

COVID19_MT Guidance for Resumption of driving tests: theory and practical

Business continuity

Success in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic depends on the full cooperation of all sectors of society who play an essential role in curbing the spread of this disease, whilst continuing to provide their services to the community. Public Health Authorities will support business continuity while coordinating action in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognising that business continuity in respect of COVID-19 should be founded in expert health advice and constructive dialogue, the following principles shall apply:

- ✓ Everybody has the right to a healthy and safe working environment.
- ✓ The COVID-19 pandemic requires a uniquely focused approach to work health and safety as it applies to specific business needs, its workers and its clients.
- ✓ To keep healthy and safe, businesses must, in consultation with workers, assess the way they work to identify, understand and quantify risks and to implement and review control measures to address those risks.
- ✓ As COVID-19 restrictions are gradually relaxed, businesses and workers must work together to adapt and promote safe work practices, consistent with advice from health authorities, to ensure they are ready for the social distancing, exemplary hygiene measures and specific preventive measures that will be an important part of the transition.
- ✓ Businesses and workers must actively control against the transmission of COVID-19 while at work, consistent with the updated advice from the Public Health Authorities.
- ✓ Businesses and workers must prepare for the possibility that there will be cases of COVID-19 in the workplace and be ready to respond immediately, appropriately, effectively and efficiently, and consistent with specific recommendations from health authorities.

How COVID-19 spreads

The virus which causes COVID-19 disease can be spread through droplets from a sick person or on contact (by touch). COVID-19 disease often presents with

coughing or sneezing which release droplets of infected fluid. Cases may present with other symptoms or none at all. Most of these droplets can fall on nearby surfaces and objects - such as dashboard, steering wheel, gear knob and stalk, equipment, indicator stalks, door handles, seat belts etc. People can catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Standing within a distance of less than two metres of a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time, one can catch the disease by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them.

In other words, COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to flu. The most common symptoms of coronavirus include cough, fever, shortness of breath, tiredness, sore throat, runny / blocked nose, headache, muscle pain, loss of smell, loss of taste, diarrhoea or vomiting. Most persons infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. Risk of serious illness rises with age. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

If you develop these symptoms, please stay at home, contact your doctor and contact the Public Health team on (+356) 111 or 21 324086 for further advice and guidance. For more information on when to get tested, see guidance on www.covid19health.gov.mt

Practice Social Distancing in daily life

Avoid social contact with others, keeping a physical distance of at least two (2) metres in normal circumstances. Practice simple hygiene by covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and washing or sanitising hands frequently.

Use of face masks or visors

With the lifting of certain restrictive public health measures instituted as part of the COVID-19 Public Health Response, the Public Health Authorities require wearing a face mask in preference to a visor or in conjunction with it by individuals when outside their residence. Whilst in the vehicle:

- ✓ Students shall wear face masks or visors throughout the whole journey.
- ✓ Examiners are to wear face masks or visors throughout the whole journey.
- ✓ Instructors are to wear face masks or visors throughout the whole journey.

Vulnerable instructors

There are a number of instructors who will not be in a position to start providing lessons immediately, due to residing with vulnerable family members, young children or themselves being in the vulnerable group. These instructors will be given a chance to postpone their driving tests. Pre-empting this, Transport Malta requests that it be immediately be notified of such instructors, so as to avoid the booking and subsequent cancelling of tests and/or rescheduling of tests.

Procedures to reduce risk of COVID-19 spread on resumption of driving tests: theory and practical

Same rules apply both for Malta and Gozo based tests.

Theory test centre:

- ✓ Theory tests shall be carried out only by appointment, and the limit of the number of persons within the premises at any point in time shall be one (1) person per four (4) square metres and keeping a physical distance of at least two (2) metres between testing stations.
- ✓ Persons entering the theory test centre must have their body temperature checked before entering the premises. Individuals displaying fever (37.2°C or more) will not be allowed to enter.
- ✓ Face masks or visors shall be worn at all times inside the premises by both staff and visitors.
- ✓ Reading assistance and translator assisted theory tests will NOT be offered at this stage. This is valid until further notice.
- ✓ All computers, keyboards/mice, desks and chairs need to be properly disinfected using 70% alcohol before and after use.
- ✓ Use of toilets/bathrooms is not recommended.

For practical tests category A (Motorcycles)

- ✓ Students and/or instructors (as applicable) shall have their body temperature checked prior to the examination. Individuals displaying fever (37.2°C or more) will not be allowed to take the test.
- ✓ No students will be allowed to do the examination if they display any symptoms, or there is a suspicion, of not being in good health.
- ✓ The use of two-way radios shall be prohibited, and instead independent driving on pre-fixed routes shall be adopted.

- ✓ Driving instructors shall not accompany the examiner while on test. However, they shall remain available (on call) within the manoeuvring area in the eventuality of a stop test or an accident to assist as requested.
- ✓ The sharing of protective gloves and helmets is prohibited.
- ✓ Driving instructors shall disinfect using 70% alcohol the handlebars and seat before and after each test.

