

Nottingham City Transport – Safer Travel Guidance for Customers

Version 2, 15 June 2020

The Department for Transport (DfT) published Safer Travel Guidance for Passengers on 12 May 2020, which we are following in full. We are committed to revising this guidance as changes are made by DfT, with the latest update effective from 15 June 2020.

You can view the full guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers> which applies to all passengers – adults and children.

What's Changed?

- 15 June - Updated to reflect mandatory requirement to wear facial coverings; addition of Capacity Checker and new Journey Assistance cards

Previous Versions

You can download Version 1 of this guidance [here](#).

Introduction

Our teams are not responsible for the enforcement of social distancing so, please help us to keep everyone safe.

When thinking about travelling, you must **STAY ALERT** and this means you must:

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- wash your hands regularly
- self-isolate if you or anyone in your household has symptoms

You should avoid using public transport where possible and if you do travel, you should think carefully about the times, routes and way you are travelling to stay safe.

Those who can work from home should continue to do so. This helps to ensure that public transport is available for key workers and those who cannot work from home.

You are very unlikely to be infected from walking past another person. Public Health England (PHE) recommends trying to keep 2 metres away from people, where possible, as a precaution. However, **this is not a rule and the science is complex.** The key thing is to not be too close to people for more than a short amount of time, as much as you can.

There are situations where this may not be possible, for example when boarding or alighting, on busier services, at busier times of day, when walking through bus stations and interchanges.

You MUST NOT travel on our buses if you:

- are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms
- are self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms or sharing a household with somebody with symptoms
- are clinically extremely vulnerable
- are not making an essential, necessary journey

Planning Your Journey

Consider all other forms of transport before using public transport. Could you walk or cycle to your destination?

Before and during your journey, check for the latest travel advice or information:

- [NCTX Buses app](#)
- [NCT Website](#)
- [NCT Twitter](#)
- [NCT Facebook](#)
- [Sign up for e-mail news alerts and information](#)

Your journey may take longer than normal due to reduced capacity and social distancing measures and you must allow sufficient time if your journey involves changing buses or on to different forms of transport.

You may have to wait for the next service if you cannot safely keep your distance from other people.

If you can, travel at off-peak times (after 10am and not between 3pm-6pm) and try to take a less busy route, where possible. [Use our Capacity Checker to see how quiet or bus your bus may be.](#)

Public Health England recommends keeping a 2 metre distance from other people, where possible. **Where this is not possible**, you should keep the time you spend near others as short as possible.

What to Take With You

From 15th June 2020, wearing a facial covering is mandatory on public transport - see below.

The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect our employees and other customers if you are infected and have not yet developed symptoms. This is most relevant for short periods indoors with other people.

Consider making a list of items to take with you and minimise the luggage you take.

The government advise that you travel with hand sanitiser, essential medicines, tissues and your phone.

Facial Coverings

From Monday 15th June 2020, the government has made it mandatory for passengers to wear a facial covering on public transport.

What is a facial covering?

A facial covering is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment. These should continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings, like those exposed to dust hazards.

You are responsible for sourcing a facial covering and [advice on how to make a facial covering is available here.](#)

How do you wear a facial covering?

It is important to use the facial covering properly:

1. Wash your hands and face with soap before touching the covering and before wearing the covering
2. Wash the covering before each daily use
3. Ensure the facial covering covers your nose, mouth and chin and that any elastics are well placed behind your head
4. Do not touch the facial covering or face once the facial covering is worn
5. Wash your hands before you remove the covering, remove the covering without touching your face and then wash your hands and face again after it is removed.

Who is exempt from wearing a facial covering?

Passengers are expected to wear a facial covering to help protect others.

It is important to wash or sanitise your hands before and after touching your face covering. For longer journeys, take more than one face covering and a plastic bag for used face coverings.

The requirement to wear a face covering also does not apply if you have a reasonable excuse not to. Reasonable excuses include:

- if you have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
- if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress
- if you are travelling with, or providing assistance to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate

- if you are travelling to avoid injury or escape the risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you
- if you need to remove it during your journey to avoid harm or injury or the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others
- if you need to eat, drink, or take medication you can remove your face covering
- if you are asked to remove your face covering by a police officer or other official

In addition, the following people are also exempt:

- children aged under 11
- police, community support officers or emergency responders in the course of their duty

The wearing of a facial covering remains optional for bus drivers when in their enclosed cab, which provides a physical barrier between customers and drivers. We've also covered the ventilation holes in these screens for enhanced protection. Unless covered by the exemption list, all NCT employees who are travelling as a passenger will have to wear a facial covering.

If I am exempt, how do I let the driver know?

When you board, a notice will remind customers that wearing a facial covering is mandatory to travel on public transport.

If you are exempt, please tell the driver you are exempt and you will be allowed to board.

We have joined other operators by producing Journey Assistance Cards for people who are exempt to show drivers upon boarding, which we encourage you to download and print at home. You can download the full [Journey Assistance Cards](#) here.

