

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

Procedure Owner: Bruno Riendeau
Safety & Environment

Effective date: June 15, 2021

1 OBJECTIVE

1. Provide information on the protection offered from wearing different type of personal protective equipment (including source control 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

Employees	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 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>
Travelers	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)



Contractor

All contractors that come on site on VIA property, maintenance centers, stations, and offices to render services or deliver goods.

Pandemic

Outbreak of any disease, such as typhoid or influenza, on a large or global scale

4 ROLES & RESPONSABILITIES	
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow recommendation, procedures and guidelines of VIA Rail Canada Inc. Where applicable and required, follow recommendations, procedures, and guidelines of Public Health Agencies to ensure your health and safety, and that of others Immediately contact your supervisor if you develop any signs and symptoms of an illness, become ill, or sustain an injury/ incident Adhere to preventive and hygienic preventive measures Wear VIA Rail Canada Inc. provided PPE as per instructions Immediately contact your supervisor if in need of PPE, or the PPE provided is damaged, in poor condition or requires replacement Understand the risks associated when wearing PPE; the risks associated when not wearing PPE; Identify and report work hazards to their immediate supervisor
Immediate supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide PPE to employees Ensure employees are trained and educated on the wearing of PPE Address Hazards/ Risks associated with employees
Contractor/Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow VIA Rail Canada Inc. guidelines and procedures (see your immediate supervisor, and/ or, VIA Rail Canada Inc. contact person)
5 GUIDELINES	

5.1 Preventive and hygiene measures to be prioritized before applying PPE

All employees must apply the following preventive and hygienic measures inclusive of wearing masks as a method to prevent the spread of an infectious disease:

- Perform Self Health Check assessment (Self- Monitor/ Self- Isolation)
- Physical Distancing (Social Distancing) a total of 6 feet or 2 meters
- Hand Hygiene and other Sanitary Measures
- Mask Wearing

Where applicable, a Level 1 (One) Risk Assessment may be required to ensure the wearing of a mask does not augment the noted risk or creates a secondary hazard. The methodology used to assess a day-to-day risk would be considered a Level 1 Risk Assessment.



A level 2 or 3 Risk Assessment may be required if the level 1 Risk Assessment identified significant risks.

**Note: The wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or Source Control i.e., masks, gowns, gloves, does not replace any of the noted preventive measures. However, wearing a mask reduces the risk of transmission of diseases in cases where all other preventive measures cannot be constantly applied.*

5.2 Understanding how the respiratory infectious disease spreads

An infectious disease can be transmitted through Direct or Indirect Contact.

- Direct Contact is when an infectious agent is transferred from a reservoir to a host by direct contact or droplet spread such as kissing, hugging or skin to skin contact.
- Droplet spread refers to relatively large, short range aerosols produced by sneezing, coughing or talking.
- Indirect Transmission refers to the transfer of an infectious agent from a reservoir to a host by suspend air particles, inanimate objects, or other vectors. Air borne particles can include materials settled on surfaces and become resuspended by air currents and other sources. Inanimate objects that may indirectly transmit an infectious agent includes food, water, and handkerchiefs, bedding. Vectors include mosquitos.

To combat the potential spreading of diseases, it is urged to:

- Seek Medical Attention if you are ill- Do Not Enter your Workplace
- Wear a VIA Rail approved mask
- Employ good respiratory etiquette (cough or sneeze into your arm/elbow)- Do not remove your mask!
- Avoid close contact with others (do not shake hands)
- Perform good hand hygiene (before and after you touch an object/item)
- Clean your work/ break area with an approved cleaning product

5.3 Description of the protection offered from wearing Personal Protective Equipment

5.3.1 Masks:

1. When properly fitted and worn according to instructions, a mask can reduce the spread of droplets from one person to another.
2. The wearing of a mask will also protect those around you.

Non-Medical Masks NMM (Cloth / Reusable)

1. Non-Medical Masks can reduce the volume of aerosols and microorganisms that reach others when you cough, sneeze, laugh or sing.
2. Non-medical Masks are a source control, meaning they protect those around you from your droplets.

