



Department  
for Transport



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

Dear Recipient,

**RE: Extending the free face covering distribution programme for passengers and workers**

Further to our previous letter to you, the offer of contingency face coverings for passengers and workers, to all transport bodies at zero cost has been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. This is to reflect the continued recommendation that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport, as well as to help reduce transmission rates during the winter period.

The Government continues to hold a strong stock of masks, including disposable masks which can be used as PPE in certain settings but can also be used as face coverings for source control. To support the ongoing reopening of the economy, increased use of the transport network and the upcoming winter period, we are still able to take advantage of this stock of face coverings.

Due to their widespread use most people have access to face coverings and surveys suggest that the use of face coverings is generally high. To support high face covering usage rates over the winter period, a contingency supply remains available for transport settings to offer to people who, among other things:

- have forgotten their face covering
- are unable to use their face covering as it has become damp, soiled or unsafe
- are struggling to access a face covering

**This contingency supply of face coverings is intended to support passengers in these situations.**

In addition, you can also order face coverings for transport workers in instances where you do not have sufficient stocks to provide to your workforce until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2021.

**These face coverings are provided by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) at no cost to your organisation. DHSC and DfT are unable to accept return of these items.**

DHSC will complete delivery of face coverings, which should provide enough contingency stock until at least 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. **Beyond this date DHSC cannot confirm whether we will be able to supply free face coverings.**

DHSC and DfT believe the face masks to be suitable and safe for use as general face coverings and they should not be used as PPE or for medical purposes. The DHSC and DfT do not accept liability of any kind for the face coverings and do not give any conditions, warranties or other statements express or implied as to quality or fitness for a particular purpose of the face coverings.

## Conditions of use

- The face coverings are to be distributed to passengers free of charge. Operators are not to request more supplies of face coverings than they require to provide to passengers on a contingency basis.
- **The face coverings are to be supplied to passengers on a contingency basis**. The supply does not substitute Government guidance that people using public transport are expected to supply their own face covering. This is a contingency supply to be used in such situations as set out above.
- The face coverings can be distributed to workers also. Operators are not to request more supplies of face coverings than are needed for their workforce and should only make a request in instances where they do not have sufficient stock.
- The face coverings supplied are disposable face masks, they are not to be distributed nor used as PPE or for medical purposes. For distribution to transport passengers or workers **the masks are classed as face coverings only**. A face covering, as set out in the guidance, is any type of covering which covers the nose and mouth, and this position has not changed.
- All transport bodies should distribute the face coverings in an appropriate manner and make adequate provision for the disposal of used face coverings.

**Where the above conditions are not adhered to, DHSC may, without notice, terminate their supply of face coverings, with immediate effect.**

## Contact information

For any **queries or complaints on delivery related or missing items**, please contact the DHSC PPE helpline (provided by UNIPART) on **0800 8766802**, identifying yourself as a transport operator or relevant local authority body. Alternatively, you can email [dftppequeries@unipart.com](mailto:dftppequeries@unipart.com) and your query will be handled by the helpline team.

For any **questions on DfT face covering policy** please refer to the DfT [guidance](#) or your DfT Officials contacts.

We would like to thank you again for your continued effort and hard work in keeping our transport networks moving during this difficult time.

Yours truly,

Domestic COVID19 Directorate

**Department for Transport**

PPE Policy Team

**Department for Health and Social Care**