**CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) – PROTOCOL**

**Effective August 4th, 2020**

Strait Area Transit is implementing a Corona Virus Protocol for all staff to ensure the safety and health of all staff and clients.

This protocol has been established as guidance based on current available scientific evidence and expert opinion and is subject to change as new information on transmissibility and epidemiology becomes available. It has been put in place to help ensure your safety.

**SYMPTOMS**

(<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/when-to-seek-help/>)

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

* fever (chills, sweats)
* cough or worsening of a previous cough
* sore throat
* headache
* shortness of breath
* muscle aches
* sneezing
* nasal congestion or runny nose
* hoarse voice
* diarrhea
* unusual fatigue
* loss of sense of smell or taste
* red, purple or blueish lesions on the feet, toes or fingers without clear cause
* The severity of COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe, and in some cases, can lead to death. Current information suggests most people don't experience severe illness or need to be hospitalized.

If you have any one of the COVID-19 symptoms, or any other symptoms that concern you, call 811 for assessment by a nurse.

**TESTING**

Nova Scotia Health Authority has established COVID-19 assessment centres. If you need in-person assessment, 811 will refer you to a centre. Do not go to a COVID-19 assessment centre unless 811 referred you.

**TREATMENT**

Supportive. At this time, there is no specific treatment (e.g. antivirals) for cases of COVID-19. If you have questions you can go to novascotia.ca/coronavirus or call 811.

**WHAT SAT IS DOING TO REDUCE THE RISK OF CONTRACTING THIS VIRUS IN THE WORKPLACE**

* Daily monitoring of the status of this virus within the province of Nova Scotia.
* Updates will be provided as changes take place.
* Providing masks and use of hand sanitizer to clients and staff.
* New procedures to reduce transmission of germs are outlined below.

**WHAT STAFF IS TO DO**

* Review the **Protecting yourself from coronavirus** information available at https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/#protect
* If you are sick with symptoms like those of COVID-19 – stay home until you are feeling well again.
* Ensure you practice good hand hygiene. Wash or sanitize hands often. Hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the preferred method of hand hygiene.
* If soap and water is not available use the alcohol-based hand sanitizer provided to you.
* Use cough and sneeze etiquette. If you must cough or sneeze, ensure you use a tissue or flexed elbow followed by proper hand hygiene. Discard tissues and disposable materials in garbage containers.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
* Ensure that you use the hand sanitizer after handling any cash.
* Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces and objects often. All drivers are to ensure that the steering wheel, door handles, seat belts and buckles etc. are wiped down at the beginning and end of your shift and after each passenger is dropped off.
* Hand sanitizer should be used after each passenger is dropped off.
* All drivers will be provided with masks, hand sanitizer and disinfectant cleaner.
* Keeping the driver and rear windows down a crack to keep fresh airflow in the vehicle is recommended. (when able to)

**Dispatch is implementing the following screening procedures when booking rides:**

* asking clients if they have travelled outside of Nova Scotia within the last 14 days, or come into close contact with anyone who has
* asking clients if they, or anyone they have had close contact with, has received a positive test result for COVID-19 and not had two separate negative tests.
* asking clients if they, or anyone with whom they have had close contact, are experiencing, or have experienced in the last 14 days, any symptoms like those for the COVID-19 virus or are showing any other signs of illness
* advising clients they cannot book a ride if they have symptoms like those for the COVID-19 virus
* advising clients they are required to wear a non-medical mask when traveling with SAT
* asking clients if they have allergies to cleaning products

**ADDITIONAL VEHICLE SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS**

Driver

* Must wear gloves and a non-medical mask while loading and unloading client.
* Upon initial pickup and before loading, ask client if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
* Offer the client a non-medical mask if they require.
* Clean and disinfect belts and area inside rear compartment after client’s last exit.

Passenger

* Put his/her own wheelchair brakes on if capable.
* Must wear a non-medical mask.
* Must use hand sanitizer before entering and upon leaving vehicle.