



570 Warco St • Bloomington, WI 53804 • 888-285-5409 • 608-994-2701

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Please review the new school bus safety guidelines with your children for this school year. Warco has implemented the following best practices to help protect our passengers and professional drivers based on the current CDC guidelines for public transportation.

**For the Safety of Our Valued Employees and Passengers, Warco has the Following Rules:**

- **It is mandatory for students to wear a mask throughout the duration of the trip.**
- Assigned seating—Driver will assign seats (They will be grouped by grade levels)
- NO eating, NO drinks, and NO chewing gum on the bus to and from school
- **No bus passes this year.** This means you must have your daycare scheduled for the year. Shared custody schedules will be accommodated; although we highly encourage condensing/limiting locations this school year.
- Limit, to the extent possible, close contact with others by maintaining a distance from other passengers while entering and exiting the vehicle
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Monitor your temperature and stay home if you are sick

**Masking on School Buses**

As schools get ready for the 2021-2022 school year, there appears to be a fair amount of confusion and uncertainty regarding the duty of school districts when it comes to requiring masks on school buses. At present, schools are required to have persons traveling on school buses wear masks. Under this CDC Order, regardless of the mask policy in a particular district, passengers and drivers on a school bus must wear a mask, regardless of whether the buses are owned and operated by the district or a transportation vendor. This mask requirement applies to all individuals, regardless of their vaccination status. Violations of the district's requirements of not wearing masks should be handled like all other rule or policy violations with respect to employees or students.

There are certain exemptions from the mask requirement, such as individuals with disabilities under the ADA or individuals for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duties. However, for the remaining individuals who are on school buses, masks are required.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been frequently asked whether districts need to follow “guidance” as opposed to an “order”. While the subtleties between “guidance” and “orders” and the risks of not following guidance is a topic for another article, this is a CDC order and should be followed. There is no set expiration date for the CDC order. Additionally, the order could be modified at any time. However, given the recent surge of the Delta variant and the CDC recently recommending all students and staff mask at all times while indoors, regardless of vaccination status, it is increasingly unlikely that other health and safety measures will be relaxed any time soon.

### **Information from the CDC Website**

“Masks are required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States...”

#### **What is a public transportation conveyance?**

A public transportation conveyance is any mode of transportation other than a private vehicle. Types of public transportation conveyances include airplanes, trains, subways, buses, taxis, ride-shares, maritime transportation, trolleys, and cable cars.

#### **Which public transportation conveyances does the order apply to, and in which areas?**

The Order applies to all public transportation conveyances traveling into the United States (i.e., arriving from a foreign country) or within the United States (including within states or territories or traveling between states or territories). **This includes school buses.** The Order also applies to all conveyances leaving the United States until they arrive at a foreign destination.

#### **Are masks required on school buses?**

Yes, passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in CDC’s Order. Operators of school buses should refer to the Department of Education’s COVID-19 Handbook pdf icon[PDF – 27 pages]external icon for additional guidance.

If you have any questions, please contact Warco at (608) 994-2701.

Sincerely,

Tom Hoffman  
President