

**Date:** May 22, 2020

**To:** Driving School and Remedial Programs Owners and Operators

**From:** Business Licensing and Driver Instructional Services Division

**RE:** Driving School and Remedial Programs Operations

In response to the existing state of emergency resulting from COVID-19, the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) has approved the emergency use of distance learning to provide the certified driver education program only for the period of time a state of emergency is declared in Maryland.

With the commencement of Phase I reopening, the MDOT MVA sought direction from the Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP), Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Maryland Department of Health (MDH) regarding ability of driving schools to resume operations in the Phase I reopening environment. Based on the information received we are able to provide the following guidance.

Driving schools are considered essential services by the Department of Homeland Security and may operate during this crisis.

Distance learning is unquestionably the safest method for providing classroom instruction. Schools not able to provide distance learning may provide classroom instruction following the below constraints, which are based on recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

**Maryland Department of Health General Guidelines:**

- Screen participants prior to all training sessions:
  - Ask if they have any signs or symptoms associated with COVID-19
  - Ask if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or have had close contact with anyone that has tested positive for or exhibited signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
  - Allow a pre-training temperature check.
- Any participant who answers yes to any of the questions above should not be allowed to participate in training.

**Classroom Instruction:**

- Instructors and students should wear of face covering (mouth and nose covered) at all times when in class.
- Six feet of separation should be maintained between students.
- Gatherings are limited to no more than 10 persons (one instructor and nine students).
- Please ensure there are adequate breaks
- Hand sanitizer should be available at all times for use by students and instructors.
- Frequent hand washing is recommended, so hand soap must be supplied in all restrooms.
- Classrooms should be cleaned and sanitized at the conclusion of each class with the focus on frequently contacted surfaces.

**Behind-the-Wheel Instruction:**

- Only one instructor and one student should be allowed in the vehicle at any time.
  - Exception: a parent/guardian or representative of the MDOT MVA may accompany a student for the purpose of monitoring instruction.
- All occupants of the vehicle should adhere to the appropriate PPE guidelines; wearing of face covering (mouth and nose covered) at all times.
- Eye protection (indirectly vented goggles) is strongly recommended.
- Hand sanitizer should be available to all occupants of the vehicle at all times.
- Windows should be rolled down, whenever safe to do so, to maintain fresh air circulation.
- Training vehicles must be cleaned and sanitized after every training session and before the next training session may begin.
- Schools should obtain signed permission from a parent or guardian for minors to participate in behind-the-wheel instruction during the state of emergency.

As the reopening environment develops please continue to reference CDC guidelines. The health and safety of students, staff, and others is of the utmost importance to the MDOT MVA and the guiding principle to be adhered to at all times.

Questions should be directed to the Business Licensing and Driver Instructional Services Division at 410-787-7769 or [delicensing@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:delicensing@mdot.maryland.gov)