

## **General Guidelines for School Bus Drivers** **(Prevent the spread of influenza-like-illness)** **September 14, 2009**

### **Basic Infection Control Practices**

All bus drivers should always follow basic infection control practices to prevent illness. One of the best ways to prevent influenza is to get the influenza vaccine every year. A vaccine for the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus is expected to be available by November, 2009.

Hand hygiene is the most important and effective way to prevent the spread of germs. Nasal secretions, saliva or other body fluids may contain germs that can be spread from soiled hands to the mouth, nose or eyes, where germs can then enter the body. Hands should be cleaned before preparing food, eating, touching one's face and after coughing or sneezing, using the toilet and after handling soiled material.

Hand washing with soap and water must be done when hands are visibly soiled. The mechanical action of rubbing soapy hands under warm running water for a minimum of 15 seconds and then patting the hands dry with either a clean towel or paper towel is effective in removing bacteria from the skin.

Alcohol-based hand rub (60-90% alcohol) may be used when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled. Hands must be dry before the application of the alcohol based hand rub. Apply enough alcohol-based hand rub to spread the product over all surfaces of the hands, concentrating on finger tips, backs of hands and the base of the thumb. Continue to rub the hands until all the product is dry, which should take a minimum of 15-20 seconds.

### **Recommended Equipment List for Bus**

- Sickness bags for passengers
- Disposable gloves
- Disposable cloths
- Paper bags for garbage
- Paper towels
- Disinfectant: common household disinfectant
- Alcohol-based hand rub (60-90% alcohol)

### **Environmental Cleaning & Disinfecting**

During influenza season when commonly touched surfaces may be contaminated with infectious material by passengers, regular and frequent cleaning of surfaces will reduce the spread of infections. This should be done twice a day, when passengers are dropped off. If

the bus is used more often for transporting multiple groups (e.g. from different schools, field trips), cleaning should be done after each group is dropped off.

- Wear non-sterile disposable gloves while cleaning.
- Use disposable cloths and disinfectant when wiping surfaces.
- Wipe down commonly touched surfaces such as seats, back rests, and railings on back rests and at front of bus.
- Remove and discard gloves after cleaning is done. Always perform hand hygiene before donning gloves and after removal of gloves.
- Avoid touching face with gloved or unwashed hands.
- Perform hand hygiene immediately after gloves are removed.

### **III Passengers**

- If the driver notices that a passenger has respiratory symptoms, such as continuous coughing or profuse runny nose, provide tissue and ask the passenger to cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Ask passenger to put used tissue in the paper garbage bag.
- Have passenger who is sharing the seat with the ill individual move to another seat if possible.
- If carrying passengers during a field trip, ensure school personnel or chaperone are aware of ill passenger
- Clean and disinfect as per usual after passengers are unloaded, leaving ill passenger's seat area to be cleaned last as not to spread infected material.

### **III Drivers**

Ill drivers should report to their supervisors and stay home until they are free of symptoms and feeling well, and are able to fully participate in all normal daily activities. Drivers who become ill during work should advise their superior and take the following steps until arrangements can be made to have a replacement driver:

- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough and sneeze into sleeve.
- Put used tissue in a waste basket.
- Perform hand hygiene immediately after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol based hand rub is preferred if hands are not visibly soiled.
- Avoid close contact with passengers.