



MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT

Corporate Communication Unit

Corner Richmond and London Streets, Port of Spain

Tel: (868) 625-1225 Ext 10813 Fax: (868)625-3091 Email: communications@mowt.gov.tt

MEDIA RELEASE

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MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19: GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The free movement of citizens through the use of public transport is critical for our country's stability. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19), now declared a global pandemic, has changed every facet of our daily operations. As such, the Ministry of Works and Transport has taken decisive action to ensure that the health and safety of the travelling public is addressed, given the reliance of thousands of citizens on these services.

To treat with COVID-19, all agencies including the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT), the Public Transportation Service Corporation (PTSC) and the Water Taxi Service, have reviewed and elevated their preventative measures to avoid the spread of the virus and to protect citizens. The various organizations continue to review their cleaning protocols to ensure they are up-to-date as the current situation evolves. In this regard, all public transport systems have adopted the following measures:

- Social distancing practices. Passenger accommodation on all PTSC buses, Water Taxis and Inter-Island Ferry vessels will be reduced by 50% until further notice.
- Routine sanitization before and after every trip -
 - All transport units will be fully sanitized before and after each service. This involves cleaning of high touch areas such as stop buttons, hand rails and grab straps. This will supplement normal cleaning arrangements.
- Public transport units, where possible, will operate without air-condition. Windows will be opened to allow fresh air to circulate which can significantly reduce the spread of the virus;
- Adequate hand sanitizer dispensers will be available for public use;
- Adequate supplies of soap will be available in all public washroom facilities;

- Staff will be provided with an adequate supply of hand sanitizers;
- All Tours and Charter services will be cancelled until further notice; and
- Commuters who display flu-like symptoms will be discouraged from utilizing all forms of public transportation.

These measures have been introduced based on the advice of the Ministry of Health and international best practices in light of COVID-19. The Ministry of Works and Transport will keep these increased measures in place for as long as needed in the best interest of the health and safety of all citizens.

While the various organizations are implementing preventative measures, the general public also has a significant role to play. To support our efforts, members of the public are urged to practice good personal hygiene including:

- Washing of hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Covering of nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze and dispose of the tissue immediately;
- Cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow if you do not have a tissue; and
- Avoid close contact with people who have flu-like symptoms.

Citizens are also encouraged to do the following:

- Practice social distancing measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Stagger travel times as follows:
 - Travel outside of peak times which will help reduce the number of persons using public transport
 - Plan ahead before you travel.

At this point in time, there is no need to shut down the country's public transport system. However, as we continue to monitor the status of this global health pandemic in Trinidad and Tobago's circumstances, we will keep the public apprised of all new measures to safe guard the public's interest. During this period, the Ministry urges all citizens to practice social responsibility as we collectively navigate our country through these trying times.
