

UK Tram



SOCIAL DISTANCING

Tramway Guidance

Abstract

This document's focus is on how to achieve Social Distancing. PPE or risk assessments are covered in separate guidance elsewhere.

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PART 1: GENERIC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These guidelines are based upon and should be read in conjunction with the advice offered by Public Health England, Public Health Wales and Health Protection Scotland. They reflect the most up to date advice (at the time of writing) from Government and explain how to protect yourself and others from the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Please read the following guidance carefully and utilise along with the latest Guidance on Public Transport use that can be found [here](#) and the recently published guidance for passengers, with information about how they can travel safely which can be found [here](#).
- 1.2. PHE has recently updated their guidance for employers to include a specific section on social distancing in the work-place. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-andbusinesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronaviruscovid-9#social-distancing-in-the-workplace-principles> and here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-duringcoronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#transport-businesses>
- 1.3. UKTram are working closely with the Light rail industry to share best practice and will advise where possible relevant guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE), new health advice and working practices developed during the course of this health emergency. In line with this an employee risk framework is being developed and shared with UKTram members.
- 1.4. Social distancing involves reducing day-to-day contact with other people as much as possible, in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing measures are in place as a means of reducing the burden on the NHS by slowing down and reducing the rate of transmission in the community. It is not a measure to prevent people from ever getting COVID-19.
- 1.5. All employees involved with or engaged in light rail systems are asked to follow the advice provided on social distancing where practicable to do so; and to support the national effort to protect citizens and key workers. It is vital we all play our part in protecting each other during our working day whilst carrying out our essential duties.
- 1.6. Social distancing includes, where possible maintaining a distance of 2 metres from other people to minimise the spread of COVID-19 through contact or transmission of airborne wet particles. Where the application of a 2-metre distance is not possible in relational to all tasks, an As Low As Reasonably Practicable **ALARP** approach should be taken, to reduce risk in line with

industry and organisational established and recognised risk management principles.

- 1.7. All staff should comply with the public health guidance applicable at the time, including the principles of social distancing wherever possible.

2. Scope

- 2.1. These guidelines are designed for use by Light rail staff in typical associated environments such as Tramstops boarding areas, trams and depots during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.2. Some of the guidance is generic and could apply in any situation, other elements are more suitable in particular situations.
- 2.3. This document's focus is on how to achieve Social Distancing in the workplace.
Details about risk assessments or PPE for specific tasks are covered elsewhere.

3. How the Virus is spread

- 3.1. Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. Generally, coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.
- 3.2. Further information on clinical features of the disease is available here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirusbackground-information/wuhannovel-coronavirus-epidemiology-virology-andclinical-features>
- 3.3. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another
 - Via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- 3.4. All employees, whether at home or in the workplace need to wash their hands regularly with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitiser could be provided and used in any cases where a hand washing facility is not available.

4. If a Member of Staff Develops Symptoms at Work

- 4.1. If a member of staff becomes unwell with the symptoms of coronavirus COVID-19 they should be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance.
- 4.2. If they need clinical advice, they should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- 4.3. If a member of staff or a passenger has helped someone who was taken unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, they may not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.
- 4.4. It is not necessary to close the workplace or send any staff home under current government policy. Keep monitoring the website for the latest details.

5. Latest Advice

- 5.1. The advice from Government can change on a daily basis; this guidance may be superseded by new information. For the latest advice, operators and their respective staff should regularly check announcements on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

PART 2: SOCIAL DISTANCING - STAFF

6. Social Distancing – overview

- 6.1. Social distancing involves reducing day-to-day contact with other people as much as possible, in order to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Businesses and workplaces should encourage their employees to work at home, wherever possible.
- 6.2. If you cannot work from home then you can still travel to work. This is consistent with the Chief Medical Officer for England's advice.
- 6.3. The advice on social distancing measures applies to everyone and should be followed wherever possible. Workplaces need to avoid crowding and minimise opportunities for the virus to spread by maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres (3 steps) between individuals wherever possible. This advice applies both to inside the workplace, and to where staff may need to interact with customers.
- 6.4. Staff should be reminded to wash their hands regularly using soap and water for 20 seconds and particularly after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing. Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser could be

used. Workers should cover any coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then dispose of the tissue in a bin and immediately wash their hands.