Surgical Masks

1. Surgical masks, also known as procedural or medical masks, are designed to help prevent contamination of the work environment or a sterile field from large particles generated by the wearer/worker (e.g., to prevent the spread of the wearer's spit or mucus).
2. Surgical masks may also be used to help reduce the risk of splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions, and excretions from reaching the wearer's mouth and nose.



Respirators N95/ KN95 (PPE)

Respirators are designed to help reduce the wearer's respiratory exposure to airborne contaminants such as particles, gases, or vapours. Respirators and filters must be selected based on the hazards present. They come in various sizes and styles and should be individually selected to fit the wearer's face and to provide a tight seal.

Risks of Wearing a Mask

1. Wearing a mask can help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, however, it can potentially increase the risk of infection if proper hygiene measures are not applied. If a mask is not worn/ handled in an appropriate manner, is improperly discarded, or laundered inappropriately, the user risks becoming ill.
2. The wearing of a mask may inadvertently cause secondary occupational hazards and risks such as reduced field of vision, may become distracting, may impact on the ability to clearly communicate, or interfere with other PPE.
3. Not all masks are made to the same standard or for all tasks. Use the appropriate mask for the task at hand. If unsure, immediately seek out assistance from your supervisor.

5.3.2 Face Shield

1. A Face Shield is not a safe alternative to wearing a mask.
2. A Face Shield is to be worn in addition to wearing a mask. Although a face shield is effective at stopping some particles, it does not protect against airborne infectious diseases.
3. Not all face shields are made to the same standard or for all tasks. Use the appropriate Face shield for the task at hand. If unsure, immediately seek out assistance from your supervisor.
4. The use of a Face Shield can create secondary hazards or risks such as reduced field of vision, may become distracting, may impact on the ability to clearly communicate, or interfere with other PPE.
5. The employee must wear safety eye protection underneath the face shield.

5.3.3 Gloves

1. When worn according to manufacturer's guidelines, gloves can form an effective barrier that prevents the transmission of infectious diseases.
2. The wearing of gloves does not prevent the cross-contamination of objects.
3. Hand Hygiene must be adhered to before and after wearing gloves.
4. Gloves must be removed and disposed of in a safe manner to avoid cross-contamination.

Risk of Wearing gloves:

1. Wearing the right type of gloves can help prevent contact with an infectious disease, however, it can increase the risk of infection if hygiene measures are not applied, improperly worn, improperly discarded, or inappropriately laundered/ stored.

5.3.4 Gowns

1. Wearing a gown prevents the user's clothing or skin from encountering fluids or other particulates.
2. Employees must be trained on the use of a gown (proper donning/ doffing)
3. Employees are to dispose of the gown in an appropriate manner.

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

5.4 Who must wear personal protective equipment and when



5.4.1

Masks

1. All employees must wear a VIA Rail approved mask when entering or accessing VIA Rail Canada Inc. owned property, when they cannot maintain physical distancing
2. All employees must wear an approved mask when entering or accessing third party work locations (i.e., CN, off site property)
3. All VIA Rail employees must wear a mask/ NMM when at work/in the office when they cannot maintain physical distancing, or if a barrier is not installed (e.g., plexiglass) between themselves and another employee*
4. Customer facing employees must wear a mask at all times when working onboard the train and in our stations.
5. If an employee requires a medical exemption to the mandatory mask wearing rule (i.e., Workplace Accommodation), they are to immediately inform their supervisor and seek guidance from them (*see section 5.7*)
6. When wearing a mask, an employee is expected to follow and adhere to all preventive measures (i.e., Health Check Screening, Hand Hygiene, Physical Distancing, Respiratory Etiquette, Maximum Room Occupancy Limit, etc.)
7. When wearing a mask, an employee is expected to follow and adhere to all preventive measures (e.g., Health Check screening, Hand Hygiene, Physical Distancing, Respiratory Etiquette, Maximum Room Occupancy limit, etc.).

