



# PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

March 2020

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this plan is to ensure organization and structure during events that disrupt service for SPARTAN Rural Public Transit employees and passengers.

A pandemic is an outbreak of disease that spreads across a large region or worldwide that affects a high proportion of the population.

## **DECISION-MAKING**

Limiting service and/or ceasing service will be at the discretion of the Director of Transportation and the South Plains Community Action Association, Inc. (SPCAA) Executive Director. Decision-making will be based on information gathered from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and official federal, state and local guidance and information.

## **PREVENTION AND EDUCATION**

### ***Crisis Communication***

SPARTAN will develop and deliver a formal awareness program that includes training for employees to disseminate facts and to address concerns. SPARTAN will continue to update employees with status reports of the virus condition using all appropriate means of distribution, likely email, dispatch and/or conference calls. SPARTAN management will utilize information from credited sites to ensure that all information is relevant, positive and appropriate.

Information to the public will be transmitted through the SPCAA and SPARTAN websites, social media, local news sources, SPARTAN 800 number recordings, and through flyers on buses. The transportation call center will relay any and all messages to clients as prepared by SPARTAN Management to communicate all information about service, restrictions, preventive measures and expectations.

### ***Sanitization***

#### **Vehicles**

SPARTAN Rural Public Transportation will conduct enhanced cleanings of all service vehicles with emphasis towards hand-contact surfaces.

SPARTAN will have sanitary aids on board all vehicles and in the office located 1105 W Hwy 114, Levelland TX to ensure employees and the public can safeguard themselves in their daily commute and operations.

SPARTAN has adopted preventive practices from the American Public Transportation Authority (APTA) Guide for Public Transportation Pandemic Planning and Response (NCHRP, 2013) regarding personal protective equipment (PPE), hand hygiene, and environmental hygiene:

- Sanitized wipes have been placed in all vehicles for use before and after passengers boarding and alighting. Hand sanitizer, as available, will also be in SPARTAN Vehicles for passengers to use before and after passengers boarding and exiting the vehicle.
- SPARTAN Management has required operators to wash hands as frequently as possible and utilize hand sanitizer when soap and water are not readily available.
- SPARTAN Vehicle Operators have been encouraged to wear gloves when necessary
- Vehicles are sprayed with an EPA certified disinfectant at least three times/day to include thorough end-of-route cleaning with special attention to handrails, armrests, seat backs and driver compartment.

#### Office

All office staff are required to keep their workspace in a clean and efficient manner. At the end of the day all office staff must clear their work area and sanitize with disinfectant spray. If staff are working with the public, they are encouraged to wear protective gloves.

All equipment and touch surfaces must be disinfected daily to include phones, keyboards, copiers and door handles.

## **SERVICE DURING A PANDEMIC**

In the event of a large-scale pandemic, SPARTAN Transit may need to, or be required to, reduce service to comply with public health department recommendations and directives or due to other variables that may hinder the ability to effectively operate transit service. SPARTAN has identified essential functions, those primary and supporting services that the organization must continue even in the event of an emergency.

SPARTAN Transit has identified tasks related to developing service reduction, system shutdown and system restorations plans. Service reduction planning shall identify indicators that will be monitored regarding ridership and employee availability and include strategies for in service reduction.

### ***Service Reduction***

The following indicators will be monitored by Operations as potential service reduction triggers:

- Ridership
- Employee Attendance
- Asset Availability

Service levels will be adjusted as necessary with the following anticipated progressions:

- Shorten Hours of Operation
- Run-limited Services (i.e. In-County Only)
- Limit Trips to Purposes Related to Medical Appointments, Access to Food, and Work
- Shut Down System

### ***Service Shutdown***

Given the need to stop service completely, the primary objective will be to execute an orderly, safe closure of service, which preserves SPARTAN Transit assets in a condition that will facilitate later service restoration.

### ***Operations Shutdown***

- Transportation will arrange for qualified personnel to complete service, including staffing of the Call Center
- All revenue vehicles will be appropriately positioned in the yards at close of operations for the night.
- Notifications will be provided to the other transit providers in the area.

### ***Service Restoration***

In anticipation of service restoration, the following actions will be performed:

- Conduct complete system inspection before start-up. This will include facility, fleet, and communications systems.
- Inspect office and vehicles, including power and operational checks of all equipment and supplies.
- Complete any repairs or maintenance identified during the start-up inspections.
- Inspect revenue vehicle fleet.

Service will commence after the above actions have been accomplished, and contingent upon approval by the Director of Transportation.

