Tips for COVID-19 Management in Driver Education

Disclaimer:
This is not professional medical advice. Should you choose to conduct driver education courses, these tips are offered to driver educators for informational purposes only. The reader is responsible for determining what is appropriate and prudent for their program while following State and Federal guidelines and regulations. ADTSEA cannot and will not be held liable for a program or educators’ actions.

Updated January 5, 2021
Note to Reader:
These tips are offered through **May 31, 2021**. Please visit the [ADTSEA Website](http://www.adtsea.org) for updated information.

As a result of the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak, business will not be business as usual within the foreseeable future. Driver education, naturally, brings individuals into close proximity in the training process.

Administering and delivering driver education courses will not be the same as before. While we must endeavor today to reduce the risk of spreading the virus, we must also be vigilant in the future to reduce the possibility of additional waves. Practices established today can help to manage and minimize the risks of COVID-19 or similar outbreaks. If you choose to conduct driver education courses, ADTSEA offers the following tips.
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Tips for All Modes of Driver Education Delivery

State Protocols, Physical Distancing, Sanitizing, etc.
Tips for All Modes of Driver Education Delivery

❖ Know the protocols of your state agency.
❖ Seek approval from your state agency(ies) and departments prior to conducting any training.
❖ Seek guidance from other state agencies and departments (e.g., health department) prior to conducting any training.
❖ Check frequently for updates from local, state and federal government agencies/organizations. **Locate your state health department at** [https://www.usa.gov/state-health](https://www.usa.gov/state-health).
❖ Develop policies and agreements about student masking, screening requirements and steps to take if precautions are not followed.
❖ Proactively and confidentially request that students and parents/guardians who are showing signs of COVID-19 stay home. Visit the [CDC’s List of COVID-19 Symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html). Provide this list to students and parents/guardians.
❖ To the extent possible, use online/virtual learning to replace in-person classroom instruction.
❖ Before classroom and BTW instruction begins, consider screening instructors and students for COVID-19 symptoms.
   ➢ This could include screening questions, temperature checks, and more.
   ➢ Anyone exhibiting symptoms should be confidentially asked to return home.
Examples of screening questions:

- Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea?

- Within the past 14 days, have you been in close physical contact with a person who is known to have COVID-19 or with anyone who has any symptoms of COVID-19?

- Are you isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 or are worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?

- Are you currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?

If answered NO to ALL questions:
Proceed with lesson

If answered YES to ANY questions:
Cancel the lesson and reschedule when everyone who will be in the vehicle can answer NO to all questions
Tips for All Modes of Driver Education Delivery

❖ Do not joke about the COVID-19 virus. You don’t know if one of your students or parents/guardians knows someone with the virus. Keep it serious if the topic comes up.

❖ To minimize student congregation:
  ➢ Discourage early arrival of students before classroom and BTW sessions begin.
  ➢ If possible, have them wait in their vehicles.
  ➢ Require masks while waiting.
  ➢ If they are required to stand in line, designate 6-foot markings on the ground to keep distancing.
  ➢ Encourage students to be picked up immediately upon completion of classroom and BTW sessions.

❖ Minimize the amount of contact/instructional time for all persons.

❖ Continue physical distancing with both students and parents/guardians – avoid physical contact at all times.
  ➢ Do not extend your hands or elbows to greet students or parents/guardians.

❖ If instructors are at higher risk for complications of COVID-19, attempt to limit their in-person contact with multiple students. If possible, provide them with a different role than in-person instruction.
Tips for All Modes of Driver Education Delivery

❖ In both classroom and instruction vehicles, have the following available for you, your students, and parents/guardians, and encourage the use of:
  ➢ sanitizing wipes,
  ➢ alcohol-based hand sanitizers, and
  ➢ sealed disposable options for gloves and tissues.
Note: avoid keeping sanitizers in the vehicle. Warm and cold temperatures can reduce the effectiveness of sanitizers.

❖ Require instructors and students to wear face coverings. Provide if necessary.
  ➢ Cloth masks help prevent people from spreading the virus.
  ➢ Masks should have two or more layers.
  ➢ The mask should completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the side of the face.
  ➢ It is not recommended for the general public to wear masks intended for healthcare workers such as N95 masks.
  ➢ The CDC does not recommend the use of single layer gaiters or face shields (on their own).
Tips for All Modes of Driver Education Delivery

❖ Conduct shorter lessons to reduce the length of time that students and instructors are together in the classroom or in the vehicle.

❖ Require and encourage students and instructors to report if they develop COVID-19 following lessons (within 2 weeks).

❖ Do not conduct classes or BTW lessons if safeguards cannot be met (consider the liability issues).
Hygiene Tips for Driver Educators

Washing Hands and Vigilance
Practice good hygiene. It seems obvious, but vigilance can keep you healthy.

