

Industry standard for safe tourist coach travel

Members of NHO Transport are performing tourist coach transport services. This includes operations for, among others, the hospitality sector, organisations, private businesses, and others. These trips differ in durations, the travel destination is often known, and the passengers are known/identifiable.

This industry standard indicates general guidelines to maintain infection control during tourist coach travels for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic, to be applied for tourist coach companies and their customers. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI) have provided inputs to the content.

FHI have in their [standard for infection control in public transport](#) (bus, train, tram, taxi, patient travel and more) specified that their standard now also apply to tourist coaches. Still, FHI have referred to specific industry standards for more information.

Thus, NHO Transport's industry standard for safe tourist coach travel is still relevant for tourist coach companies and those who purchase their services, that are looking for applicable and sector specific infection control measures, with clearly defined responsibilities between tourist coach companies and their customers.

Basic advice and information

FHI's basic advice concerning infection control for transport¹ shall always be complied with: (1) Sick individuals stays at home. (2) Good hand- cough hygiene and enhanced cleaning. (3) Contact-reducing measurements. One meter distance between passengers is recommended and should be strived to be upheld throughout the entire journey.

See elaborate information regarding FHI's advice in [standard for infection control for various services](#)². Furthermore, there are information materials and posters concerning Covid-19 at the [Norwegian Directorate of Health's website](#)

Considerations during tourist coach travel

By considering risk and implementing measures for infection control, tourist coach trips should be able to be conducted in a safe manner within legal boundaries. Customers of tourist coach transport services and tourist coach companies plan for how infection control can be managed. In the following, a series of guidelines and measures for infection control are outlined. The division of responsibilities and tasks must also be clarified. For instance, this can be arranged as a supplementary document to the original purchase agreement between the tourist coach company and the customer.

¹ See FHI's standard for infection control in public transport [here](#) (in Norwegian only).

² In Norwegian only.

Customer's responsibility when purchasing tourist coach transport services:

- Adhere to guidelines regarding infection control provided for in this industry standard and updated advise from health authorities.
- In dialogue with the tourist coach company, be responsible for ensuring that seating tickets are booked that make it possible to dimension sufficient distance between travelers as far as practically possible. The following is recommended:
 - Strive to maintain one meter distance throughout the entire journey.
 - One passenger per double seat if not in the same cohort³.
 - Two passengers per double seat if in the same cohort.
 - Fixed allocated seats.
- For commercial travel, commonly performed with class III coaches, NHO Transport recommends that up to 70 percent of the vehicles capacity can be used, in accordance with the Norwegian governments' phase 3 [re-opening plan](#)⁴. The level of vaccination and protection within the society is increasing, and based on experience, multiple travelers are in the same family household or cohort. For the latter groups, these can sit next to each other during the coach travel.
- Inform passengers regarding infection control measurements and routines during the journey, in addition to how they should conduct themselves before, during and after the trip, as agreed to together with the tourist coach company beforehand. Sick passengers are denied.
- Conduct a risk assessment and implement clear information measures for groups (passengers) that can have a higher risk for serious sickness following infection of Covid-19. See specifically "high risk groups" at FHI's website [here](#).
- Seek advice from the municipal chief physician or health authorities if there is a need for clarification or reinforced measures, for example during transport through areas with a high concentration of infection locally.
- Collect contact information⁵ from all passengers for use in possible infection tracing⁶.
- Customers must ensure that other potential suppliers beyond the transport service itself (hotels, restaurants, concerts etc.) complies with necessary infection control measures in thread with health authorities and/or the industry's recommendations.

Tourist coach company's responsibility:

- Adhere to guidelines regarding infection control provided for in this industry standard, and updated advise from health authorities.

³ If unsure regarding the definition of a cohort, contact the local municipal chief physician.

⁴ In Norwegian only.

⁵ Information regarding all passengers is necessary during infection tracing. It is recommended that collection of this information is conducted ahead of the journey. Collected information should be limited to what is strictly necessary for the purpose of infection tracing, which will typically be name and phone number. Information must be contained in a safe manner and only be used for the purpose of infection tracing.

⁶ The municipal health service has the responsibility for infection tracing and follow-up in the event of a confirmed Covid-19 infection. Read more about the company's role in FHI's section regarding "the company's role in infection tracing" [here](#). (In Norwegian only – page 2).

- Enhanced cleaning onboard the vehicle. See FHI's recommendations regarding cleaning [here](#).
- Facilitate hygiene- and infection control measures for passengers during boarding, disembarking and stay in the vehicle, as agreed upon with the customer.
- In dialogue with customer, provide input for dimensioning practical passenger capacity and seat allocation for the passengers, based on infection control regulations and actual degree of capacity in the coach.
- Conduct a risk assessment of the working environment, including risk for infection among employees (drivers). Read more at the website of [The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority](#) and NHO's website [Arbinn.no](#). The occupational health services can also provide professional assistance for risk assessment and planning of infection control measures.
- Have routines for the handling of passengers and driver with suspected or confirmed Covid-19 contamination⁷. Sick passengers are denied.
- Seek advice from the municipal chief physician or health authorities if need to conduct reinforced measures or clarifications regarding infection advice.
- The tourist coach company must ensure that potential subcontractors follow the company's guidelines for infection control.
- The tourist coach trip could be integrated in a packaged tour. If the tourist coach company is the total supplier/trip organizer with the responsibility for both the transport service and other activities, the following section in this industry standard is mandatory to follow.

When the tourist coach company is the total supplier/trip organizer

The tourist coach company could be the total supplier/trip organizer with the responsibilities of ordering/completion of both the transport service, but also other activities during the trip. In this case, the tourist coach company must gather a declaration from all service providers during the trip (hotels, restaurants, museums, sub-contractors etc.), to confirm that all parties comply with the necessary infection control measures in line with the health authorities and/or the industry's recommendations.

The tourist coach company also adheres to all guidelines as listed in this industry standard, in both the section of the customer's responsibility, and tourist coach company's responsibility. The tourist

⁷ If suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 among passengers, the tourist coach company shall immediately notify their customer, who will onward get into dialogue with the municipal health service for the handling of infection tracing (see footnote 6). If the driver is suspected or have a confirmed contamination of Covid-19, then the tourist coach company itself shall notify the municipal health service. Read more about the company's role in FHI's section regarding "the company's role in infection tracing" [here](#). (In Norwegian only).

coach company are also responsible for making sure potential sub-contractors adheres to these guidelines.

Change history

History

24.11.2020: Specified with reference to the Norwegian Institute of Public Health's standard for infection control in public transport, that this standard now also applies to the tourist coaches.

15.04.2021: Specified with reference to FHI's standard for infection control in public transport, to notify the various infection control measures (A, B and C) that apply locally in different communes.

26.04.2021: Specified the relationship of responsibility between purchaser and tourist coach company to specify that purchaser is responsible for correct dimensioning of passenger capacity. The tourist coach company shall on their behalf be responsible for, in dialogue with the purchaser, estimate the need for capacity.

Established a change history for this industry standard.

30.06.2021: Updated the industry standard in accordance with FHI's update of their standard for infection control in public transport. Underscored that for commercial travels, commonly performed with class III coaches, these journeys can have a 70 percent capacity usage of the vehicle.

This industry standard was initially published 02.11.20, and last time updated on the 30.06.2021. NHO Transport make reservations to update the industry standard if needed/changing of the covid-19 situation. An update will be conducted in dialogue with the Norwegian Institute of Public Health.