

# COVID-19 Transitioning - Standards for Transport Service Providers and for Passengers using Transport Services

Version 5.0  
Effective from 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021

## Applicability

The following standards are issued under the Public Health Act Chapter 465 of the Laws of Malta. These standards apply for all means of Public Transport which include:

1. Scheduled Public Transport Services
2. Coaches, Minibuses, Minivans and Tail-lift Vans
3. Taxis and light passenger transport vehicles
4. Gozo Channel and all other Ferry Services
5. Commercial Passenger Vessels (Commercial vessels certified to carry passengers in terms of the Commercial Vessels Regulations)
6. Private and chartered recreational boats & yachts
7. Commercial Vessels, sea craft, jet-skies and towables (including self-drive rentals) being operated in terms of a Water Sports Operators Licence

## Scheduled Public Transport Services

### Passengers using the service

- ✓ Passengers not wearing a face mask or visor will not be allowed to board buses.
- ✓ Passengers are to be reminded that face masks or visors must be worn throughout the whole course of the journey.
- ✓ Passengers waiting for the bus in bus termini, interchanges and on bus stops are also to wear face masks or visors throughout their waiting time. Passengers are also requested to observe the social of 2 metres from other persons whilst queuing.
- ✓ The maximum limits of passengers allowed shall be as follows:

Bus type		Sitting passengers	Standing passengers (Adjusted)	Total passengers Adjusted
King Long	12 metre	41	5	46
Otokar	12 metre	42	5	47
Otokar	12 metre	35	5	40
Otokar	9 metre	31	5	36
Minibus	8.8 metre	17	0	17

- ✓ The bus operator will install stickers on the floor of the bus to guide passengers accordingly.
- ✓ Bus drivers will be responsible to limit the number of passengers on the bus.
- ✓ Passengers should always move back to allow for additional passengers to board the bus without blocking the passageway.
- ✓ Passengers are encouraged to use their *Tallinja Card* when paying for their fare onboard the bus. Persons paying by cash are required to have the exact fare.

### Persons providing the service

- ✓ Persons providing the service which include bus drivers and support service personnel operating in bus termini are to wear face masks and/or visors, at all times, whilst in service.



## Coaches, Minibuses, Minivans and Tail-lift Vans

### Passengers using the service

- ✓ Passengers not wearing face masks or visors will not be allowed to board.
- ✓ Passengers are to be reminded that face masks or visors must be worn throughout the whole course of the journey.
- ✓ Any coach or minibus or minivan or tail-lift van shall carry up to 65% of its maximum capacity, so that passengers on board can better observe the social distance of 2 metres from other persons.
- ✓ Passengers waiting to board any coach or minibus or minivan or tail-lift van are to wear face masks or visors and observe the social distance of 2 metres from other persons throughout their waiting time.

### Persons providing the service

- ✓ Drivers providing the service are to wear face masks or visors, at all times, whilst in service.

## Taxis and light passenger transport vehicles

- ✓ The guidelines issued earlier continue to apply. These can be found on <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/health-promotion/covid-19/Documents/mitigation-conditions-and-guidances/Guidance For Taxi And Cab Owners And Drivers.pdf>

## **Gozo Channel and all other Ferry Services (vessels that carry out point to point trips with frequent dis/embarkations)**

### **Passengers using the service**

- ✓ Passengers not wearing face masks or visors will not be allowed to board the ferry.
- ✓ Passengers are to be reminded that face masks or visors must be worn throughout the whole course of the journey.
- ✓ A ferry boat shall carry up to 65% of its maximum capacity.
- ✓ Passengers waiting for the ferry at the ferry terminals / landing sites are to wear face masks or visors and observe the social distance of 2 metres from other persons throughout their waiting time.

### **Persons providing the service**

- ✓ The crew of the ferry are to wear face masks or visors, at all times, whilst in service.
- ✓ The canteen/snack bar shall operate in conformity with the Closure of Food and Drink Outlets Regulations, 2021 and any of its amendments.

## **Commercial Passenger Vessels (Commercial vessels certified to carry passengers in terms of the Commercial Vessels Regulations)**

### **Vessels providing the service**

- ✓ Boats certified to carry up to a maximum of six (6) persons (including staff) shall be allowed to operate with this maximum number.
- ✓ For all other commercial vessels, the maximum number of passengers shall be 65% of the certified capacity.
- ✓ Operators to ascertain that passengers onboard can be seated in line with applicable social distancing regulations.
- ✓ Passengers to remain seated throughout the voyage.
- ✓ Only take-away pre-packed snacks and beverages can be offered/sold on board unless they can operate as a restaurant if they are so licensed, in which case the relevant standards shall apply.



