

Coronavirus – wearing of masks is compulsory on public transport from Monday

New approach put in place as Scotland moves to Phase 2 of recovery

Face coverings will become mandatory on public transport from Monday 22 June 2020, as part of operators' preparations for progress towards recovery and to reduce the risk of transmission.

The move was set out by the First Minister in tandem with the announcement that Scotland will move through phase 2 of the [routemap](#) in stages over the next three weeks.

It will apply to all passengers and staff in public areas, although there will be exemptions especially for those who are not able to wear a face covering for specific medical reasons. Children under five will also be exempt.



Wear a Face Covering signs at Edinburgh Waverley

Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

Transport Secretary Michael Matheson stressed the importance of the new rules and that by wearing a face covering everyone is engaged in a collective responsibility to reduce the risk of transmission. He said: "Our message remains clear that public transport should be for key workers and those who need it most and can't walk or cycle to work. Capacity is reduced to enable physical distancing and operators are not yet running full services. However, as we work towards recovery and more people return to work and further local leisure opportunities begin to open up it is vital that measures are put in place to protect everyone's health.

"Transport operators continue to play a key role in supporting essential travel and in ensuring passenger confidence in public transport while maintaining physical distancing. The use of face coverings forms a fundamental part of gaining that public trust.

"We are asking people to take personal responsibility to do

the right thing. Wearing a face covering while on public transport means you are playing your part in the collective effort to prevent the spread of coronavirus and reducing the risk to your fellow citizens. These measures complement physical distancing and good hand hygiene, they do not replace them. ”

Roz Foyer, STUC General Secretary said:“Our overriding concern is the safety of transport workers and the general public, so we fully support mandatory face coverings for which transport unions have unanimously argued. In conjunction with other key safety measures, this is a vital component in giving people the confidence and security to return safely to their work as a careful and sustainable relaxation of lock-down is enacted.”

Paul White, Director CPT Scotland said:“This is another boost to operators’ existing safety measures which are keeping buses safe for passengers and staff. Passengers have worked with bus operators and with each other to maintain social distancing guidelines; we will be looking to them to work with us to ensure the policy is a success”

Robert Nisbet, Director of Nations and Regions at the Rail Delivery Group, said:“Everyone taking the train wants to be able to travel safely and the vast majority want to help others do the same. By wearing face coverings on trains and at stations, passengers are helping to slow the spread of the virus and making them mandatory provides even greater clarity for passengers on how they can do the right thing when travelling.”

Anthony Smith, chief executive of the independent watchdog Transport Focus, said:“People thinking of returning to public transport have told us they want face coverings to be used by all passengers. Today’s decision will provide welcome clarity and will boost pressure on others to cover up.

“Transport operators must ensure that passengers who need to

travel have clear advice to understand what is expected of them, who is exempt and how they can play their part to help keep one another safe.”

Advice on face coverings, including how to make one and instructions for using one, will be available on the [Transport Scotland website](https://www.transport.scot.nhs.uk/). This advice is being updated to include full details of the applicable exemptions.



Edinburgh Waverley. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
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