

Procedure concerning the wearing of masks or face covering by employees

Procedure owner:

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Safety & Environment

Effective date:

April 24, 2020

1 OBJECTIVE

Provide information on the protection from wearing a mask and the risks related.

Provide the preventive and hygiene measures to be implemented by employees who choose to wear a mask as an additional measure to take to protect others around you, especially in situations where physical distancing guidelines cannot be maintained.

Provide instructions to support the updated position from VIA Rail to encourage employees to wear a mask to reduce the spread of infectious respiratory droplets and protect people from the wearer, following guidance from the Public Health Agency of Canada and Transport Canada.

2 SCOPE

This procedure applies:

- During a pandemic with an infectious agent as declared by the World Health Organization; or a state of sanitary emergency as declared by a federal, provincial or municipal public health authority.
- To VIA Rail Canada frontline Customer Experience and Transportation employees when at the workplace.

3 DEFINITIONS

Employee All employees, including full-time, part-time, contracted employees, consultants and students/interns that work from time to time for VIA Rail

Self-monitoring Monitor yourself for symptoms of contamination to an infectious agent.

Note: The symptoms to infectious agents are those determined by the Public Health Agency of Canada

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Employees**
- Follow the recommendations, procedures and guidelines of public health agencies and the employer to ensure their health and safety and that of others;
 - Contact your manager immediately and apply the self-isolation procedure if you experience symptoms associated with an infectious agent (e.g., COVID-19);
 - Implement the prevention and hygiene measures;
 - Ensure they are familiar with and understand the protection offered from and the risks of wearing a mask; and
 - Understand and apply these instructions when wearing a mask.

- Immediate Supervisor**
- Encourage employees to wear a mask;
 - Communicate these instructions to all employees.



5 PROCEDURE

5.1 Protection and risks from wearing a mask*

How coronavirus spreads

1. The viruses are most commonly spread from an infected person through:
 - a. Respiratory droplets generated when you cough or sneeze;
 - b. Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
 - c. Touching something with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands;
 - d. Close contact with an infected person.

Protection offered from wearing a mask:

1. When worn properly, a person wearing a mask or face covering can reduce the spread of his or her own infectious respiratory droplets

Note:

There is no clear evidence that wearing a mask will protect you from the virus, however wearing a mask may help protect others around you.

Risks from wearing a mask:

1. Wearing a mask can help prevent the spread of some respiratory illnesses, but it may also increase the risk of infection if not worn/handled properly or discarded improperly.
2. Masks may also cause other occupational and operational hazards and risks such as reduced eyesight, distraction, impacting the ability to communicate clearly or interfering with other PPE.

Note: Employees are responsible to ensure an on-the-job hazard analysis is performed to ensure the mask does not interfere with the required Personal Protective Equipment or cause a secondary hazard.

* Source: Public Health Agency of Canada (April 2020)

5.2 Preventive and hygiene measures*

All employees must apply the following preventive and hygiene measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Self-monitoring and self-isolation:

1. Employees must self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough or difficulty breathing);
2. If the employee is displaying signs or symptoms of COVID-19, he/she must refrain from reporting to work and stay home to avoid spreading illness to others;
3. If you develop even mild symptoms while at your workplace, separate yourself from others and go home, avoiding the use of public transit (e.g. buses, train, taxi) if possible;
4. The employee must follow the *Self-Isolation Procedure*, immediately contacting his/her manager.

Physical (social) distancing:

1. Physical (social) distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak by minimizing minimize close contact with others, including:

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- a. Keeping a distance of at least 2 metres between you, your coworkers, customers and the public;
 - b. Increasing distance between desks, tables and workstations, when possible;
 - c. Rethinking activities (methods, timing, sequence, etc.) that require close physical proximity or contact with people, such as team meetings, safety briefings, work activities;
 - d. Limiting contact with people;
 - e. Limiting any contacts closer than 2 metres to the shortest time possible;
 - f. Avoiding crowded places and non-essential gatherings;
 - g. Avoiding common greetings, such as handshakes.