- 6.5. Some staff will be required to interact with customers whilst undertaking essential tasks. Staff in other locations may not be able to perform critical tasks whilst maintaining a 2m distance from other colleagues. Therefore, the following guidance is offered to help them continue to do their job safely and to provide tips and suggestions for maintaining social distancing where possible.
- 6.6. It is recognised that transport is vital to support our economy and public services. It can continue if done in accordance with the social distancing guidelines wherever possible.
- 6.7. This applies if you operate trains, trams, buses, planes, ferries or other enclosed transport where staff on board cannot stay 2 metres away from each other or passengers at all times.
- 6.8. Staff should wash or sanitise their hands for 20 seconds or more and more frequently than normal.

7. Social Distancing - on the way to work

7.1. When travelling to and from work:

- Walk or cycle if possible.
- If travelling using private transport, do so alone where possible
- If travelling using public transport, maintain the recommended social distance of 2 metres from other people where possible
- If travelling to work in a works van - see suggestions in section 15 *Travel to site and using works vehicles*
- Whilst travelling, where possible and safe to do so, avoid touching high touch areas, such as buttons, rails, door-knobs etc.
- On arrival at your place of work, wash your hands with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds
- Use disposable towels or hand driers to dry your hands
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8. Social Distancing - in the workplace

- 8.1. Managers should implement practical measures to maintain appropriate social distancing amongst staff to minimise the spread of COVID-19. Reasonable measures include:
 - Encouraging staff to regularly wash their hands and avoid touching their faces
 - Regularly reminding staff of social distancing guidelines
 - Highlighting surfaces to avoid touching in case of contamination

- Consulting and amending local roster arrangements
- Staggering break times to ensure uncrowded rest spaces
- Limiting numbers of employees in staff areas, offices, canteens and changing rooms etc.
- Restricting access to offices
- Restricting access to communication and control rooms
- Stopping non-essential tasks
- Revising sign-on arrangements

8.2. Managers are encouraged to review location workload, practices and staffing levels to the minimum needed to deliver and support essential activities.

8.3. Employees not required on shift should remain at home. Managers should review rosters and adjust shifts ensuring work activities are fairly shared amongst the pool of available staff.

8.4. Where an essential activity cannot be achieved without the need to be within 2-metres of someone else, consider if it is possible to:

- Achieve the desired outcome another way e.g. using alternative methods
- Defer the activity until a later date i.e. how critical is the activity now?
- Reduce the need for both people to be present
- Reduce the amount of time both people need to be in close proximity
- Where it is not possible to remain 2 metres apart, staff should work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face if possible
- Where face-to-face contact is essential, this should be kept to 15 minutes or less wherever possible

Note: This document's focus is on how to achieve Social Distancing. PPE, face covering and risk assessments are covered in separate guidance elsewhere.

8.5 As much as possible, keep teams of workers together (cohorting in the same general area), and keep teams as small as possible. Nevertheless, staff should not gather in groups. People working together should be restricted to a maximum of 2 people and even then, social distancing rules should be applied. Team members should be reminded of social distancing rules and the need to regularly wash their hands. This is especially important:

- In mess rooms
- At work locations
- In offices and control rooms
- In mobility vehicles
- At gate lines and on concourse and platform areas
- When engaging with others
- Signing on for duty (clocking in)

8.6. Managers should consider the layout and use of the workplace. Consider the use of signage, screens, markings and other physical prompts to promote social distancing.

- 8.7. Desks and workspaces should be separated to enable employees to work at a safe distance from each other wherever possible.
- 8.8. Where hand washing facilities are not available, use hand sanitiser. If any cleaning supplies are missing/running low, staff should notify a local manager to get these replenished as soon as possible.
- 8.9. Meetings should be held remotely wherever possible. If physical meetings cannot be avoided, attendees must adhere to social distancing rules.
- 8.10. Discuss and consider flexible ways of working – for example changing start and finish times to avoid peak commuting times wherever possible.
- 8.11. Non-essential face-to-face events and meetings should be cancelled or rearranged to phone or video conference calls wherever possible.
- 8.12. Any social club areas should be closed in line with Government advice.
- 8.13. Regulate entry to workplaces, so that the premises do not become overcrowded.
- 8.14. Use additional signage to ask customers not to enter the premises if they have Symptoms
- 8.15. If feasible, place plexiglass barriers at points of regular interaction as an additional element of protection for workers and customers (where customers might touch or lean against these, ensure they are cleaned and disinfected as often as is feasible in line with standard cleaning procedures).

