

The Latest COVID-19 Updates

Over the last several weeks Prudence & Bay Islands Transport has been working with the R.I Governor's Office and R.I Public Utilities Commission to help develop guidelines for safe ferry operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please read the following Ferry Operations Guidelines that PBIT and other R.I ferry services will be following during Phase I of R.I reopening.

REOPENING RI

05.11.20

Phase I ferry operation and sightseeing operation guidelines

Beginning on May 11, 2020, ferry and sightseeing operations may continue essential lifeline services and begin seasonal service. In accordance with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) emergency regulations, ferry and sightseeing operators must prepare and implement a [COVID-19 Control Plan](#). The RIDOH emergency regulations can be found [here](#). The State prepared a [guidance document](#) to assist businesses in meeting the requirements outlined in these RIDOH regulations. Ferry operators and sightseeing operators must comply with RIDOH regulations and active [executive orders](#).

The guidelines below summarize **additional** steps Rhode Island is asking ferry and sightseeing operators to take. If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact Joseph Masino at Joseph.Masino@governor.ri.gov.

Phase I Operations:

- **Social distancing:** Passengers, whenever possible, must maintain six (6) feet of social distance between themselves and others who are not part of their household, especially on the vessel when moving about as corridors and walkways are narrow. Passengers are responsible for maintaining social distancing at all times possible. Operators can assist with social distancing on the vessel if they so choose, this includes but not limited to, boarding by party size and assigned seating. In addition, to allow for adequate distancing, ferry operators will limit cabin capacity and request passengers to remain with their vehicles, if safe to do so, or on deck during the duration of the trip (weather dependent). Operators should place spacing demarcations at ticket booths, concessions, and boarding lines.
- **Capacity:** In order to maintain social distancing, capacity should be limited to 30% to 60% of the operating vessel's capacity (based on ridership demand, weather elements, and sea conditions). If needed, ferry operations will be allowed to operate additional vessels to run the routes (based on ridership demand, weather elements, and sea conditions). When weather and sea conditions limit outdoor seating, ferry operators should limit capacity to 30%-40%. When outdoor seating is not limited, operators should limit capacity to 50%-60%.
- **Screening Signage:** COVID-19 screening signage should be posted at the entrances and high traffic areas. For lifeline ferries, added safety protocols should be posted for boarding passengers needing transport for residence, medical or essential services.
- **Cleaning Procedures:** All cabins and commonly touched surfaces such as handrails, tabletops, and restrooms on the vessel must be sanitized between runs and at the end of the day. The entire vessel also must be thoroughly cleaned at least once a day.
- **Food & Beverage Sales:** All food and beverage sales shall follow the most recent executive orders, regulations, and/or guidance related to restaurants.
- **Bookings:** All ticket sales should be done online whenever possible to eliminate the need for paper tickets and to encourage cashless transactions. Service providers should inform customers of encouraging cashless transactions through social media and on company website.
- **Face Coverings:** All persons (employees and passengers) are required to wear face coverings when providing or using the ferry service in accordance with RIDOH regulations and [Executive Order 20-30](#). Face coverings shall not be required of those who are developmentally unable to comply, including young children who may not be able to effectively wear a mask. Nothing in this guidance shall require a place of business to refuse entry to a customer not wearing a face covering.

The ferry operation guidelines can also be found online on the [Reopening RI website](#)

For more information on Prudence & Bay Islands Transport's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and for a full list of customers policies and protocols please visit the updates & newsletters page on our website or call our office at 401-683-0430.