Boarding the Bus

When waiting at the bus stop, keep 2 metres away from other people, **where possible**.

Please pay for your journey using a pre-paid method such as the NCTX Buses app, an Easyrider smart card or Robin Hood card.

Our exact fare cash payment method means you can still pay with cash. This applies to all NCT routes, including those where drivers normally give change and customers on the 1, 26 and 49 will need to pay with the correct money only.

Have your fare, pass, ticket or app ready when the bus arrives to minimise the time taken to board. Activate your NCTX Buses app ticket when the bus is in sight.

Wait for people to get off the bus before you board and only board the bus one at a time.

Where to Sit

We have removed some seats from use to assist with social distancing, but **it is your responsibility** to keep a safe distance from other people, when you can.

There are situations where this may not be possible, for example on busier services and at busier times of day. It is for these reasons that the government has mandated that you wear a facial covering.

When you can and space allows, you should:

1. Sit in the window seat only
2. Try and sit a row of seats away from other people, other than members of your own household. Sitting with people you live with will leave seats free for other customers.
3. Make use of the upper deck, where there is one. On too many journeys, we've seen people downstairs and hardly anybody upstairs

Wheelchairs and Pushchairs

Our buses remain available for people who have to make an essential journey, but there will be reduced capacity for pushchairs due to social distancing measures.

Our drivers will continue to deploy the ramp when required, but customers should wait **at least 2m away from the door**, to allow the driver to deploy the ramp and maintain social distance.

When getting off the bus, please press the bell and wait in the bay until the driver has deployed the ramp and then moved away from the bus, to give you social distance.

On Your Journey

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

Keep your distance from people outside your household. Public Health England recommends keeping a distance of 2 metres, **where possible**. The key thing is to not be too close to other people for more than a short amount of time, as much as you can.

There may be situations where you can't keep a suitable distance from people, for example:

- when boarding or alighting
- on busier services
- at busier times of day
- when walking through bus stations and interchanges.

In these cases you should avoid physical contact, try to face away from other people, and keep the time you spend near others as short as possible. You must wear a face covering on public transport.

We have removed some seats from use to assist with social distancing, but **it is your responsibility to keep a safe distance from other people**, when you can.

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

Help keep yourself, our employees and other customers safe by:

- respecting other people's space while travelling
- avoiding consuming food and drink on board
- being aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- being aware that some individuals may have hidden disabilities
- opening windows to allow a fresh air supply is consistently flowing through the bus

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, maintain a short distance from members of staff, where possible. If this isn't possible, you should try to avoid physical contact and keep the time you spend near staff as short as possible.

Treat our Staff with Respect

All of our employees are key workers, ensuring that people who have to make essential journeys by public transport can do so, but they are not responsible for the enforcement of social distancing.

We are doing everything we can to protect them and you by providing them with face coverings, gloves, sanitiser, disinfectant wipes and reminding them to follow the guidelines on washing their hands and keep their distance, when they can.

Our drivers have worked behind screens for several years, which provides a physical barrier and we've also covered the ventilation holes in these screens for enhanced protection.

Please treat all of our employees with respect and follow the instructions they may give you and follow signage on the bus, which is in place for the safety of everyone.

Getting off the Bus

When getting off the bus, press the bell in good time and remain in your seat until the bus stops.

On the floor of our buses, there is a red circle where you should wait until the doors are opened. Once the doors are open, leave the bus as quickly as you can.

When getting off the bus, customers who travel in a wheelchair should press the bell and wait in the bay until the driver has deployed the ramp and then moved away from the bus, to give you social distance.

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible, including for children.

What are NCT Doing?

Throughout the coronavirus outbreak, we have always followed government advice for the transport sector at all times, for both our customers and employees, and we will continue to respond to changes in guidance.

We must stress that there is a **big responsibility placed on customers** during the coming weeks and months in **not using public transport where possible** and if you must, you do so within the guidance outlined above. The actions of customers is the biggest thing that will make a difference.

On bus, we're taking our responsibility seriously and NCT will continue to:

- review and implement government advice and guidance
- communicate regularly with our customers
- rigorously clean our buses, paying additional attention to the parts of buses that are most commonly touched, such as doors, poles, bells, card readers.
- provide our employees with access to wipes, gloves, facial coverings and hand sanitiser
- close off some seats on buses to support social distancing
- reinforce messages to our employees about the expectations and requirements on them on the bus and when at work
- monitor usage and loadings per journey and look at ways we can provide additional capacity, where resources allow
- launched Capacity Checker to help you see how quiet or busy your bus may be
- enforce that where any employees who show any symptoms or are living with someone who has symptoms that they self-isolate and do not return to work until they provide a negative test result
- regularly communicate with our employees and recognised trade union, Unite

Further information:

Contact us by emailing travelcentre@nctx.co.uk or calling 0115 950 60 70