Hygiene:

1. Proper hygiene can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others:
 - a. Keep your hands clean;
 - b. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 30 seconds;
 - c. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content if soap and water are not available;
 - d. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand;
 - e. Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards;
 - f. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth;
 - g. Avoid touching surfaces people often touch;
 - h. Instead of a handshake, give a friendly wave or elbow bump;
 - i. Use any necessary personal protective equipment, as directed;
 - j. Keep your environment clean;
 - k. Use appropriate products to clean and disinfect items like your desk, work surfaces, phones, keyboards and electronics, cash registers, keypads, elevator buttons, customer service counters more often, especially when visibly dirty;
 - l. If they can withstand the use of liquids for disinfection, frequently touched electronics such as phones, computers and other devices may be disinfected with 70% alcohol (e.g. alcohol prep wipes).

* Source: Public Health Agency of Canada (April 2020)

5.3 Who should wear a mask/When to wear a mask

Note:

In the context of the Public Health Agency of Canada recent positioning, VIA Rail recognizes that wearing a mask or facial covering can reduce transmission of the disease and protect people from the wearer. This is also in the context of strict application of the prevention and hygiene measures described above. In that regard, VIA Rail is encouraging frontline employees to wear mask. To enable this, VIA Rail will be providing masks from its limited inventory of surgical mask in the transition to a more permanent solution being developed using other types of masks and for all employees.

Customer facing employees (Customer Experience and Transportation):

1. Employees that do not already have additional mitigation measures (eg. plexiglass) and/or cannot maintain the physical (social) distancing requirements of 2 metres are strongly encouraged to wear a VIA Rail provided surgical type mask.

Note: Employees are responsible to ensure an on-the-job hazard analysis is performed to ensure the mask does not interfere with the required Personal Protective Equipment or cause a secondary hazard.

5.4 Wearing a mask

How to wear a mask:

1. Before putting on your clean and dry mask, wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 30 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer; Remove eye glasses (if applicable);
2. Ensure hair is tied and secured from touching the front of the mask and away from your face;
3. Secure the elastic loops around your ears (remember to remove earrings, ear piercings or ear jewellery);
4. Cover your mouth and nose with the mask, make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask;
5. Ensure the mask is snug and comfortable against your face;
6. Place eye glasses;
7. Do not touch the front of the mask while you wear it;
8. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 30 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you accidentally touch your mask.

Steps to Put on a mask and eye protection



Adapted from Public Health Ontario

5.5 Removing and disposing of the mask

How to remove/throw away your mask:

1. Do not touch the front of your mask to remove it;
2. Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
3. Remove the elastic hoops of the mask from around your ears;
4. Hold only the loops and place the mask in a garbage bin with a lid and a liner;
5. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 30 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after you have discarded your mask;



More information about masks:

1. When a mask becomes damp, humid, soiled or contaminated, replace it with a new mask;
2. Do not re-use a single-use mask;
3. When worn in a continuous manner, a mask can be worn for a period of maximum 4 hours;
4. Clean and sanitize all items that come into contact with the mask e.g. cellphones, radios, microphones;
5. Practice social distancing while wearing a mask;
6. Avoid touching your nose, eyes, mouth or face when wearing a mask.

6 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

6.1 Appendices

The procedure is accompanied by the following appendices:

Appendix A: Poster: Wearing a mask

Appendix B: Storing, Packaging and Delivering Masks

6.2 Associated procedures and guidelines

- a. Self-Isolation Procedure

6.3 Resources

Public Health Agency of Canada site.

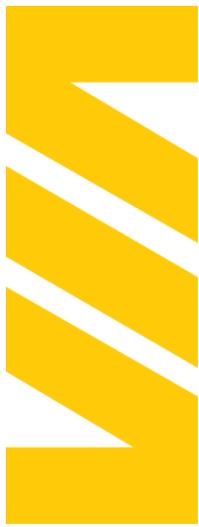
7 REFERENCES

- N/A

8 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Questions regarding the interpretation of this procedure should be referred to the Safety & Environment team, at the attention of:

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9 APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT HISTORY

The person responsible for the instrument must review it once a year.

9.1 Approval

Procedure version 1.0 has been approved and is effective as of the following date:

Bruno Riendeau, Safety & Environment

Approving Authority

April 24, 2020

Date

9.2 Change History

Version	Description of the main changes	Effective Date
1.0	<i>New procedure</i>	April 23, 2020