Washing hands **regularly** is one of the **most important** things you can do. For more information, see the World Health Organization’s [Clean Your Hands Campaign](#).
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Avoid touching your face. It can be difficult to do, but it is important to minimize contracting the virus though nose and eyes.

Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), for example, face coverings.
- Wash hands after removing PPE.
- Replace disposable PPE after each use.
- Wash reusable PPE after each use and replace when appropriate.
Classroom Tips for Driver Education

Physical Distancing and Sanitizing
Classroom Tips for Driver Education

❖ Have everyone check-in by using a sign-in sheet to record their name, the date and time.

❖ Maintain physical distancing between students when teaching in the classroom.
  ➢ Keep a minimum of 6 ft. or more between students, as recommended by the CDC, to both the sides and forward/backward between rows.
  ➢ Limit the number of students per class.

❖ Encourage frequent breaks for proper handwashing.

❖ Wipe down tables, door handles, restroom door handles, sink handles, student and instructor materials, etc., regularly and especially after classes. Document all times of sanitization.

❖ Ensure adequate air circulation and ventilation by opening windows.

❖ Consider purchasing air filtration systems for the classroom (MERV 13 rating most effective).
Alternative Methods of Classroom Delivery

Technology-Based, Independent and Parent/Guardian-Led
Consider a mix of the following classroom delivery methods:

- Virtual classroom sessions utilizing the many technology platforms available.
  - Visit the ANSTSE website at www.anstse.info to view webinar recordings on virtual training.
- Robust eLearning platforms (Note: a website with files does not constitute eLearning)
- Simulation, computer-based training (CBT) and virtual reality (VR) learning approaches.
- Online class management services (e.g., Google Classroom)
- Individual student activities and assignments (do not assign groups to activities).
- Parent/guardian-led activities and assignments.

A mix of these methods can be a good alternative.

Utilize distance learning approaches for knowledge assessments and end-of-course testing.

For more information on assessment and testing see ANSTSE’s 2020 Stopgap Measures in Driver Education During a Pandemic or Emergency at www.anstse.info.
Behind-the-Wheel Tips for Driver Education

Physical Distancing and Sanitizing
Keep a daily log of all vehicles used. Include names of students, instructors and document time in vehicle.

Require students to wash hands before and after BTW driving sessions.

Create a list of all the high-touch surfaces within the vehicle that should be sanitized after each use. Document all times of sanitization.

- Inside and outside door handles
- Steering wheel
- Gear shift
- Turn signal and wiper levers
- Any buttons on the radio and climate control unit
- Seat upholstery
- Seat belts
- Mirrors
- Driver and passenger arm rests
- Grab handles and seat adjustment levers
- Everything

Consider using plastic disposable seat covers, as it is not possible to readily disinfect cloth seats.

Conduct lessons by appointment only to allow for adequate time to sanitize the vehicles between students.
Behind-the-Wheel Tips for Driver Education

❖ Encourage frequent breaks for handwashing.
❖ Assess the skills of the student prior to lessons to optimize the use of the BTW lesson time (e.g., assess through interviews or via virtual means).
❖ As it is difficult to practice physical distancing when conducting BTW, reduce exposure through time (minimizing time in contact) and space (keeping distance).
   ➢ Minimize the time in the vehicle by stopping the vehicle in a safe place and speaking outside of the vehicle to explain a technique or provide feedback.
   ➢ Examine how the parent/guardian, with proper guidance in partnership with the instructor, may provide additional hours of BTW instruction/practice and observational time.
   ➢ Avoid additional students in the vehicle for observation time. No more than one student in the center back seat, if required.
      o Use a dash/mirror camera to record cabin interactions between the instructor and student(s) to minimize wrongful act liabilities.
   ➢ Multiple people within the same household can be included without distancing from each other. No more than 3 people should be in the vehicle together at any time.
   ➢ If possible, use a bigger vehicle with more space.
   ➢ Try to increase distance between people in the vehicle as much as possible.
Avoid using the vehicle’s air “recirculation” feature which may increase the spread of the virus. Ensure airflow is set to outside, with fresh air coming in.

Ensure adequate ventilation by opening windows, as applicable. Remind students to wear warm clothing, if necessary.

Consider purchasing air filtration systems that adequately filter the entire vehicle cabin, such as:

- NuvoMed Car Air Purifier HEPA Filter
- JVC HEPA Filter Air Purifier
- IQAir Atem Car HEPA Filter Air Purifier

While physical barriers keep individuals in small spaces separated, there is no evidence that they, alone, prevent the airborne transmission of COVID-19. Comprehensive PPE, disinfecting, hygiene and distancing practices will assist in reducing the risk.

