

# **Travelling safely (coronavirus): guidance for the public on using Public Transport**

## **Is your journey essential?**

At the moment, you should only travel:

- to get to and from work, if you cannot work from home
- to get essential food or medical supplies
- to support someone who is vulnerable, if no-one else can do so
- for daily exercise, but staying local

You should not travel if you are:

- experiencing any **coronavirus symptoms (on NHS 111)**
- **self-isolating** as a result of coronavirus symptoms or sharing a household with somebody with symptoms
- **clinically extremely vulnerable**
- **shielding** because of your age or a medical condition

Before you travel, consider if your journey is necessary and allowable under the rules in Wales. If you are travelling into another part of the United Kingdom bear in mind the rules which apply in those parts of the UK and the need to comply with regulations in Wales when you return to Wales.

Try to reduce your travel. If you need to travel, think carefully about the times, routes and ways you travel as this means we will all have more space to stay safe. This will ensure the transport network can keep running and allows people who need to make essential journeys to travel. You can reduce your travel by:

- **working from home where possible**
- shopping less frequently and shopping locally

## **Plan your journey**

Work from home if you can. If you need to travel, before and during your journey check with your transport operator for the latest travel advice on your route including the level of service and how busy it is.

Travel may take longer than normal on some routes due to reduced capacity and social distancing measures. Allow sufficient time if your journey involves changes between different forms of transport.

Plan ahead by identifying alternative routes and options in case of unexpected disruption.

If you can, travel at off-peak times. Your transport operator can advise on off-peak times. Your employer may agree alternative or flexible working hours to support this.

Where possible, book your travel online through your transport provider's ticketing app or website. Consider contactless payment to buy tickets.

Taking a less busy route and reducing the number of changes (for example between bus to train) will help you keep your distance from others. You must try to adhere to the social distance guideline. Where this is difficult you should keep the time you spend within close proximity of other people as short as possible and avoid physical contact.

Try to start or end your journey using a station or mode of transport you know to be quieter or more direct. For instance, walk the first or last mile of your journey, or alight at an earlier station, where this is possible.

If you need travel advice and assistance, for example if you have a disability or particular need, consult the relevant transport operator in advance to get advice and discuss what you need.

## **What to take with you**

Consider making a list of items to take with you and minimise the luggage you take on transport. There is a suggested checklist at the end of this document.

## **On your journey**

Some routes may be busier than usual due to social distancing measures or changes to previous timetables or schedules.

Have regard to social distancing in bus queues at bus stops and at railway stations. Try to establish whether other people in the queue have more essential travel needs, for example are they a health or social care worker? If you cannot get onto a particular bus or train, be patient in these difficult circumstances. Everybody will be trying their best. Don't rush the doors of a bus or train and cause a crowd or put other travellers with particular needs at a disadvantage.

When travelling, you should adhere to the social distancing rules with people who are not in your household. There may be situations where this is difficult, for example when boarding or alighting, on busier services, at busier times of day or when walking through interchanges. If you come within close proximity of others, you should avoid physical contact, try to face away from other people, and keep the time you spend close to others as short as possible.

Wearing a **face covering** is recommended as it provides some extra protection to you and may protect others if you are infected, whether or not you have developed symptoms. If you do wear a face covering, make sure you wear it properly and it forms a tight fit over your nose and mouth. Do not let the use of a face covering give you a false sense of security: continue to socially distance and maintain good hygiene including washing your hands before putting a face covering on or taking it off and wash your hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer as soon as possible after completing your journey.

A face covering is recommended when using public transport or when it is difficult to maintain social distancing (in which case closer proximity should be kept to the shortest time possible).

A face covering in this situation is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by health care and other workers such as social care workers as part of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We should continue to prioritise this higher specification PPE for health and social care workers and those in industrial settings for example where exposed to dust and other similar hazards. If necessary, if you want to use a face covering and are having difficulty getting one, it is possible to make face coverings at home. There is advice about this on the Web.

Treat transport staff with respect and follow instructions from your transport operator. This may include:

- notices about which seats to use or how to queue
- additional screens, barriers or floor markings
- requests to board through different doors or to move to less busy areas

Be considerate to your fellow passengers and to transport staff:

- wait for other passengers to get on or off first before you board
- do not congregate near entrances, exits, under canopies, at bus stops, on platforms or outside stations
- be prepared to queue or take a different entrance or exit at stations
- wait for the next service if you cannot safely keep your distance on board a train or bus
- respect other people's space while travelling
- be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space, for example to secure a wheelchair
- be aware that some individuals may have hidden disabilities
- be aware of people who need particular assistance, for example if someone needs to lip read consider lifting your face covering while maintaining appropriate social distancing
- if somebody near you is experiencing difficulty hearing, reading or seeing a notice or otherwise having difficulty accessing information, be prepared to help them out as you would in normal circumstances while maintaining social distance

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Try to touch as few surfaces as possible. Use hand sanitizer if you do. Be careful not to touch your face. Carry tissues and cover your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use something else like the elbow of your sleeve if you have forgotten any tissues, to minimise the spread of droplets. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer at the start and end of your journey.

### **Seek assistance if you need it**

If you require assistance when travelling and would normally contact your transport operator ahead of time, continue to do so, so they can prepare accordingly. If you have problems queuing or otherwise moving through a travel concourse or accessing public transport vehicles, speak to your transport operator in advance to get advice and explain what assistance you need.

If any problems arise or you feel ill during your journey, speak to a member of transport staff. In the case of an emergency, contact the emergency services as you normally would.

If you need help, try to maintain a social distancing with members of staff. If this is not possible you should avoid physical contact and keep the time you spend within close to staff as short as possible.

### **Children on public transport**

Social distancing applies to children as well as adults in order to help minimise the risk of transmission of the virus. Children should adhere to social distancing with others who are not in their household. If this is not possible they should avoid physical contact, face away from others, and keep the time spent within 2 metres of others, as short as possible.

If you are the responsible adult or carer travelling with children, please try to ensure that children observe social distancing.

Where travel is necessary, consider whether children should walk or cycle and whether they should be accompanied by a responsible adult or carer.

Arrangements for a return to school and therefore for school transport are being considered separately.

### **Completing your journey**

When finishing your journey:

- consider walking or cycling from the station or stop you arrived at
- follow local guidance
- wash or sanitise your or your children's hands as soon as possible

## **Checklists for safer travel**

### **Plan your journey**

- can I walk or cycle to my destination?
- have I checked the latest travel advice from my transport operator?
- have I asked for any assistance I think I may need?
- have I planned my journey to minimise crowded areas and allow for delays?
- am I taking the most direct route to my destination?

### **What to take with you**

- a plan for my journey
- contactless payment card
- phone (if needed for travel updates, tickets, contactless payments)
- tickets
- hand sanitiser
- essential medicines
- food and water
- tissues
- a face mask or other covering