

Standard Operating Procedure for Public Transportation post Movement Control Order

A substantial proportion of the Malaysian population are dependent on public transportation to go about with their daily lives. With the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is therefore paramount that a Standard Operating Procedure for Public Transportation is established to minimise the risk of spread of SARS-CoV2, thus avoiding any COVID-19 outbreak potentially arising from the use of public transportation.

The main mode of transmission of the SARS CoV2 is through droplets, which can spread directly from an infected person when he or she is coughing, sneezing, or even talking forcefully. COVID-19 infection can also spread if an individual touches objects or surfaces where the infectious droplets have landed, and subsequently touches his or her own face, hence transferring the virus laden droplets.

There are a number of things that the public could do to minimise the risk of spread of COVID19 infection; these include practising social or physical distancing, maintaining hand hygiene, minimising touching of objects or surfaces, wearing of mask in public spaces, and keeping the environment clean.

The implementation of social or physical distancing in a public transport is not practical and may not be economically feasible Therefore, other measures also are emphasised:

Environmental Control

1. The public transport should have fresh air circulation.
 - This can be achieved by opening small windows at the front and at the back of the transport; or
 - In air-conditioned vehicles, the recirculating air button  must be switched off, and the fresh air button  needs to be switched on.

For the driver

1. The minimal personal protective equipment that is required for the driver is a face mask, that must be worn at all times.
2. The driver must at all times maintain hand hygiene by either washings his hands, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after interaction with passengers.
3. The driver is recommended to have a separate set of clothes for work and if possible, to shower or change clothes before going home.

For the passenger

1. Passengers are encouraged to bring their own hand disinfectant and use it after touching a common surface/ object, and before touching their face.
2. Passengers should wear a face mask at all times while waiting for, and travelling in public transports.
3. If possible, passengers should try to stay 1 metre away from other passengers while waiting for, and travelling in the public transport.
4. Passengers are encouraged to use electronic payment methods such travel cards, touch-n-go cards, e-wallets, debit cards or credit cards.

Before Entering the Public Transport

1. Ensure that there is a queue while waiting, and before boarding the public transport.
2. Ensure a distance of at least 1 metre between passengers. If the 1 metre distance cannot be achieved, it must be ensured that the passengers are wearing facemasks at all times.
3. If possible, the surfaces at the public transport stop should be cleaned at least once every 2 hours with appropriate disinfectants.
4. Suitable signs must be posted at appropriate locations in the waiting areas (stations/ stops) to educate the passengers on the importance of physical distancing, hand hygiene and wearing of face masks in public areas.
5. If possible, consider providing a hand disinfectant in the public transport stop for passengers to observe hand hygiene before entering the public transport.
6. If possible, the passenger doors should be able to open and close automatically. If not, then the handles should be cleaned after each passenger enter or leave the vehicle, or at least every 2 hours.

While in the Public Transport

1. If possible, all public transport should have a physical barrier between the driver and the passengers. The physical barrier should be built in such a way that it is able to minimise the driver from exposure to any secretions from the passenger either in the form of saliva, coughing or sneezing.
2. If possible, all transactions should be in electronic form i.e., travel card, touch-n-go, e-wallet, debit or credit card. The use of cash should be discouraged.
3. If possible, there should be at least 1 metre distance between passengers while in the public transport. If this is not feasible, the passengers must use face mask at all times while in the public transport. In short distance travels, all forms of drinking, and eating should not be allowed inside the public transport, to prevent the passengers from removing their face masks.
4. If possible, hand sanitizers should be provided inside the public transport to ensure that the passenger can maintain hand hygiene.
5. If possible, surfaces of the public transport must be cleaned after each passenger disembark or at least once every 2 hours with appropriate disinfectants.
6. Suitable signs must be posted at appropriate locations inside the public transport to educate the passengers on the importance of physical distancing, hand hygiene and wearing of face masks in public areas.
7. If possible, the passenger doors should be able to open and close automatically. If not, the handles should be cleaned after each passenger enters or leaves the vehicle, or at least every 2 hours.

After the passenger leaves the public transport or while in the depot

1. Terminal cleaning of the vehicles must be undertaken with appropriate disinfectants at the end of each working day. The terminal cleaning can be done by wiping the place down with appropriate disinfectants, using an appropriate chemical to fog the public transport or using Ultraviolet C (UVC) light disinfectant.

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