### ***Workforce***

#### **Notification of Symptoms or Possible Infection/Exposure**

If an employee believes he or she has symptoms, possible infection, or may have been exposed he or she is required to notify their immediate supervisor and follow recommended Local Health Department Guidelines and SPARTAN Transit Sick Leave Policies.

**Quarantine**

If an employee believes he or she has symptoms, possible infection, or may have been exposed he or she is required to notify their immediate supervisor and follow recommended Local Health Department Guidelines for self-quarantine in order to limit the spread of the disease.

**Staffing Level**

During confirmed pandemics by the Centers for Disease Control and with the help of local public health departments, SPARTAN Transit may implement the following staffing and service levels reductions. See next page.

## Alert Status/Level and STAFFING LEVEL CHART

### Level 1

- **CONCERNING**
- 100% Staffed
- This level follows the Centers for Disease Control hazard level criteria where the bacteria for which the threat of antibiotic resistance is low or there are multiple therapeutic options for resistant infections. These bacterial pathogens cause severe illness. Threats in this category require monitoring and in some cases rapid incident or outbreak response. Basic education and supplies will be administered to conduct rudimentary housekeeping and hygiene practices.

### Level 2

- **SERIOUS**
- 50% Staffed
- This level follows the Centers for Disease Control hazard level criteria where these are significant antibiotic-resistant threats where these threats will worsen and may become urgent. At this level public government has urged or required that travel be reduced. This level consists of employer and business center shutdowns where only minimal services are to be rendered.

### Level 3

- **URGENT**
- 0% Staffed
- This level follows Centers for Disease Control hazard level criteria where there is a high-consequence of antibiotic-resistant threats because of significant risks identified across several criteria. These threats may not be currently widespread but have the potential to become so and require urgent public health attention to identify infections and limit transmission.

## **ALERT STATUS DESCRIPTIONS**

### ***Alert Status 1***

(Actively Monitoring - No reported cases in service areas)

- More frequently clean common areas including door hardware, bus seats, etc.
- Communicate online the precautions to avoid spreading COVID-19
- Continue to monitor attendance and communicate with local health officials
- Communicate to staff to stay home if sick
- Review Pandemic Plans
- Begin bi-weekly departmental briefings for communication updates

### ***Alert Status 2***

(Cases in service areas)

- Continue to monitor attendance and communicate with local health officials
- Ramp up cleaning efforts to expand cleaning to less frequently used areas in addition to common areas
- Potentially limit all unnecessary travel
- Potentially limit large gatherings to only essential events or consider postponing essential events
- Potentially limit/restrict outside visitors and guests
- Potentially restrict outside food deliveries to facilities
- Communicate to staff to stay home if sick
- Develop contingency plans

### ***Alert Status 3***

(Confirmed cases amongst service areas and/or SPARTAN employees)

- Potentially close buildings
- Potentially cancel all business-related staff travel
- Potentially cancel all events
- Potentially close office in consultation with the local health officials
- Communicate to residents the extent of closures, length, and work accommodations
- In the event of facility closures, communicate to staff which staff members are to report to duty to maintain services
- Perform a deep clean of all areas

## **CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- Stay home when you are sick. If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Cleaning your hands by washing them often or using hand sanitizer will help protect you from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread when a person touches something contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- Contact your family doctor if you have coronavirus-like symptoms and you have any questions.

**COVID-19**  
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

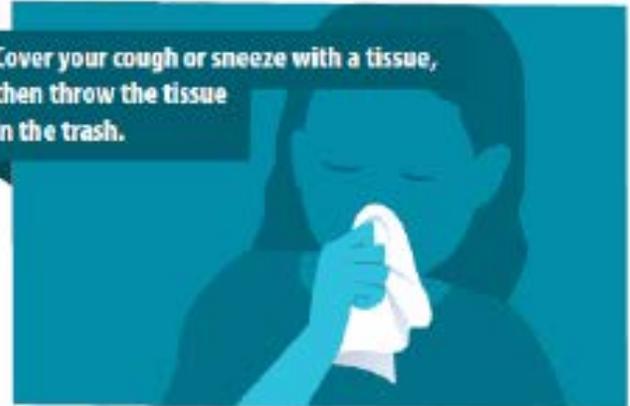
# STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services

Texas Department of State  
Health Services

For more information: [dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus)

# Stop Germs! Wash Your Hands.

## When?

- After using the bathroom
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



## How?



Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.



Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.



Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.



Rinse hands well under clean, running water.



Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

**Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things we can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.**

LIFE IS BETTER WITH

**CLEAN HANDS**



[www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)



This material was developed by CDC. The Life is Better with Clean Hands campaign is made possible by a partnership between the CDC Foundation, GOUO, and Staples. HHS/CDC does not endorse commercial products, services, or companies.