*Under certain conditions, office employees are permitted to remove their mask/NMM while working. The elements noted below (due diligence) must be true for the employee to remove their masks/NMM:

- i. The employee has completed their Health Check Screening questionnaire
- ii. While seated, the employee is physically distant from another employee, or a barrier is installed.
- iii. The employee is practicing good respiratory etiquette.
- iv. The employee is not shouting.
- v. The employee (s) will respect the noted maximum occupancy of a given room.
- vi. The employee acknowledges that a risk remains for them to be exposed to an airborne infectious disease when not wearing a mask/NMM.
- vii. The employee has their immediate supervisor's permission to remove their mask/NMM while working.
- viii. The ventilation system is functioning and in good working order.
- ix. If the factors above are modified, the employee must wear their mask/NMM.

Types of masks allowed to be worn on VIA Rail Canada Inc property:

1. VIA Rail approved masks (i.e., surgical, non-surgical, re-usable, N95/ KN 95 respirators)
2. When wearing a Visor, a fitted mask must be worn underneath.

Gloves

All employees must wear gloves when:

1. Following manufacturers guidelines when using a product
2. Process/ Procedure requires the wearing of gloves.

**Employees are permitted to wear gloves as required per the given situation. The employee must ensure that the wearing of gloves to complete their task does not create secondary hazards or risks. Prior to the wearing of a glove, the employee must consult their supervisor for guidance.*



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

1. VIA Rail will comply with local COVID19 policies when they are accessing third party facilities.

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 of mask provided by VIA Rail under the following conditions:
 - i. 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 your person.
 - ii. As soon as you find yourself in an environment designed for work with others, even if you are the only person present.
 - iii. As soon as you move from one place to another (hallways, elevators, stairs, paths, etc.).

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 Storage/ Handling

1. Employees are to inspect their PPE prior to use. If the employee observes damaged PPE, they are not to use the PPE and immediately inform their supervisor. The supervisor will replace the damaged PPE.
2. Employees are to store their PPE in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.
3. Employees are to don/ doff their PPE in accordance with their training to not contaminate themselves, their work location, or others.

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4. Employees are to wear their PPE in accordance with their training and manufacturer's guidelines.

Disposal

1. PPE must be disposed of in the appropriate manner. See your supervisor for guidance.
2. For re-usable PPE, the employee is responsible for the safe laundering, transportation, storage and handling of the equipment.

**Note: Inappropriate handling, storage and disposal of PPE can lead to exposure to a disease, or injury.*

5.5.2 Distribution/Dispensing

1. Supervisors are to distribute PPE to their employee(s)
2. If an employee is missing PPE or requests PPE, they are to immediately inform their direct supervisor or their supervisor's alternate.

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

If an employee has a medical condition* that prevents them from wearing PPE, VIA Rail will take the appropriate measures to accommodate the employee according to the type of work, the location, and the risks associated with the task, which can include:

1. Providing an alternative model of PPE that is adequate for the work task despite the worker's medical condition.
2. Workplace Accommodations (where possible)

**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)*

Passenger

1. A mask or face covering is not required and must not be worn when the following conditions apply:
 - i. Infant under two years-old and small children who are not able to maintain a face covering during travel.
 - ii. 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 (require medical certificate).
 - iii. A person who is unconscious or anyone unable to remove them without assistance.
 - iv. Safety endangered – any situation where wearing a face covering would impede personal safety (including when eating or drinking); and,
 - v. 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
- Appendix F:** Steps of putting on and removing PPE

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:

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9 APPROVAL AND REVISION HISTORY

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

9.1 Approval

This procedure (version 2.0) is approved and effective as of the date indicated below:

Bruno Riendeau, Safety & Environment

Approving Authority

June 15, 2021

Date



9.2 Revision History

Version	Description of major change(s)	Effective Date
1.0	<i>New Procedure</i>	July 8, 2020
2.0	<i>Changes in wording; Section 4 Roles & Responsibilities Section 5 Guidelines Addition of gowns</i>	April 9, 2021
3.0	<i>Addition of source control; non-medical masks (NMM)</i>	May 14, 2021
4.0	<i>Addition of workplace exemptions to mask wearing</i>	June 15, 2021