

# Dept. of Transportation: Mid-America states collaborating on COVID-19 transportation strategies

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To keep the supply chain of critical goods and services intact during the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officers (MAASTO) are coordinating strategies that will help the citizens of the central United States.

“Meeting the challenge of the pandemic will require that we can get vital goods like food and medical supplies where they are needed,” said MAASTO President Craig Thompson, who is secretary designee of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. “These supply chains don’t stop at state borders. We need to be working with other states, especially our neighbors in the middle of the country, to make sure we do what is needed to remove barriers that would impede response and recovery,” he said.

MAASTO member states are collaborating to:

- Permit overweight freight shipments, making it easier to ship crucial supplies.
- Ease regulations on Commercial Driver License holders, ensuring the maximum number of motor carrier drivers are available to move freight.
- Limit public exposure at motor vehicle service centers. Many states are offering only limited in-person service and relaxing requirements for license and registration renewals to reduce the need for trips to the DMV.
- Issue guidance to contractors so construction projects can proceed while keeping workers safe.

“As departments of transportation around the country work to keep the nation’s

transportation system functional, it is now more important than ever that we reach out and collaborate and learn from each other. That is why regional coordination and leadership from MAASTO is so helpful,” said Patrick McKenna, director of the Missouri Department of Transportation. “Our weekly calls with the MAASTO states are helping each state better serve the public while keeping safety as a primary objective,” McKenna said.

“Because of the evolving nature of the public health emergency, our work with the other MAASTO states helps us problem solve and work toward a unified solution to the supply chain challenges,” said Julie Lorenz, MAASTO vice president and secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation. “The emergency isn’t happening in a vacuum, we have a

responsibility to support each other today and set a good path for recovery in the future,” she said.

MAASTO’s mission is to foster the development, operation, and maintenance of an integrated and balanced transportation system that adequately serves the transportation needs of its member states: Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Ohio. It is affiliated with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officers (AASHTO). To learn more about MAASTO, visit <http://www.maasto.net/>.