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## COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Health and Safety – March 18, 2020

Mandatory steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19

To: ALL SPARTAN Drivers AND Office Staff

From: Brian Baker

### VEHICLES – Daily

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible and use hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- Use Lysol (or EPA certified disinfectant) to disinfect inside of bus or use Clorox Wipes after each group of passengers gets out of bus, or at least 3 times per day (not while on board)
- Use Lysol or Clorox Wipes to disinfect driver compartment – door handles, seat belt, steering wheel, gear shifter and dash controls/radio after potential contact or at least 3 times per day
- Use your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) whenever there is an expectation of possible exposure to infectious material – i.e. gloves, face mask, goggles. **Recommend wearing gloves when securing wheelchairs etc – change after EACH use.**
- Replace gloves after every possible contact with a passenger
- Offer (do NOT demand) face masks to passengers who are actively sneezing or coughing
- Properly clean and disinfect passenger area of bus including ALL handrails, grab bars, armrests and seat backs EVERY EVENING AFTER YOUR ROUTE is completed.
- Try not to handle passengers' fares and wipe pens after every signature on manifest
- Have Passengers sneeze into tissue and immediately throw tissue in trash can
- Ask passengers to use hand sanitizer (*not whole bottle*, just portion needed) when entering and exiting vehicle. Offer a wipe if sanitizer unavailable. (Hand Sanitizer Dispensers are on order to be permanently mounted to inside of bus).

### VEHICLES – End of Week

- Complete all applicable steps above
- Sweep floor and Mop with appropriate disinfectant issued to you by Supervisor

### OFFICE STAFF – Daily

- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds as frequently as possible
- Keep workspace in clean and efficient manner
- At the end of the day, clear work area and sanitize with disinfectant spray

ALL equipment and touch surfaces must be disinfected daily to include phones, keyboards, copiers and door handles.

## Updates and Reminders 3-20-2020

### COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY – Instead of having passengers sign the manifest, ask the passenger for their Date of Birth and write that date in the signature line.

If passengers refuse to give their date of birth, treat this as the passenger refusing to sign, and write “RTS” in the signature spot

REMINDER: During transport, vehicle ventilation should be on non-recirculated mode to maximize air changes that reduce potentially infectious particles in the vehicle. USE OUTSIDE AIR AC setting.

Older vehicles: Use “Norm AC” setting

TO: ALL SPARTAN EMPLOYEES  
FROM: Brian Baker, Director of Transportation  
REF: SPARTAN Pandemic Response Plan  
DATE: March 20, 2020

With COVID-19 reaching pandemic status, the SPARTAN Public Transit Division's top priority is maintaining the safety and wellbeing of our staff and drivers, passengers, partners, and community.

SPARTAN has activated its Pandemic Response Plan due to the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19. The purpose of this plan is to ensure organization and structure during events that disrupt service for SPARTAN Rural Public Transit employees and passengers.

Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, SPARTAN will implement "Alert Status 2" from the SPARTAN Public Transit Pandemic Response Plan where approximately 50% of office staff and drivers will be working remotely and limited public transit services will be available until April 3, 2020. At that time, management will reassess the threat-level posed by COVID-19. At this level, public government has urged or required that travel be reduced.

**Keeping employees paid:** Please continue to complete your timesheets as much as possible. If you must be sent home and are not able to work from home, you will be eligible for Disaster Leave. Please contact your supervisor for any questions regarding this new policy. Drivers that are not assigned a route are to be on standby.

SPARTAN will prioritize transportation for passengers travelling to dialysis centers and cancer treatment facilities. SPARTAN will also be offering service to grocery stores on a limited basis.

Information to the public will be transmitted through the SPCAA and SPARTAN websites, social media, local news sources, SPARTAN 800 number recordings, and through flyers on buses. The transportation call center will relay any and all messages to clients as prepared by SPARTAN Management to communicate all information about service, restrictions, preventive measures and expectations. SPARTAN Supervisors will be available by phone and email if you have any questions or need additional guidance on current issues. On Monday, we will be delivering assigned agency equipment for you to use from home in order to continue to work remotely. Office staff duties will include your normal work tasks, online training, and attending webinars and teleconferences, and other duties as assigned by your supervisor or director.

Routes will be formulated to allow recommendations to go into effect from government, the CDC, and other officials to "social-distance". To accomplish this social distancing, no more than ten (10) passengers plus the driver will be on any one bus at a time.

As a precautionary measure, to limit in-person contact as recommended, we are asking our customers, community partners and the public to contact us by phone, email, or fax rather than visit our office.

If you have any questions, please email me or contact me at (806) 773-2568.