

# DURHAM SCHOOL SERVICES

## Customer Update on COVID-19 Response as of June 8, 2020

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For more than 100 years, Durham School Services has been committed to the health and safety of our employees and passengers and this commitment has only strengthened during this pandemic. A number of our customers have asked questions about how we are responding to COVID-19 and how we will provide student transportation services once schools reopen. While we did not provide any student transportation services during the school shutdown, our Public Transit Division continued to provide service and we relied upon guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to direct our actions to keep our employees and passengers safe. This experience will help us as we resume student transportation services.

Durham School Services is a member of the National School Transportation Association (NSTA), which is the national association that represents private providers of student transportation services. Several members of our Executive Team are members of the NSTA Board of Directors and hold leadership positions within the association. Our Chief Safety Officer is the chair of NSTA's Safety and Security Committee. Our participation in NSTA and our experience providing student transportation services in over 500 districts in 39 states gives us direct access to industry best practices in safety and security.

The answers to the questions below regarding employee safety, student safety, and vehicle cleanliness reflect our current thinking and approach, based upon CDC guidance and our recent transit experience. We are monitoring the CDC website daily for additional information as well as information from state and federal governments and are committed to applying the latest thinking on how to provide safe transportation, as it becomes available. We also expect to engage in a great deal of dialogue with you, our partner, to prepare for school to resume. We need to be completely aligned on our process to give parents confidence in their student's safety while riding the bus to school.



## Questions Regarding Employee Health and Safety

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### Does Durham plan to screen employees before allowing them to return to work?

Our plans are consistent with our current process being used where we operate transit services or where we are delivering meals to students. In line with CDC recommendations, Durham School Services has implemented screening of employees for COVID-19 symptoms on a daily basis prior to the start of their first shift of the day. The screening consists of a temperature check using a non-contact thermometer and asking questions to determine whether employees have symptoms of COVID-19. If an employee's temperature is 100.4 or greater, or if the employee is experiencing any other symptoms of COVID-19, the employee is sent home. Before returning to work after being sent home, employees must either:

- Have clearance from their health care provider or public health official, or
- Three days must have passed without a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and since any symptoms of respiratory infections were present, and at least ten days have passed since their symptoms first appeared.

### What is Durham's plan to purchase face masks and other Personal Protective Equipment for drivers and other staff?



Where we are currently operating, based upon guidance from the CDC, Durham School Services is providing non-medical face masks for employees and requiring their use while in the workplace, including when driving vehicles. We are also providing gloves for use when performing tasks like wheelchair securement or touching surfaces that may be contaminated. These practices will continue when school resumes.

### How will the company's procedures for interviewing and training new employees change in light of COVID-19?

All visitors to our Customer Service Center are screened for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to being allowed to enter; this includes applicants. If an applicant shows symptoms of COVID-19, he or she is not allowed to enter the CSC. If no symptoms are present, applicants are allowed to enter but are required to wear a face mask at all times while in the CSC. We will practice CDC-recommended social distancing measures when interviewing new applicants as well as when conducting classroom and behind the wheel training.

### Will Durham install physical dividers or protective barriers for drivers?

While Durham School Services is exploring the potential for installing protective barriers to separate the drivers from passengers with our bus manufacturers, at this time no decision to install barriers has been made. Any device installed would not interfere with state and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards for school buses and must be approved by state regulators. We will keep you informed of our final decision on installing vehicle barriers prior to any potential installation.

## What is Durham's procedure if an employee were to get sick while at work or test positive for COVID-19?

Employees who are ill are directed to stay home. All employees are screened prior to starting their shift as outlined above. If an employee becomes ill after starting work, they will be sent home immediately. If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, we follow CDC guidance and require any employee who was in close contact with the infected employee within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms to self-quarantine for 14 days and report to us immediately if they develop any symptoms.

If the employee who tests positive was in close contact with any students or school personnel within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms, we will notify the District and work together to ensure school personnel and the parents of the students who may have been exposed are notified.

## Questions Regarding Student Health and Safety

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### Will Durham require students to wear masks when riding the bus?



Where required by state regulation or customer policy, passengers are expected to wear masks when riding our buses. The decision on whether or not to transport regular or special education students who either do not have a mask, refuse to wear a mask, or is unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition, will be made in consultation with each District partner.

### Will Durham provide masks or other personal protective equipment (PPE) for students?

While we are not currently distributing PPE to passengers, we are open to discussing it as an option should the District wish to provide face coverings or other PPE for students when school resumes.

### Will Durham expect to take students' temperatures before boarding?



We are currently not screening passengers by taking their temperatures prior to boarding. Should CDC, state or federal guidelines recommend or require screening of passengers, we will discuss it with customers at that time.

### What is Durham's guidance in terms of the number of students that should be allowed on the various sizes of the buses? How will this impact routing?



While the CDC has not provided specific guidance for school bus operations, in Transit operations the CDC recommends maintaining at least six feet between passengers and the driver, as well as six feet between passengers. If we apply these principals to school bus operation, it would significantly reduce the capacity of the bus.

Prior to the start of school we will discuss CDC, state and federal guidelines for social distancing and work with you to develop a transportation plan. This plan will include bus capacity and seating arrangements, loading/unloading procedures to encourage social distancing, signage, and recommendations for social distancing at bus stops.

### **Will additional bus aides be put on buses to help encourage social distancing?**

We do not have plans to add additional bus aides on the vehicles, but are open to discussing it with you if state guidelines call for them.

### **What additional procedures will you put in place for special education students?**

The needs of special education students will be considered individually and we will work with the district to implement safety measures without resulting in harm to students because of their disability. Examples of this may include requiring the use of face masks during transport or keeping windows open to increase ventilation.

## **Questions Regarding Vehicle Cleanliness**

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### **What is Durham's plan for disinfecting buses?**



As we start the school year, we will implement disinfecting of vehicles twice per day; once after the AM route and again after the PM route. In addition, we will provide anti-bacterial cleaning supplies to drivers to enable them to spot-clean any surface that becomes contaminated during the route prior to the start of school. If we learn a driver or passenger on a bus has tested positive for the virus, we will take that vehicle out of service for minimum of 24 hours prior to disinfecting it and putting it back into service.

### **Will hand sanitizer be available on the bus?**

We are exploring providing hand sanitizer on the bus, but must remain in compliance with state law regarding storage. We will keep you updated as we approach the start of school.

