Industry Notice

Reminder for Perimeter Seating Vehicle Operators to follow COVID-19 Protocols and Orders of the Provincial Health Officer

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The purpose of this notice is to remind operators of commercial passenger vehicles with perimeter seating (PS Vehicle), to follow COVID-19 health and safety protocols and orders issued by the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), Passenger Transportation Branch, WorkSafeBC, and other public health agencies. These measures are established to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and keep people safe.

In a PS Vehicle, seats provided to passengers are primarily located along the sides or the rear of the commercial passenger vehicle. PS Vehicles include:

- **Perimeter Seating Buses (PSB)**, which is defined in the Passenger Transportation Regulation as a passenger directed vehicle that provides perimeter seating for 12 passengers or more plus the driver; and
- **Large Vehicle Limousines (LVL)**, which the Passenger Transportation Board defines as seating for 6 to 11 passengers or more plus the driver.

**Provincial Health Officer**

Since the onset of COVID-19, the PHO Dr. Bonnie Henry, has issued [orders, notices and guidance](#) to help mitigate its spread. PS Vehicle operators are advised to review and abide by all relevant orders, notices and guidance issued by the PHO.

On November 19, 2020, the PHO issued a [provincial-wide order](#) on gatherings and events, to address recent increases in COVID-19 cases across BC. The order applies to all persons in BC and a number of businesses, including PS Vehicle operators.

Specifically, PS Vehicle operators including PSB, LVL operators are:

1) Prohibited from operating PS Vehicles between 11pm and 6am, except for maintenance, fueling or a related purpose.

2) Prohibited from operating PS Vehicles between 6am and 11pm, except for:
   a. maintenance, fueling or related purposes; or
   b. transporting passengers.

   **Note:** “Transporting passengers” does not include:
   - to and from an event, unless conveying a worker for the purpose of working at an event;
• for the purpose of social interaction or another event in a PS Vehicle; or
• from a place which is subject to the Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order.

b. With more passengers than can be accommodated safely. To safely accommodate passengers, PS Vehicle operators must ensure that passengers are seated at least two metres away from each other, except when passengers reside in the same private residence.

Failure to comply with this order may result in fines. A violation ticket of $2,000 can be issued to PS Vehicle operators while each passenger attending a party in a PS Vehicle can receive a fine of $200.

In addition, PS Vehicle operators must ensure that passengers wear face coverings. The face covering must cover passenger’s mouth and nose. Exceptions to this rule include:

- People with health conditions or with physical, cognitive or mental impairments who cannot wear one;
- People who cannot remove a mask on their own;
- People who are speaking to someone who is hearing impaired;
- Children under the age of 12; and
- If the mask must be removed for identification purposes.

**Best Practices to Limit COVID-19 Transmission:**
PS Vehicle operators across the province are encouraged to follow general best practices to limit COVID-19 transmission, including:

- **Drivers should wash hands** regularly, including after re-fueling, after each client interaction, before eating, and at the beginning and end of every shift with soap and water for 20 seconds or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- **Clean the vehicle** after each passenger trip, such as sanitizing surfaces and interior/exterior door handles. Do this immediately after passengers exit the vehicle.
- **Keep windows open** as much as possible when transporting passengers to allow for air circulation.
- **Exchange payment outside** of the vehicle and promote the use of tap or phone payments.
- **Consider installing barriers** such as plexiglass or temporary vinyl if the design of the vehicle allows.

**WorkSafeBC COVID-19 Guidance**
WorkSafeBC has developed a COVID-19 safety resource specifically for the transportation industry. PS Vehicle operators are advised to review and follow the recommended safety protocols, available on WorkSafeBC’s webpage.
Visit the Passenger Transportation Branch website for additional COVID-19 updates for the commercial passenger transportation industry.

Thank you,
Passenger Transportation Branch.