- ✓ No alcohol is permitted to be on board, except for one unit of wine or beer per person served with main meals.
- ✓ Passengers to be pre advised at the time of the booking that no alcohol can be taken on board and that they are to stay at their allocated seating throughout the voyage.
- ✓ In accordance with the Closure of Certain Places of Entertainment Regulations, 2020 and the Organised Mass Events Regulations, 2021 and any of their amendments, boat parties or other organised events are prohibited, and live or recorded music may only be played at a level that is inaudible at a distance of 5m from the vessel.
- ✓ Operator and Master are responsible to ensure that during embarking and disembarking social distancing is maintained and carried out in an orderly organised manner.
- ✓ Operator shall ensure that face masks are worn by passengers and staff at all times. The exemption for wearing a mask is applicable whilst swimming and eating / drinking only.
- ✓ Operator shall provide hand sanitizing facilities on board.
- ✓ Operator to install signage onboard describing the restrictions in place.

### Passengers using the service

- ✓ Passengers not wearing face masks or visors will not be allowed to board the vessel.
- ✓ Passengers are to be reminded that face masks or visors must be worn throughout the whole course of the journey.
- ✓ Passengers waiting for the vessel at landing sites are to wear face masks or visors and observe the social distance of 2 metres from other persons throughout their waiting time.

### Persons providing the service

- ✓ The crew of the vessel are to wear face masks or visors, at all times, whilst in service.



## Private and chartered recreational boats & yachts

- ✓ Persons on board shall not exceed the maximum capacity as stipulated as per certification/insurance/CE plate.
- ✓ The number of persons on board must be in accordance EITHER with the Number of Persons in Public Places Regulations, 2021 and any of its amendments OR with the Groups of Persons in Residential Properties Regulations, 2021 and any of its amendments and that includes the captain and the crew in the case of chartered boats and yachts.
- ✓ Regular hand sanitizing as per good hygiene practices.
- ✓ Boats and yachts can only congregate in a group or berth/moor/anchor alongside each other when the total number of households in the group is in accordance with the Groups of Persons in Residential Properties Regulations, 2021 and any of its amendments. A wide berth from other vessels shall be maintained at all times in all other situations.
- ✓ In accordance with the Closure of Certain Places of Entertainment Regulations, 2020 and the Organised Mass Events Regulations, 2021 and any of their amendments, boat parties or other organised events are prohibited, and live or recorded music may only be played at a level that is inaudible at a distance of 5m from the vessel.

## Commercial Vessels, sea craft, jet-skies and towables (including self-drive rentals) being operated in terms of a Water Sports Operators Licence

- ✓ A vessel or craft can only be rented to members of the same household.
- ✓ Operator and Authorised Instructor are to ensure that social distancing is maintained at all times.
- ✓ Operator shall provide hand sanitizing facilities and ensure that face masks are worn by passengers and staff, at all times, as per applicable legislation.
- ✓ Persons and staff waiting for the vessel at landing sites are to wear face masks and observe the social distance of 2 metres from other persons throughout their waiting time.
- ✓ No alcohol is permitted on the premises or on board any sea craft.
- ✓ Thorough cleaning of the vessel or craft is to be carried out between each use.

## Special Note on ventilation

### ✓ **Public Transport Buses**

- Air conditioning systems in the buses can be switched on.
- The air ducts of the air conditioning systems will be fumigated every night by the authorities in conjunction with the bus operator.
- The inflow particulate air filters of the air conditioning systems on the buses are being upgraded to have an efficiency to block allergens of between 90% and 95% depending on the bus model. These filters will be cleaned regularly in accordance with manufacturer guidelines.
- The air conditioning system will be set to ensure that the air within the bus is changed at least eight times per hour. This will be done by combining the internal re-circulation of air which will be filtered with the particulate air filters, and external air brought into the vehicle through the system intakes.
- Windows and escape hatches will remain closed for the correct functioning of the air conditioning systems, however both front doors and rear doors (where applicable) will be opened whenever the bus stops on a bus stop and at the end of each trip.

### ✓ **Other Vehicles** (e.g. coaches, private cars, taxis, vans, minibuses, etc.):

- Air conditioning systems in vehicles can be switched on
- Avoid using the recirculated air option for the vehicle's ventilation
- Operate the AC with ventilation selector on outside air. Typically, this is presented with the following icon:



- On long trips either keep windows slightly open or open windows frequently to ventilate with fresh air.
- For coaches, vans and minibuses only: All vehicle doors will be opened whenever the vehicle stops to board or alight passengers during a trip and at the end of each trip.



## Special Note on masks and visors

- ✓ Passengers and staff are to wear face masks or visors throughout the whole course of any land or sea journey, as per the Mandatory Use of Medical and Cloth Masks Regulations 2021 and any of its amendments.
- ✓ Face masks should NOT be placed on young children under 3 years of age; on anyone who has trouble breathing; or on anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.

## Special Note on sanitisers

- ✓ All transport service operators will continue to provide sanitisers for the use of passengers boarding vehicles. Passengers are to be encouraged to make use of these sanitisers on boarding the vehicle.