9. Maintenance and Cleaning of Shared Spaces and Equipment

- 9.1. Additional cleaning is appropriate, particularly on surfaces that are frequently touched by multiple persons (especially metal and hard plastic). Surface wipes should be used to clean down tables and surfaces of regular use using normal domestic cleaning products. This should be kept under constant review to reduce contamination and transference risk.
- 9.2. Any equipment needed for daily duties should be issued individually where appropriate and where individual issue is not possible, shared items must be thoroughly cleaned with alcohol wipes before and after use.
- 9.3. General cleaning of desk spaces, shared areas and kitchen areas should be increased.

PART 3: SOCIAL DISTANCING AT FIXED LOCATIONS

10. Social Distancing - Interchanges Specific Activity Guidance

- 10.1. Consider the use of signage, e.g. floor markings, to signal 2 metre intervals to facilitate social distancing between passengers whilst transiting through transport hubs and on public transport. This to include queues for replacement services.
- 10.2. Remind all customers that they should only travel when essential, such as travelling to work when they cannot work from home, and that when they do so they should also remain 2 metres apart where possible.
- 10.3. Communicate that staff should move around the tram or replacement vehicle as little as possible to maintain distance from passengers. Increase the frequency of cleaning procedures on board and in terminal or stations areas, to ensure all areas are disinfected as often as is feasible.
- 10.4. Essential activities at static locations include security and revenue checks, customer assistance (including ticket transactions), emergency response; and reactive operational tasks.
- 10.5. Individual staff members carrying out customer information activities should maintain social distancing where it is reasonable and practicable to do so.
- 10.6. A customer is likely to be stressed about the change in experience – staff can empathise with them about these being difficult circumstances and thank them for their understanding.
- 10.7. We know that many operators have existing relationships with their customers – use these to your advantage to thank customers for their understanding.
- 10.8. When reviewing travel documents, customers should be asked to place the documents in a place where detail can be seen without touching them.
- 10.9. Passengers requiring assistance should be transported in the backseats of buggies and in family groups only; the vehicle should be wiped down in between each assistance job.
- 10.10. Always practice good personal hygiene, wash your hands regularly for a minimum of 20 seconds. Where a hand-washing facility is not available, hand sanitiser may be made available. Hands should be washed immediately if you come into direct contact with another person.
- 10.11. Consider the management of access at boarding and alighting areas. Information on social distancing should be clearly displayed and safe demarcation lines may be implemented to assist with separation.

- 10.12 The continued use of posters and announcements to remind travellers and staff to wash their hands often, follow general hygiene advice and to remain at an appropriate distance should continue.

11. Social Distancing - Passenger Assistance

11.1. General assistance to customer should be provided as follows:

- Be supportive and communicate clearly with customers so that they understand the reason for your actions.
- Wherever possible maintain the recommended 2 metre social distance between staff and customers until it is absolutely necessary to move closer – keep periods of close proximity working to an absolute minimum.
- When providing direct assistance attempt to keep as much separation as possible between staff and the person being assisted, for example maintain an arms-length distance with visually impaired passengers.

11.2. When assisting wheelchair users:

- Remember to ask them not to turn to face you. Wipe down handles before pushing and after pushing a wheelchair – remember that the customer may not be able to do this themselves.
- Power wheelchairs are not likely to require assistance as they are self-propelled.
- Avoid being in confined spaces with the customer, e.g. lifts where possible. If the customer requires use of the lift, you can assist them into the lift. Staff could then take the stairs and meet the customer as the lift arrives. This will be more practical at some locations than others.
- If the customer has requested luggage assistance, they should be asked that their luggage be set down, and for them to move away. Staff can then approach their luggage without having to be within 2 metres of the customer.

11.3. When assisting a customer with visual impairment:

- Staff should ask how they would like to be assisted. If guiding is required, use a vest or some other clothing between their hand and your arm that can be removed after assisting. Remember to explain staff are doing for everyone's safety.

