# Superintendent’s Memo #149-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: June 18, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Resumption of Behind-the-Wheel Instruction

The purpose of the memo is to notify school divisions that they may choose to resume behind-the-wheel instruction immediately. Under Governor Northam’s March 2020 school closure order, all in-person operations ceased in Virginia’s schools, including behind-the-wheel instruction. In May, Governor Northam issued the Third Amended [Executive Directive 7](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/ED-7-THIRD-AMENDED---Administrative-Action-Due-to-The-Novel-Coronavirus.pdf) easing restrictions on Class B Driver Training School programs. In June, Governor Northam issued [Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Final-Phase-Guidance-for-Virginia-Schools-6.9.20.pdf), which provides recommendations about safely resuming in-person offerings in schools.

As schools are no longer under the Governor’s school closure order, and as Class B Driver Training Schools resume operation, this document serves as notification that public and private schools may consider offering behind-the-wheel instruction. Divisions should make decisions on implementing such programs, and assuming additional risk, in consultation with local health departments and school board attorneys.

Since in-car instruction is a high-risk activity due to the inability to meet social distancing requirements, instructors and students should consider any of their own personal high risk conditions prior to participation. When offering in-car instruction, school divisions are strongly encouraged to require students and staff to wear cloth face coverings and gloves. Stringent cleaning and disinfecting protocols should be followed and would include, but are not limited to, using alcohol-based products to thoroughly clean the steering wheel, steering column controls, dashboard controls, seats, seatbelts, gearshift, keys, door handles and all other touched surfaces before and after each lesson. Daily health screenings are recommended for staff members and students participating in in-car instruction. Anyone who feels ill or has symptoms should not participate in in-car instruction.

Additional information to limit the spread of COVID-19 is available from the [Virginia Department of Health](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/) and the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html) (CDC).

If you have questions, please contact Vanessa Wigand, Coordinator for Driver Education, by telephone at (804) 225-3300 or by email at vanessa.wigand@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/VCW/dr