
Guidance: Non-Medical Transportation Providers

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The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) remains dedicated to health and public safety as the department responds to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Current information about COVID-19 suggests that older adults and people with chronic medical conditions have a higher risk of severe illness. An important step in preventing the spread of COVID-19 is to restrict large groups of people coming together and to minimize the number of people congregating in close settings.

Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) providers have several major tasks to consider during this state of emergency:

- preventing the spread of the disease,
- providing services during the pandemic,
- managing workforce impacts,
- and conducting crisis communication.

The American Public Transit Association developed a policy brief in March outlining things transit providers should consider while operating during the COVID-19 state of emergency. NMT providers should review this guidance and adapt it to their daily operations for people with developmental disabilities.

NMT providers must understand their responsibilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These are some items to consider when providing NMT services:

- Keep people separated from one another.
- Ensure drivers have received training about how to reduce transmission of COVID-19.
- Ensure NMT agency has policies and procedures in place about training and enforcement of policies.
- Maintain a space of 3 to 6 feet between people to minimize contamination from aerosol and droplets (e.g., sneezing and coughing).
- Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for drivers and riders, as available. Gloves and respiratory protection (masks) are important to reduce contamination.

- Provide vehicles with waterless hand sanitizer for both drivers and riders.
- Allow drivers to stop frequently for handwashing, as available.
- Ensure each vehicle has the appropriate cleaning products and disinfectants.
- Require cleaning before pickups and after drop-offs.
- Consider reducing the number of people transported in vehicles and increase the number of available routes to accommodate smaller ridership per vehicle.

While the overall number of people with disabilities using NMT will decrease during the state of emergency, it is still a crucial service for people to access essential services. Therefore, it is important to continue to provide this service while also taking measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Please continue to exercise flexibility to ensure the health and safety of Ohioans with developmental disabilities and their families.

Information and Resources

DODD support teams are available to help county boards and providers.

DODD has set up a dedicated web page for department communications and links to helpful resources that will advise people with disabilities, their families, service providers, direct support professionals, county boards of developmental disabilities, and the community at large.

For specific questions about COVID-19 and additional information and resources, DODD urges you to use the Ohio Department of Health's call center. Call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634), or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

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