the "Reference table for wearing PPE during specific tasks/activities"

**CONTRACTORS, SUPPLIERS AND VISITORS**

1. All contractors and visitors (in the workplace) must wear a mask when the physical distancing of 2 metres is impossible to maintain and there is no additional mitigation measures in place defined in the physical distancing guidelines.
2. Wearing a mask is required in the same conditions as described in section 5.4.1.1 and 5.4.1.2.
3. The person responsible for the contractor, supplier or visitor is responsible to advise them of the social distancing and wearing of a mask requirements (VIA Rail will not be providing masks to contractors and visitors who are not complying with this requirement)

**VIA employees and contractors operating in a third party facility:**

1. VIA Rail will comply with local COVID19 policies when they are existing in third party facilities. Approved and recognized requirements from main third parties will be added to this guideline.



## VIA employees and contractors when on Canadian National (CN) site:

Note: This section is in accordance with CN's policy. This applies to any employees who must access CN railway properties.

1. Employees who must access Canadian National (CN) railway properties and rights-of-way, including common areas, rest areas, locker rooms, kitchens, offices, reservation rooms, bathrooms, dormitories, hotels and work camps, must wear a surgical type mask provided by VIA Rail under the following conditions:
  - a. As soon as you access it, unless you are in an environment where you are alone, and you have enough time to put your mask on before someone comes within 6 feet or 2 meters of you;
  - b. As soon as you find yourself in an environment designed for work with others, even if you are the only person there;
  - c. As soon as you move from one place to another (hallways, elevators, stairs, paths, etc.).
2. Wearing the Mask is not required under the following conditions:
  - a. If you are working alone in the field with no other personnel present - but you must have your mask on hand should your working conditions change;
  - b. When you eat or drink;
  - c. When travelling alone in a vehicle
  - d. When covering your face would affect your health or be incompatible with your professional duties or would in any way interfere with your personal safety.

Note: Employees must ensure that a job hazard analysis is performed to ensure that the mask does not interfere with required personal protective equipment or cause a secondary hazard.

## PASSENGERS

Note: This section is in accordance with Transport Canada's recommendation. This applies to any passenger present in a VIA Rail station and travelling on board the trains.

1. Passengers are **required** to wear a mask or face covering in a VIA Rail station and on-board the train if physical distancing requirements of 2m. cannot be maintained.
2. Passengers must have their own mask or face covering. If they do not, VIA RAIL will provide a disposable mask for the duration of the trip.
3. Passengers must be advised that VIA RAIL will not accept personal protective equipment displaying offensive pictures, messages or design according to the VIA RAIL Policy.
4. Passengers must be notified of these requirements prior to booking a ticket, in the station and at the time of boarding the train.

Refer to Appendix C for instructions for the use of disposable masks by passengers



## 5.5 Storage, distribution, disposal of PPE

---

### 5.5.1 Storage / Handling

1. Personal Protective Equipment must be stored in such a way as to avoid contamination with other person or with other objects.
  - Avoid unnecessary exposure
  - Avoid putting in your pocket

Refer to the specific instruction to properly use your personal protective equipment.

*Note: It is sometimes more dangerous to wear poorly maintained or defective PPE than not wearing any. Workers have a false sense of security and believe they are protected when in reality they are not.*

### 5.5.2 Distribution/Dispensing

1. The supervisors, lead hands and the in charges will be responsible to provide the proper PPE when required for the employee.
2. The PPE must be provided in a such way that the risk of contamination is controlled. The options are either:
  - The PPE must be in a sealed packaging either as a single or multiple unit or;
  - Provide a PPE dispenser or;
  - Before distributing the personal protective equipment, the employee must wear a mask and gloves to avoid to contamination of the distributed PPE.
3. When distributing the masks to the passengers the employee must respect the hygiene procedure and wear a mask and gloves.

### 5.5.3 Disposal

1. A container must be available for the disposal of disposable protective equipment. This container must be:
  - Identify for this purpose (put the used equipment in this container).
  - Resealable with a lid or with the use of a sealable bag
  - Easily emptied once full (example, trash bag)
2. For washable equipment, the employee is responsible to properly clean and wash their own personal protective equipment after used. The employee must carry a sealable container to store the used PPE. Refer to instructions in appendix.

## 5.6 Poster – Visual Standards

---

1. Posters must be affixed where the wearing of required PPE is mandatory, along with the method on the application of protective equipment in every entry point. The sign must be visible and blue.

Refer to Appendix E for the Wearing of a Mask poster.



## 5.7 Medical condition

---

### Employee

1. If an employee has a medical condition that prevent him from wearing the proper PPE, VIA RAIL will take appropriate measure to accommodate according to the type of work, the location and the risks associated with the task which can include:
  - a. Providing an alternative model of PPE that would be appropriate despite the condition
  - b. Assign the other person to a task where PPE are not required;
  - c. Apply accommodation options as available.

*Note: The medical condition must be certified by a doctor and the certificate must be provided to the Disability Management and Wellness team ([disability@viarail.ca](mailto:disability@viarail.ca))*

### Passenger

1. A mask or face covering is not required and must not be worn when the following conditions apply:
  - a. Infant under two years-old and small children who are not able to maintain a face covering during travel;
  - b. Persons with health conditions - any person whose medical condition results in trouble breathing unrelated to COVID-19 or renders them unable to snugly fit a face covering over their nose and mouth;
  - c. A person who is unconscious or anyone unable to remove them without assistance;
  - d. Safety endangered – any situation where wearing a face covering would impede personal safety (including when eating or drinking); and,
  - e. Subject to authorities – any situation where a local authority requires that an individual nose and/or mouth be visible and/or exposed.

## 6 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

---

### 6.1 Appendices

---

The procedure is supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix A:** Instruction on wearing the disposable mask - Employees  
**Appendix B:** Instruction on wearing the washable mask - Employees  
**Appendix C:** Instruction on wearing the disposable mask - Passengers  
**Appendix D:** Reference table for wearing PPE during specific tasks/activities  
**Appendix E:** Poster on Wearing a mask

### 6.2 Associated procedures and guidelines

---

- a. Self-isolation procedure
- b. Hygiene and sanitation procedure
- c. Physical distancing procedure





## 6.3 Resources

Public Health Agency of Canada Site.

Standards, Equity and Occupational Health and Safety Commission.

Public Health Agency of Canada April 2020

## 7 REFERENCES

- <https://www.cchst.ca/oshanswers/prevention/ppe>
- <https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-canada.html>

## 8 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Questions regarding the interpretation of this procedure must be addressed to the Safety & Environment Team, specifically to the attention of:

Gerardo Calitri  
*Advisor, Health, Safety & Environment*  
416 427-1963  
[Gerardo\\_Calitri@viarail.ca](mailto:Gerardo_Calitri@viarail.ca)

Sébastien Bouvier  
*Advisor, Health, Safety & Environment*  
514 814-7322  
[Sebastien\\_bouvier@viarail.ca](mailto:Sebastien_bouvier@viarail.ca)

## 9 APPROVAL AND REVISION HISTORY

This procedure is to be reviewed by the Procedure Owner every year.

### 9.1 Approval

This procedure (version 1.0) is approved and effective as of the date indicated below:

Bruno Riendeau, Safety & Environment  
**Approving Authority**

July 8, 2020  
**Date**

### 9.2 Revision History

Version	Description of major change(s)	Effective Date
1.0	<i>New Procedure</i>	July 8, 2020