

Commute with Confidence

A Return to Work Guide for Commuters During COVID-19

Use this guide to help plan a safer commute as you return to work. Included are tips on what you can do to keep yourself safe during your commute, as well as information on what area transportation providers are doing to make shared commuting as safe as possible.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STAY SAFE:

Consider Telework. Telecommuting is a great option that eliminates the need for a commute. Resources to ensure telework is successful can be found at <https://www.yourcommutesolution.org/Partners#Resources> .

If your trip to work is necessary, we recommend the following:

- **Create a plan to help reduce your exposure to COVID-19.**
 - Avoid travel during peak hours. Try leaving earlier or later when traffic congestion and overcrowding may be minimal.
 - Do not travel to work while sick. Follow established guidelines provided by your employer and transportation provider concerning when to return.

- **Protect your health and that of others.**
 - Keep up with the Centers for Disease Control and local health department recommendations concerning personal protection.
 - Consider wearing a mask covering your mouth and nose. Wash hands for 20 seconds before entering and exiting a vehicle. If this isn't possible, use hand sanitizer.

- **Take additional precautions based on your mode of travel.**
 - **PUBLIC TRANSIT**
 - Follow social distancing guidelines established by your provider. Skip a seat and maintain a safe distance from other riders.
 - Limit exposure to riders who may be coughing or sneezing.
 - Take the next train or bus when a railcar or bus is full.
 - Limit contact with train or bus handles, poles, or seat belts, etc.
 - Don't touch your phone while on public transit.
 - Don't eat or drink while on public transit.
 - If carrying bags, keep them off the floor and other surfaces.
 - **BICYCLE**
 - Stay two arms lengths away from other riders.

- Consider wearing a breathable mask (and gloves for doors and racks).
 - Use a helmet.
 - Carry a tool kit with sanitizer.
 - Don't have a bicycle? Try [Houston BCycle](#).
- **WALK**
 - Consider wearing a breathable mask (and gloves for crosswalks and doors).
 - Stay two arm lengths away from others.
 - Carry sanitizer.
- **CARPOOL/VANPOOL**
 - If possible, use larger vehicles to encourage social distancing.
 - Reduce the number of passengers in the vehicle to maintain social distancing, ideally no more than one passenger per row and stagger passengers left to right.
 - Disinfect frequently used surfaces in the vehicle with an EPA or CDC approved disinfectant.
 - Carry sanitizer.
 - Turn on the fresh air setting. Do not recirculate the air. Let down the windows.
- **DRIVE ALONE**
 - While you are out, think about other necessary trips you can combine to limit exposure to COVID-19.
 - Disinfect frequently used surfaces in the vehicle with an EPA or CDC approved disinfectant.

WHAT LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS ARE DOING TO HELP KEEP YOU SAFE:

Public transportation providers in Greater Houston are implementing several measures to help keep you safe during your commute. Measures include extra cleaning, social distancing, contactless payment, and more. Find your transportation provider below for additional details:

- **Colorado Valley Transit** routes are operating on a limited basis with the majority only servicing dialysis patients. Full operations will tentatively resume on June 1. Additional information - <http://gotransit.org/>.
- **Connect Transit** is placing a greater emphasis on disinfecting buses and has implemented a free fare to encourage social distancing. Additional information - <https://www.facebook.com/Connect-Transit-272512076112331/>
- **Conroe Connection** is increasing the frequency of bus cleanings and implementing additional measures to ensure the safety of patrons and bus operator. Click here to contact Conroe Connection with additional questions <https://www.cityofconroe.org/departments/transit/about-contact-us>.

- **Fort Bend Transit** is taking specific steps for safer travel. Steps include social distancing, requiring operators to wear masks, and requesting that commuters wear masks as well. Additional information - <https://www.fortbendcountytx.gov/government/departments/county-administration/public-transportation>.
- **Harris County Transit** has temporarily halted fare collection to limit contact. Additional information - <https://transit.harriscountytx.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

FAQs

<https://www.yourcommutesolution.org/documents/harris-county-transit-riders-faq.pdf>

- **Houston BCycle** has increased cleanings at high traffic stations and requires technicians to wear gloves. It also takes payment via an app and has closed some stations near overcrowded parks. Additional information - <https://www.houstonbicycle.com/covid19>.
- **Island Transit** has added buses to highly utilized routes and is limiting each bus to ten (10) passengers. Social distancing measures are taken on all buses, and bus interiors are cleaned each hour, sometimes more frequently. Additional information - <https://www.galvestontx.gov/393/Transportation>.
- **Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) Bus and Rail** has implemented seat reductions by 50% to enforce social distancing. When buses reach 50% capacity, digital signs will signal you to wait for the next bus. Rear boarding is in place where possible. Additional information - <https://www.ridemetro.org/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>.

Fact Sheet

<https://www.yourcommutesolution.org/documents/METRO-COVID-19-response.pdf>

- **Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) STAR** has a number of programs in place to assist vanpoolers and has provided tips for vanpool groups to encourage social distancing and frequent cleaning in the van. Additional information – <https://www.yourcommutesolution.org/documents/METRO-STAR-flyer.pdf>
- **Woodlands Transit** routes have been consolidated to accommodate service adjustments. Trolleys will resume operations at a later date. Additional information - <https://thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov/96/Transportation>.

For more information, please contact your transportation provider above or the Commute Solutions team at commutesolutions@h-gac.com. **Sources:** Connect Transit, Conroe Connection, Colorado Valley Transit, Fort Bend Transit, Harris County Transit, Houston – Galveston Area Council, Island Transit, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Woodlands Transit, Centers for Disease Control, Scoop