For practical tests category B (Cars)

- ✓ Students and/or instructors (as applicable) shall have their body temperature checked prior to the examination. Individuals displaying fever (37.2°C or more) will not be allowed to take the test.
- ✓ No students shall be allowed to do the examination if they display any symptoms, or there is a suspicion, of not being in good health.
- ✓ No more than the student and the TM driving examiner shall be allowed in the vehicle at any one time.
- ✓ The driving instructor shall not be allowed in the same vehicle during the test, barring exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of TM.
- ✓ The use of A/C's is currently NOT allowed even where fitted. (Public Health Authorities shall be issuing further instructions to address the issue in view of the hotter weather conditions in the coming months)
- ✓ Car windows shall remain (at least partially) open during the test.
- ✓ Car windows shall be opened completely for ten (10) minutes to air the vehicle at the end of the test, and before the driving instructor enters the vehicle to disinfect it.
- ✓ The following shall be properly disinfected using 70% alcohol by the driving instructor before and after each test: dashboard, steering wheel, gear knob, indicator stalks, door handles, seats and seat belts.
- ✓ Examiners shall disinfect their writing boards and hands before and after each driving test.
- ✓ Both front seats shall be ideally be covered in leather, plastic and / or rexine (i.e.: non penetrative materials) thus ensuring that any droplets remain on the seat's surface and can be disinfected more easily and effectively. Disposable plastic covers similar to the ones used by mechanics for servicing/repairs can also be used and these must be discarded safely after single use.

For practical tests categories C1, C, D1, and D (Goods carrying and passenger carrying vehicles)

- ✓ Students and/or instructors (as applicable) shall have their body temperature checked prior to the examination. Individuals displaying fever (37.2°C or more) will not be allowed to take the test.
- ✓ No students shall be allowed to do the examination if they display any symptoms, or there is a suspicion, of not being in good health.
- ✓ No more than the student and the TM driving examiner shall be allowed in the vehicle at any one time.
- ✓ The driving instructor shall not be allowed in the same vehicle during the test, barring exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of TM.
- ✓ The use of A/C's is currently NOT allowed even where fitted. (Public Health Authorities shall be issuing further instructions to address the issue in view of the hotter weather conditions in the coming months)
- ✓ Car windows shall remain (at least partially) open during the test.
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- ✓ The following shall be properly disinfected using 70% alcohol by the driving instructor before each test: dashboard, steering wheel, gear knob, indicator stalks, door handles, seats and seat belts.
- ✓ Examiners shall disinfect their writing boards and hands after each driving test.
- ✓ Both front seats shall be ideally be covered in leather, plastic and / or rexine (i.e.: non penetrative materials) thus ensuring that any droplets remain on the seat's surface and can be disinfected more easily and effectively. Disposable plastic covers similar to the ones used by mechanics for servicing/repairs can also be used and these must be discarded safely after single use.
- ✓ During the reversing exercise the driving instructor shall keep a safe distance from the examiner.

Module 5 (CPC [Certificate of Professional Competence] - Practical demonstration tests)

- ✓ Students and/or instructors (as applicable) shall have their body temperature checked prior to the examination. Individuals displaying fever (37.2°C or more) will not be allowed to take the test.

- ✓ No students shall be allowed to do the examination if they display any symptoms, or there is a suspicion, of not being in good health.
- ✓ No more than the student and the TM driving examiner shall be allowed in the vehicle at any one time.
- ✓ The use of A/C's is currently NOT allowed even where fitted. (Public Health Authorities shall be issuing further instructions to address the issue in view of the hotter weather conditions in the coming months)
- ✓ Car windows shall remain (at least partially) open during the test.
- ✓ Car windows shall be opened completely for ten (10) minutes to air the vehicle at the end of the test, and before the driving instructor enters the vehicle to disinfect it.
- ✓ The following shall be properly disinfected using 70% alcohol by the driving instructor before each test: dashboard, steering wheel, gear knob, indicator stalks, door handles, seats and seat belts.
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- ✓ Both front seats shall be ideally be covered in leather, plastic and / or rexine (i.e.: non penetrative materials) thus ensuring that any droplets remain on the seat's surface and can be disinfected more easily and effectively. Disposable plastic covers similar to the ones used by mechanics for servicing/repairs can also be used and these must be discarded safely after single use.

Cleaning and disinfection of vehicles at the end of the working day

- ✓ Apart from disinfection between tests, vehicles are to be thoroughly cleaned at the end of the working day. Pay close attention to surfaces that are touched often by passengers.
- ✓ Water and household detergents and the use of common disinfectant products should be enough for cleaning and disinfection. Examples of recommended disinfectants include 70% ethanol and products containing sodium hypochlorite (such as household bleach). Always carefully follow the directions on the product label.
- ✓ Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and safely dispose of them immediately after using them once.