



COVID-19 and Seasonal Influenza: Interim Guidance for Health Care and Public Health Providers

APPENDIX 20: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAFER MOVEMENT TO PREVENT COVID-19 INTRODUCTION

This document provides recommendations for vehicular transport (e.g., buses, vans, and cars). This guidance does not apply to escorting a patient on foot or transferring within a prison (e.g., between yards).

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

Movement and transportation are risks of spreading COVID-19. AVOID Transport:

- For court appearances, the use of telecommunication alternatives should be employed whenever possible to avoid movement.
- Limit unnecessary transportation of inmates between prison institutions.
- Avoid or minimize travel to multiple institutions during one trip.
- Inmates who are quarantined, in medical isolation after testing positive for COVID-19, or who have symptoms of COVID-19, should only be transported for essential reasons (e.g., medical care that cannot be accomplished through telemedicine, regular releases to the community).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSPORT

Staffing and equipment

- Designate staff who are responsible for ensuring that policies are implemented.
- If possible, assign transportation officers to one type of work assignment (e.g., transporting inmates between prisons or between prisons and hospitals).
- If resources allow, dedicate one vehicle to transporting inmates who are positive for COVID-19. This vehicle and all other vehicles transporting inmates should be decontaminated after each trip.

Planning and preparation

- Limit bus/van capacity to 50% or less to ensure that all passengers are seated 6 feet apart.
- Ensure hand sanitizer is available.
- Post signage regarding distancing and masking requirements.
- Ensure appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is available for staff and inmates, including N95 respirators.
- Sanitize each transport vehicle thoroughly first thing in the morning and after each trip.
- Staff who share equipment should sanitize the equipment after each use.
- If feasible and safe, consider installing solid paneling (e.g., plexiglass) between sections or seats on the bus.



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COVID-19 testing prior to transport

- Inmates should have a negative viral test prior to transport. Please refer to the [COVID-19 Screening and Testing Matrix for Patient Movement](#) (Appendix 13) for detailed guidance regarding transport and testing timeframes needed.
- Testing correctional officers who transport inmates should follow the current Office of Employee Health and CCHCS testing policy.
- Point of care (POC) testing for inmates and staff may be used immediately before transport.

Personal protective equipment

- Wearing a fit-tested N95 respirator is required for correctional officers and staff in transport vehicles.
- Inmates should be provided with N95 masks. Staff should monitor inmates to ensure they comply with masking requirements.

Screening for symptoms and temperature prior to transport:

- All inmates and transport and custody staff should be checked for all symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature check, prior to boarding the vehicle, within 24 hours of transport.
- Please refer to the [COVID-19 Screening and Testing Matrix for Patient Movement](#) (Appendix 13) for screening and movement details.

Precautions during transit:

- Provide hand sanitizer and require inmates and staff to use it when entering and exiting the vehicle.
- Maximize ventilation, including opening windows, if feasible and safe.
 - Open all the vehicle windows and doors during stops to air it out.
 - Drive with the windows partially open on both sides of the bus/van.
 - Do not set the vehicle ventilation system to recirculate the air.
- Minimize the time spent on the bus. Because N95 respirators increase the work of breathing, allow for breaks during long bus/van rides so that N95 users can remove their respirator during the breaks while maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet.
- Because it may not be possible to use air conditioning and because passengers will be wearing masks, for travel of two or more hours, ensure stops for inmates and staff to exit the bus/van. Provide water for the inmates and staff during these breaks and ensure that passengers maintain 6 feet of social distance.
- Discourage inmates and transport and custody staff from eating in the vehicle.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch hard surfaces prior to re-boarding after breaks/stops.



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ON ARRIVAL TO A CDCR INSTITUTION

- Screen for symptoms and temperature per Reception/Triage and Treatment Area (TTA) policy.
- Quarantine and testing after arrival:
 - Inmates arriving at an institution, or those returning from a hospital or healthcare setting or court should follow the CCHCS policy to prevent the introduction of COVID-19. Please refer to the [COVID-19 Screening and Testing Matrix for Patient Movement](#) (Appendix 13).
- Employee exposure-response:
 - Correctional transportation officers identified as having driven a vehicle with inmates or other staff who subsequently test positive should follow the current Office of Employee Health and CCHCS testing policy for quarantine and testing.

Additional Resources:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH) [guidance on transit and rail](#)
- [CDC guidance for EMS](#) on safely transporting individuals with confirmed or suspected COVID-19