11.4. If a customer with hearing impairments asks you for help, consider these factors:

- A screen will likely reflect light when talking
- Face to face over 2 metres can work in many circumstances
- Consider the written information you are displaying – keep messages clear and succinct.

11.5. Customers with neuro-diverse disabilities and learning disabilities may find these times unsettling. Be patient and calm. Although they are likely to be

aware of the 2-metre requirement, if they need reminding please do so with consideration that they might have forgotten.

12. Management of Passenger Amenities at interchanges

- 12.1. For interchanges that have **escalators**, the following actions outlined below may prove useful:
 - Provide signage at the escalator entrance point to remind users of social distancing requirements
 - Demarcate social distancing lines on escalator handrails or steps
 - Make station announcements restricting passenger movement on escalators for example advise passengers to stand to the left, maintain the recommended 2 metre distance and avoid passing each other on the escalator
 - Increased cleaning regime of handrails and other surfaces.
- 12.2. For Interchanges that have **lifts**, these should be maintained to allow access to operational areas, however action to maintain social distancing requirements should be taken:
 - Provide signage to advise potential users of alternative routes
 - Place social distancing posters in and at the entrance of lifts
 - Reduce lift availability where reasonable to do so
 - Apply demarcation lines inside lifts.
- 12.3. **Seating provisions** at Tram stops should be reviewed to support social distancing and to reduce cleaning requirements:
 - Remove seats or restrict access to seats in concourse areas
 - Review seating layouts, taking account of social distancing requirements
 - Provide social distancing signage near and around seating areas
 - Make regular announcements to customers.
- 12.4. Toilet provision should be maintained; toilet facilities are vital to upkeep personal hygiene. However, to support social distancing and hygiene, Operators should consider the below measures:
 - Close or request the closure of toilets more regularly to allow more frequent cleaning - this will also protect cleaning staff from coming into contact with customers
 - Close some urinals to support social distancing
 - Demarcate the floor areas at sinks
 - Limit hand dryers to maintain social distancing guidelines.
- 12.5. Ticket buying facilities at tramstops and other locations should be reviewed with operators to ensure appropriate social distancing and hygiene arrangements:

- Demarcate queuing systems at ticket outlets and ticket vending machines (TVMs)
- Limit the number of TVMs across tramstops to support their increased cleaning
- Introduce contactless payment methods only to reduce handling of cash
- to implement a cashless system, discuss, confirm and arrange provision of hand gel and hand washing facilities to station staff
- Ticket offices should use screens where possible.
- Open plan ticket offices may need to be rearranged to encourage social distancing where necessary.
- See photos in Section 15 for examples.

13. Assistance to an unwell or injured passenger

- 13.1. When providing assistance to unwell customers, the situation should be assessed and a decision made on whether the staff member can deal with the situation safely, or whether professional medical assistance is needed.
- 13.2. Staff members should avoid contact with customers displaying symptoms (a new continuous cough or a high temperature) of COVID-19. Unwell customers should be advised not to travel further and to return home. This will also help to protect others from infection.
- 13.3. If the customer is not well enough to make a direct journey home, a supervisor must be notified immediately so that the unwell person can be directed to a designated safe location and advice on alternative transport should be given to help them complete their journey. If customers are not able to travel it is expected that medical assistance from paramedics will be required.
- 13.4. If a disabled customer requires passenger assistance, the journey should be assessed. If the customer is required to make an interchange, consider if an alternative mode would be better placed – such as a taxi with a split partition. If a tram journey suits, make sure to follow as much of the assistance guidance above without placing yourself in direct contact with the person (bearing in mind that staff might be able to assist a wheelchair user from behind without them coughing in your direction). Follow the hygiene guidance after providing assistance.
- 13.5. Where possible you should identify a location, room or facility to isolate unwell or staff until trained medical assistance is available. These areas should be cleaned after each use to ensure they remain safe for use.
- 13.6. You must not put your staff at risk subject to assisting someone as set out in 13.4, and take all necessary precautions to prevent close contact with anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19.

- 13.7. If a member of staff or a passenger has helped someone who was taken unwell with symptoms of COVID-19, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly as per PHE guidelines for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.

