

**NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI)  
Driver Education Section**

**Behind-the-Wheel (BTW) Instruction  
Requirements and Recommendations**

This document is intended to supply guidance to Public School Units (PSU) to resume the State's Driver Education Program in compliance with the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#), [Lighting Our Way Forward: North Carolina's Guidebook for Reopening Public Schools](#), existing policies of the NC State Board of Education (SBE) and the requirements of [SL 2020 – 30](#)).

The SBE made policy modifications to allow and encourage remote instruction for the classroom portion of Driver Education, which is Plan C. The restart of the BTW instruction will initially address the backlog of students beginning at the point of interruption as a result of the unanticipated school closure. This phase will be conducted using Plan B with modifications as approved by the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) will provide routine updates pertaining to requirements and recommendations as needed to reflect changes in the guidance provided by the NCDHHS.

**Public School Units**

- ✓ It is recommended that PSUs allow Teachers/Instructors to volunteer to return to work; they should not be penalized for being unable to do so if they are considered high risk for severe illness due to COVID-19.
- ✓ PSUs are required to provide frequent reminders (e.g., signage, marking) for teachers/instructors and students to social distance, wear a cloth face covering, and use proper personal hygiene, such as washing hands or using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (ethanol).
- ✓ PSUs are required to follow safety, cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilation guidelines consistent with NCDHHS guidance.
- ✓ PSUs should consider creating a process to address the backlog of students systematically, i. e. prioritizing students who were in progress at the time of the shutdown; students should not be penalized or moved from their current order of instruction for choosing to delay BTW instruction for health and safety reasons.
- ✓ PSUs should establish written procedures to address the participation of non-PSU enrolled students, such as charter, private, federal, and home-schooled students.
- ✓ PSUs are required to identify designated restroom access for students for routine hand washing and other purposes as needed.
- ✓ PSUs are required to designate pick up and drop off points that are in safe locations that allow social distancing when communicating with parents and student drivers.
- ✓ PSUs are required to implement procedures that are consistent with each student's IEP or 504-plan if applicable.
- ✓ Driver Education Coordinators are required to follow NCDHHS and CDC guidance and provide frequent updates for teachers/instructors regarding health and safety protocols.

## **Teachers/Instructors**

### **Before and During Instruction:**

- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to conduct a daily health self-assessment, including a daily attestation, indicating they do not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or a temperature of 100.4°F or higher, have not, to their knowledge, been in contact with a person or persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, have not been told to isolate due to a diagnosis of COVID-19, have not been told to quarantine due to an exposure by a health official, are not awaiting test results for a COVID-19 test (if tested as a result of symptoms or exposure).
- ✓ Prior to entering the vehicle and in-between student drivers, teachers/instructors and student drivers are required to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, they are required to use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to instruct students to maintain social distancing while waiting to begin a driving session; students are required to remain in their vehicle or other designated open area where they are social distancing from others until the previous student has exited the vehicle, the vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected and the teacher/instructor notifies the student(s) the driving session is to begin.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to screen students daily using the Middle and High School Screening Checklist (page 15 of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Tool Kit](#)) prior to beginning each driving session.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to practice social distancing while instructing outside of the vehicle and when conversing with parents.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors and students are required to wear cloth face coverings, unless they have a documentation from a medical provider that they have a medical or behavioral condition contraindication.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to allow adequate ventilation with windows cracked and heating/AC to mix air from the outside air through the vehicle during the driving session.
- ✓ Teacher/Instructors are required to allow no more than two students in the vehicle (one student in the front seat and one student in the back seat) with the teacher/instructor seated in the front passenger seat. (This is consistent with the recommendation limitation of two passengers in contract transportation.)
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to place hand sanitizer, tissues, and a waste receptacle in each vehicle, and instruct students in the proper use of each while in the vehicle.
- ✓ Teacher/Instructor is required to frequently check and refill hand sanitizer.
- ✓ Teachers will advise that driving session will be stopped at any point if the students or teachers begin to show symptoms (for example cough, fever, chills, shortness of breath). A procedure for ending a driving session early should be clearly communicated with students and parents or guardians prior to instruction.
- ✓ Records of Teacher/Instructor and students must be kept to inform local health authorities' contact tracing activities if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting the Vehicle:

- ✓ Teacher/Instructor are required to clean and disinfect the vehicle using EPA approved disinfectants effective against SARS-CoV-2 before each driving session and allow for the proper contact time for the chemical prior to beginning the driving session. Such cleaning and disinfecting shall include but not be limited to the following contact surfaces:
  - Door handles (outside and inside)
  - Hard seats and seatbelts
  - Steering column
  - Steering wheel
  - Seat controls, head restraints, and arm rests
  - Dashboard controls
  - Turn signals
  - Gearshift knobs
  - Rear view mirror and adjustments
  - E-Brake
  - Fuel door release lever
  - Keys and Key Fobs
  - Any writing utensil used
  - Other frequently touched surfaces
- ✓ It is recommended for teachers/instructors to clean and disinfect the car as the student(s) watches, so they are comfortable they are entering a safe environment.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to ensure windows remain open during cleaning and disinfecting.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfecting products, including storing products securely away from students when not in use; products should be stored in an area with adequate ventilation.
- ✓ Teachers/Instructors are required to systematically and frequently check and refill hand sanitizer containers to ensure a sufficient supply of hand sanitizer during each driving session.
- ✓ Hand sanitizer should remain in the vehicle only when vehicles are in use. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers should not be left in vehicles when not in use.

### Parents/Guardians

- ✓ Parents are required to assess the health of their student driver and to complete the attestation form as shown on page 19 of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Tool Kit](#). The completed attestation must be provided to the Teacher/Instructor prior to each BTW driving session. If students have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not met the criteria to return to school, or displays symptoms of COVID-19, they will be unable to participate in the driving session or enter the vehicle.
- ✓ Given the moderate social distancing in the vehicle, parents/guardians will be asked to take the temperature of their child as part of the health assessment. Any student with a

temperature at or above 100.4 °F will be unable to participate in the driving session or enter the vehicle.

- ✓ Parents/guardians should not leave the school property until they know their student has been cleared to enter the vehicle per screening.
- ✓ Parents/guardians are required to practice social distancing and must wear cloth face coverings when interacting with the teacher/instructor or others on the driving site.