



Representing our members from coast to coast in solidarity.  
**One Voice. One Canada. One ATU!**

Executive Board April 21, 2020

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Dear ATU Employer/Transit Agency,

**Re: Protecting Transit Operators and Passengers from COVID-19**

On Friday, April 17, Minister of Transport, the Honourable Marc Garneau, announced new measures requiring all passengers to wear a non-medical mask or face covering to cover their mouth and nose during air travel. These measures came into effect at noon EDT on April 20, 2020.

The Ministry of Transport strongly recommended that passengers travelling by marine, rail, motor carrier/bus modes of transportation be encouraged to wear non-medical masks or face coverings as much as possible. Passengers may be asked by the transportation operator to cover their noses and mouths when physical distancing is not possible.

ATU Canada encourages transit agencies to adopt similar guidelines in the interest of protecting both transit operators and passengers from COVID19.

The Ministry stresses that while existing public health and good hygiene practices including physical distancing and frequent hand washing are the most effective methods to limit the spread of the virus, wearing a non-medical mask or face covering over the mouth and nose is another way to prevent respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces.

ATU Canada recognizes that riders may have difficulty in obtaining non-medical masks. However, jurisdictions that advise passengers to wear face coverings, such as New York State, include items such as bandanas, scarves and homemade masks from t-shirts or other materials.

Good practices to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19, include physical distancing through rear-boarding, passenger limits, increased cleaning and barriers to separate the driver and passengers.

Building on these measures, ATU Canada urges all transit employers to adopt this additional measure to further protect the lives of our operators and passengers.



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References:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/transport-canada/news/2020/04/new-measures-introduced-for-non-medical-masks-or-face-coverings-in-the-canadian-transportation-system.html>

*ATU Canada represents 34,000 transit professionals in motor coach, public transit, private contractors, vehicle operations and maintenance work across Canada. ATU Canada is part of ATU International, which has over 200,000 union members across North America.*

Sincerely,

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