PART 4: SOCIAL DISTANCING IN ENGINEERING LOCATIONS

14. Depots and Workshops

- 14.1. Engineering locations have implemented some great innovative solutions to encourage a two metres or greater separation between colleagues.
- 14.2. Depots are a hub of activity on shop floors, production offices, stores and mess rooms. UKTram has been made aware of good practice solutions, such as:
- Use visible signage on doors and windows reminding people to stay 2m apart or to limit the number of people in rooms.
 - Use visible markings on floors to promote single/limited occupancy or specific areas to use or not use.
 - Where practical, offer the option of staggered start and finish times.
 - Stagger the use of spaces and communicate this to team members.
 - Based on the size of each facility, determine how many people can use it at any one time to maintain a distance of two metres
- 14.3. Canteens:
- Staff canteens should not be serving food for consumption on site - these should be takeaway only as per government guidance.
 - Ask staff to bring pre-prepared meals and refillable drinking bottles from home
 - Staff should sit 2 metres apart from each other whilst eating and avoid all contact
 - Where catering is provided on site, provide pre-prepared and wrapped food only.
 - Payments should be taken by contactless card wherever possible.
 - Crockery, eating utensils, cups etc. should not be used.
 - Introduce enhanced cleaning of any drinking water dispensing devices.
 - Tables should be cleaned between each use.
 - All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for others to clear up.
 - All areas used for eating must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each break and shift, including chairs, door handles, vending machines and payment devices.

14.4. Mess rooms and seating areas:

- Break times should be staggered to reduce congestion and contact at all times
- Move around tables and chairs in mess rooms to limit occupancy
- Allow a two metre separation between seating areas.
- Allow at least two metres between mess room tables. S
- Consider opening up additional spaces to help spread people around and maintain two metre separation.
- Switch vending machines off unless they are essential for food options - if so ensure that the machine is cleaned appropriately.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitiser should be available at the entrance of any room where people eat and should be used by workers when entering and leaving the area

14.5. Office areas:

- Use markings on the floor to encourage staff to use social distancing principles.
- Restrict physical access to the offices (use hatches to communicate through).
- Move desks and chairs to limit occupation
- Consider whether splitting teams up across multiple locations – occupying meeting rooms or other areas normally allocated to flexible use/ training.

14.6. Similar to cash machine demarcations, mark 2-metre segregation areas around any places an individual may need to stand to complete a repetitive or routine task in a given area (e.g. signing in out/ communicating through a hatch/ fobbing machine/control panels).

14.7. Consider the best place to carry out Team Briefs - these are likely to be anywhere that discourages close confines, is well ventilated and has few high-touch points.

14.8. Consider whether any goods coming into the depot can be left for a “cooling off” period before being further handled.

15. Travel to site and using works vehicles

15.1. Works vans in general:

- Consider reducing technician-in-van activities to critical use and where possible, only one person to travel in the vehicle;
- Consider using larger vehicles than normal to allow people to space out, if one person per vehicle is not possible.
- Consider hiring additional vehicles to the amount of employees travelling in one vehicle.

- Consider fitting screens to vehicles to separate the driver from passengers. See example of rudimentary screen fitted in a works van in Section 16.
- Ensure where possible that the seats immediately adjacent to the driver are kept free.
- Use signage or 'sashes' where necessary.

15.2. Managers should consider whether workers should travel to site alone using their own transport as a means of reducing the time spent in a vehicle with others. If so:

- Parking arrangements for additional cars and bicycles may be needed on site
- Other means of transport to avoid public transport e.g. cycling may be needed
- Provide hand cleaning facilities at entrances and exits. This should be soap and water wherever possible or hand sanitiser if water is not available
- Consider how someone taken ill would get home.
- Ensure staff members are able to maintain suitable vehicle insurance for any work-related travel in private vehicles, by extending existing business insurance.

16. Working on Infrastructure

16.1. Work taking place on the infrastructure in urban areas is likely to increase contact with members of the public:

- As far as possible, where workers are split into teams or shift groups, fixing these teams or shift groups so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people.
- Employees should maintain the 2 metre distance wherever possible
- Task which require employees to work in closer proximity than 2 metres should be avoided where possible.
- If the task must be carried out then face coverings should be worn for the duration of the task.
- Consider using barriers depicting social distance signage around the work area to warn members of the public.
- Identifying areas where people must pass things directly to each other or share tools/equipment, and look for ways to remove direct contact through use of drop-off points or transfer zones.
- Using remote working tools to avoid meetings with lots of people.