Updates & Newsletters

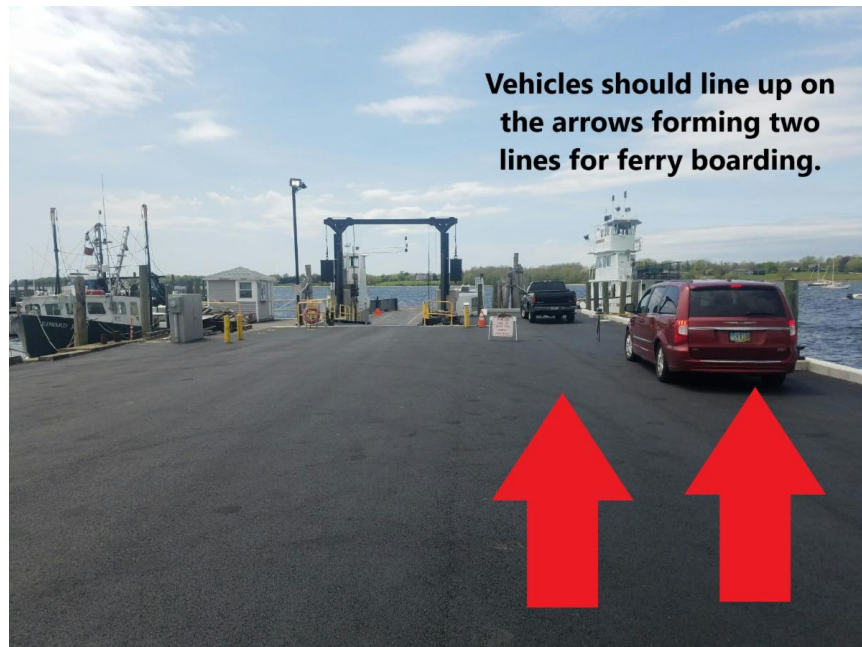
If you are experiencing symptoms consistent with, have tested positive for, or have been exposed to COVID-19, please follow the procedure below.

If you know or suspect you may have the COVID-19 virus, and need to travel on board the ferry please call the office directly to book your ferry travel.

- All passengers who have, suspect they have, or have been exposed to COVID-19 are required to ride in a vehicle and remain in that vehicle with the windows up for the duration of the ferry ride and while at both ferry terminals.
- Anyone who is feeling ill and needs to travel on-board the ferry will be asked the severity of their symptoms, particularly of any respiratory symptoms. Respiratory distress is a critical medical emergency and anyone experiencing difficulty breathing or any other severe symptoms should call 911 to be transported by rescue with trained medical personnel.

Bristol Ferry Terminal Construction and Ferry Boarding Instructions

All major construction and paving is complete at the ferry terminal in Bristol! The fence has been taken down allowing for more space for vehicles to line up prior to ferry boarding. The lines marking vehicle loading areas and parking spaces have not yet been painted, so please continue to pay attention to signs and crew directions when driving in the lot. **Vehicles waiting to board the ferry should form two lines along the North side of the parking lot.** View the picture below for where to line up and how the lot will look once line painting is complete.



The Herbert C. Bonner has Returned to Service



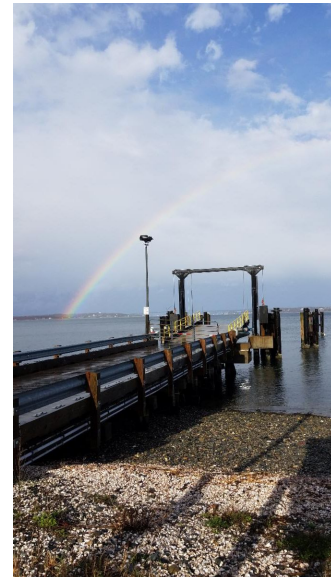
The Herbert C. Bonner returned to service on May 18th! We have continued to see an increase in ridership and have formed strategies for maintaining social distancing on the larger vessel. In accordance with the guidelines from the Gov. Office discussed above, the vessel will be operating at a reduced capacity of between 60 and 90 passengers per run. Therefore we recommend all reservations including passenger reservations are made well in advance. **Please note: to ensure social distancing on-board, we are requiring all passengers driving or riding in vehicles to remain in the vehicle for the duration of the ferry ride.**

[Click to make a reservation](#)

Looking Forward to Brighter Days Ahead

We know the last few months have been stressful and frustrating with many unknowns and frequent policy changes. Please remember that this is also new and often frustrating for our office staff and crew members. They are continuing to do their best to provide a high level of service despite these challenges. We would greatly appreciate the support and kindness of our customers during this time.

From all of us at PBIT we would like wish everyone a safe and healthy Memorial Day weekend!



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