- Center barriers between the instructor and student driver create challenges for instructor taking control of the vehicle, if necessary.
- May be useful to separate front seat from back seat occupants.

Consider the liability issues involved in conducting BTW lessons during the current pandemic.
Alternative Methods to Augment BTW Delivery
Alternative Methods to Augment BTW Delivery

- Examine how multiple-car range (MCR) instruction may augment BTW instruction, if permitted. A MCR is a defined roadway course closed to public traffic allowing for the re-creation of various basic driving scenarios.
  - Ensure physical distancing protocols are maintained.
  - Instructor remains outside of all vehicles.
  - Use communication devices (e.g., two-way radios) to interact with students.
  - No more than one student per vehicle. Parents may ride with students, if desired.
  - Follow sanitizing protocols to thoroughly sanitize the vehicle/equipment following range instruction.
  - Check with your state agency on allowances for substitution of range hours for BTW hours.

For more information on MCRs, visit the ANSTSE website at www.anstse.info

- 2020 Stopgap Measures in Driver Education During a Pandemic or Emergency
- Webinar recording on Utilizing Multiple-Car Driving Ranges
Alternative Methods to Augment BTW Delivery

- Examine how driving simulation, computer-based training (CBT) and virtual reality (VR) instruction may augment BTW instruction, if permitted.
  - Ensure physical distancing protocols are maintained.
  - Follow sanitizing protocols to thoroughly sanitize simulators/CBT/VR equipment following instruction.

- For more information on using simulation, CBT and VR see ANSTSE’s 2020 Stopgap Measures in Driver Education During a Pandemic or Emergency at www.anstse.info.
Alternative Methods to Observation Time
Alternative Methods to Observation Time

- Examine how simulation, CBT or VR may augment observation, if permitted.
  - Ensure physical distancing protocols are maintained.
  - Follow sanitizing protocols to thoroughly sanitize the equipment following instruction.
  - Check with your state agency on allowances for substitution of simulation, CBT or VR for observation hours.

- For more information on using simulation, CBT and VR see ANSTSE’s 2020 Stopgap Measures in Driver Education During a Pandemic or Emergency at www.anstse.info.
Alternative Methods to Observation Time

- Utilize pre-recorded driving scenarios during a virtual training session (with multiple students) that gives them the opportunity to observe teachable moments in driving lessons.
- Have students complete a worksheet while their parents/guardian are driving (observing the parent/guardian).
- Have students complete a worksheet while the instructor is driving, if only 1 student in the vehicle.
- Allow each extra hour of BTW instruction (beyond the minimum BTW hours) to be double the observation time.
- Check with your state agency on allowances for substitution/alternatives of observation hours.

For more information on completing observation time, visit the ANSTSE website at [www.anstse.info](http://www.anstse.info)

- **2020 Stopgap Measures in Driver Education During a Pandemic or Emergency**
- Webinar recording on Completing Observation Time in a Virtual Classroom Setting
Keeping Up-to-Date

Acquiring Information
Keeping Up-to-Date

- Additional information can be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), including steps to limit the spread of COVID-19.


- As always, the health, safety and well-being of instructors and the community comes first!

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Bringing it All Together

Summary
Bringing it All Together

According to the World Health Organization:

- Masks should be used as part of a comprehensive strategy of measures to suppress transmission and save lives; the use of a mask alone is not sufficient to provide an adequate level of protection against COVID-19.
- If COVID-19 is spreading in your community, stay safe by taking some simple precautions, such as physical distancing, wearing a mask, keeping rooms well ventilated, avoiding crowds, washing your hands, and coughing into a bent elbow or tissue. Check local advice where you live and work. Do it all!

Conduct virtual training when possible.

Before Instruction:

- Have a plan for students and instructors to practice safe distancing and sanitizing.
- Remind those who are not feeling well to stay home.
- Make sure everyone is aware that they must wear a mask.
- Have everyone check-in by using a sign-in sheet to record their name, the date and time.
- Screen all those attending instruction.
- Sanitize all surfaces (in-class and in vehicle).
- Have gloves, masks and hand sanitizer available for students, instructors and parent/guardians.
During Instruction:
- Encourage anyone attending instruction to use PPE, wash their hands, use hand sanitizer and sanitize any surfaces they have touched.
- Practice physical distancing.
- Ensure proper ventilation.
- Reduce time together and manage space.

After Instruction:
- Encourage anyone attending instruction to wash their hands and use hand sanitizer.
- Sanitize all surfaces after instruction and record time performed.

Manage the potential for liability.
Risk can not be eliminated, so focus on reducing risk.
Comprehensive PPE, disinfecting, hygiene and distancing practices will assist in reducing the risk.
How driver education courses are managed today, and in the future, will have a large impact on the health of instructors, students, parents/guardians and the community.