



April 3, 2020

Frequently asked questions about the spread of Coronavirus/COVID-19 and Island Transit service

As the coronavirus/COVID-19 continues to spread in Washington State, Island Transit is working with public health authorities to implement the latest in preventative measures to protect our riders and employees. Island Transit's number one goal is safety. This fact sheet is intended to answer the most frequently asked questions about what Island Transit is doing. Please note that it is imperative that everyone, not just Island Transit staff, engage in preventative measures. This starts with bus riders staying at home and not riding the bus if they are sick. It includes personal health steps such as washing your hands, not touching your face, and covering cough and sneezes. It includes, when possible, keeping your distance from others and not staying near the coach operators seat. It includes preparing alternative transportation arrangements should your route be impacted.

With the Governor extending the Stay at Home order to May 4, what is Island Transit doing?

We are operating on a reduced Emergency Service Plan to provide critical transportation for people who work in essential jobs and for those who need our services to access groceries, medications and other essential items. We also are asking passengers to cover their faces while riding the bus and paratransit. Read the latest on April 6 Service Reductions and New Safety Guidelines, {link to the two new news releases in PDF form)

What is Island Transit doing to prevent the spread of Coronavirus/COVID-19 on the buses?

Island Transit is following the latest guidance from local, state, and federal public health authorities. Island Transit cleans our buses each day. Island Transit is using Clorox Healthcare Hydrogen Peroxide Cleaner Disinfectant daily on the grab bars, pull cords, poles and other hard surfaces on our buses. This disinfectant has been approved for combatting COVID-19 by the Center for Biocide Chemistries. Island Transit is asking our passengers to engage in preventative actions to stop the spread, as well. This includes avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth; washing hands; sneezing/coughing into a tissue; avoiding close contact with other; and, most importantly, staying home (and not riding the bus) when sick. These measures will be updated as the guidance changes.



What other new measures has Island Transit taken to protect people from COVID-19?

In collaboration with public health advisors, Island Transit has taken additional health and safety measures to protect people from the spread of COVID-19. We have minimized driver-to-passenger interaction by removing access to passenger seats nearest the driver. When possible, we are directing riders to board two-door buses at the rear door and stay behind any sectioned off areas. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes have been provided to our coach operators who are now wearing gloves and masks. When possible, buses are being wiped down at the end of each shift. Vehicles are sanitized and cleaned deeply daily. Our facilities also are being cleaned and sanitized daily. All staff perform a health screening before they come to work. We're also dedicated to continuous improvement and constantly working to adopt our procedures and protocols as more is learned about the virus.

What is Island Transit doing to protect coach operators?

In addition to the daily cleaning protocol outlined above, each day Island Transit disinfects the coach operator's seating area. The agency has also increased the space between our coach operators and their customers while on the road. While our coach operators have been given masks, the current guidance from public health authorities is that masks or gloves are not necessary at this time. Some coach operators may choose to wear them, however, in part to help them not touch their faces.

If an employee of Island Transit is diagnosed with COVID-19, will you notify the public of any possible risk of infection?

Yes, we will notify the public if there is a risk of infection by working closely with Island County Public Health officials who oversee these cases. As of April 1, 2020, we've had two staff members report a COVID-19 diagnosis. According to Island County Public Health, COVID-19 now is widely spread across our island community. Everywhere we go, there is a risk of possible exposure. At Island Transit, we are operating as if any surface or person could be a possible carrier of the virus and we are acting accordingly by doing our best to protect people while maintaining critical transportation services. Our staff continually wipes down hard surfaces. We sanitize our buses daily. Unfortunately, we expect more COVID-19 cases among our community and employees. For transparency, we are reporting these first two cases. We will not be announcing every new illness or positive diagnosis in our workplaces since that could lead to individuals being identified and could cause other spaces to be mistakenly seen as being without risk. Additionally, if employees fear their privacy will be compromised, they may not seek needed medical care, which hinders the ability of public health officials to respond. We ask that all our passengers continue to practice measures to protect themselves and others: wear something over your face, cover coughs, don't touch your face, maintain good hygiene, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, don't ride the bus when sick, and maintain



social distancing at all times. We also ask that people honor the Stay Home, Stay Healthy orders issued by the Governor.

As a bus rider what can I do to stop the spread of the Coronavirus/COVID-19?

To help stop the spread of COVID-19, please do several things. Avoid close contact with other people, particularly those who are sick. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. If you cough or sneeze, cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then throw it away. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. Most importantly, if you are sick, please stay home and do not ride the bus.

Should I ride the bus if I am sick?

No. You should stay home and seek medical attention.

What should I do if I am sick?

If you are sick, including with COVID-19, stay home and contact your medical provider or Island County Public Health for further direction.

Could Island Transit bus service be impacted if the coronavirus outbreak worsens?

Yes. We urge all riders to prepare alternative means of transportation in the event that Island Transit's service is impacted. Please check the Island Transit website for the latest information. Please note that at this time Island Transit will continue to operate as scheduled. That could change if our workforce is reduced because of sickness. If that were to happen, we will need to adjust and reduce our service because of a lack of coach operators and other staff. This would be necessary because Island Transit has a limited number of coach operators available to fill in when others are sick. We will also rely on guidance from Island County Public Health to determine if service needs to be reduced because of public health concerns.

If service is reduced, what routes and trips would be affected?

To the extent possible, Island Transit is planning to maintain key routes on both Camano and Whidbey islands, even if a reduction of service is necessary. The specific routes and trips which will be maintained will be listed on our website and other places should a reduction be necessary. For those who rely on Island Transit's paratransit service, the agency will strive, working with partner agencies, to provide paratransit trips as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Again, we recommend that all users of Island Transit should have a "back-up" plan should the agency be forced to reduce service.



Where can I get the latest information about Island Transit bus service?

Please check the website at islandtransit.org for the latest information on route or schedule changes. You can also call Island Transit at 360-6778-7771. Or, sign up for automated alerts by going to Island Transit's website at www.islandtransit.org

Where can I get more information about the 2019 Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19)?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has information at www.cdc.gov/COVID19.

Island County Public Health has local updates at <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/Pages/Home.aspx>

The Washington State Department of Health has a coronavirus hotline that can be reached at 1-800-525-0127, press #.