

COVID-19 INFECTION PREVENTION MEASURES FOR WORKPLACE

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It has spread to many countries around the world, including Canada. Depending on the severity of COVID-19's international impacts, outbreak conditions—including those rising to the level of a pandemic—can affect all aspects of daily life, including travel, trade, tourism, food supplies, and financial markets.

To reduce the impact of COVID-19 outbreak conditions on workers and the public, it is important for everybody to plan for COVID-19 and follow instructions and recommendations of the Public Health Agency of Canada. This Infection Prevention Measures will be updated periodically as the pandemic progresses.

ABOUT COVID-19

SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some people infected with the virus have reported experiencing other non-respiratory symptoms. Other people, referred to as *asymptomatic cases*, have experienced no symptoms at all.

According to the CDC, symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

HOW COVID-19 SPREADS

Although the first human cases of COVID-19 likely resulted from exposure to infected animals, infected people can spread SARS-CoV-2 to other people.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, including:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has SARS-CoV-2 on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the primary way the virus spreads.

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (i.e., experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this type of asymptomatic

transmission with this new coronavirus, but this is also not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE WORKERS SHOULD NOT BE AT WORK

In general, workers who are ill should remain at home and contact their local health care provider.

If a worker falls into one of the categories below, employers need to instruct workers to follow the advice from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BC CDC) and public health authorities to ensure the worker does not come into work and risk infecting others.

IF YOU HAVE COVID-19

The BC CDC advises that if you are sick with COVID-19, you need to stay home. Contact your local health care provider to get advice, or call HealthLinkBC at 811 to speak to a nurse. The BC CDC also provides guidance on self-isolation.

IF YOU HAVE TRAVELED INTERNATIONALLY

If you have traveled internationally, including US, you are asked to self-isolate for 14 days after arrival in Canada. Stay home and limit contact with others for a total of 14 days. Monitor yourself daily for symptoms like fever, cough or difficulty breathing for these 14 days. If you develop symptoms, call HealthLinkBC at 811 at any time or speak with your health care provider to discuss any need for testing and follow up.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH A PERSON INFECTED WITH COVID-19

If you have had close contact with an infected person you are at high risk of exposure. The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that in these circumstances, you voluntarily home quarantine (self-isolation), with mandatory quarantine depending on circumstances, and practice hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning, and self-monitoring.

RIGHT TO REFUSE WORK

Workers in B.C. have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. In those circumstances, your employer will consider the refusal on a case-by-case basis, depending on the situation. For more information, see Occupational Health and Safety Guideline G3.12.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Employment insurance (EI) provides temporary income support to people who have become unemployed through no fault of their own and are actively looking for work, as well as people who are not working due to special circumstances, such as illness, becoming a parent or caring for a sick relative. Service Canada handles the processing of EI claims and benefit payments.

For workers who qualify for employment insurance and have to undergo quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns, the federal government recently announced it would waive the

one-week waiting period to receive benefits so the worker would receive benefits for an entire 14-day quarantine.

Apply for EI benefits **as soon as you stop working**. You do not need to wait for your Records of Employment to submit your EI application.

To submit an application, visit Canada.ca. Select Employment Insurance and leave, and then click on the type of benefits that best suits your situation.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO PROTECT EVERYONE

Physical Distancing

- Place multiple signs near entrances informing customers of the physical distancing methods being used in your store. This could include the number of customers

Hygiene Practices

Clean your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds – before you eat and at the end of the workday, during the work shift whenever possible, and when you get home from work.

- Do not shake hands; avoid physical contact.
- Do not share food, drinks, cigarettes, personal hand tools.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands (i.e., smoking, drinking water, eating, etc.)
- Follow good respiratory etiquette by covering your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough.
- Do not share a keyboard or mouse, pens, clipboards, or documents.
- Stagger coffee/lunch breaks to reduce the number of workers in the kitchen/lunchroom area at the same time.
- Maintain physical distancing by staggering seating arrangement, or don't eat in the kitchen/lunchroom.
- Remove garbage often.
- Post signage to remind workers to wash or disinfect their hands.
- **Regularly clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and tools.**

Meetings

- Limit the number of persons at any meetings – a chair spacing between workers. Where practical, hold meetings outdoors – reinforce physical distancing.
- Use the Health Screening Tool or call 811 to verify that workers are not feeling sick and so they are aware of what the symptoms are so they can self-monitor.
- Disinfect used pens, tables, chairs after each meeting.

Health Verification of Employees

- At the start of the shift, the Supervisor is to confirm the health status of workers through discussion. Document any issues.
- Supervisor, each day, is to ask for updates of employees that have left for self-isolation. Document any changes.

- At end of shift, the Supervisor is to confirm the health status of employees through discussion.
- If an employee in the workplace is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, direct them to go home and use COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool or call 811. Document this incident and clean and disinfect any surfaces in the area where the employee was working. If the employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, further cleaning may be required by a professional remediation team.

When wearing gloves

- Do not touch your face, eyes, or mouth.
- Make sure that hands are washed thoroughly or disinfected with hand sanitizer as soon as possible after gloves are removed.

Store

- Restrict Access to the store to a maximum of 10 customers at one time.
- Have customers maintain physical distance requirements.
- Identify and mark one door for the entrance of customers and another door for exit.
- Disinfect commonly touched items like door handles, chairs, tables, etc.
- Routinely disinfect the tables and other commonly handled items.
- Promote contactless payment options, such as credit and debit tap, avoid handling of cash if possible.
- Wear mask when interacting with customers.
- Do not accept re-usable bags or containers that are to be handled by staff.
- Install barrier between cashier and customer, this can include plexiglass or markings on the floor to ensure at least 2 meters between customer and staff.
- Sanitize surfaces and the immediate area between each transaction if possible (For example – sanitize the counter, plexiglass barrier, etc).
- Post signage promoting proper physical distancing protocols.
- Using colored tape on the floor mark the pathway for customers to follow.
- Encourage customers to make appointments or order in advance.
- Ask customers who arrive with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms (fever, cough or breathing issues) to return home and use a delivery service instead.

Tools

- Avoid sharing tools or equipment if possible.
- If you have to share equipment, clean and disinfect points of contact on the equipment.

First Aid Treatment

If conscious and capable of answering, ask the worker COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool questions to verify the current status of their health.

- Employees who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should be isolated from other workers until they are able to be transported home or to a health-care facility

- Employees who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should wear a surgical mask while they are in isolation and during transportation to reduce the spread of droplets from their exhalations, coughs, or sneezes. If a surgical mask is not available a cloth face covering could be used. The area should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible after the treatment has completed.

Receiving Packages

- Maintain physical distancing (2 meters) during the delivery.
- Request a contactless delivery if possible. This involves the delivery driver leaving the package in a pre-arranged location. This may not be an option if signing or proof of receipt is required.
- Request that the driver places the package down rather than handing the item directly to you.
- Avoid the use of shared materials including pens. If required to use a stylus or your finger to sign for receipt of the delivery, wipe down the keyboard before use, and wash hands immediately after receipt of the package.
- Open the package outside if possible. Dispose of the packaging immediately. Wash hands.
- Clean and sanitize any touch surfaces that the package came into contact with such as tabletops, counters, or indoor floors.

Worker Transportation

- Avoid carpooling whenever possible.
- If workers need to travel together in vehicles, consider reducing the number of workers per vehicle and staggering seating so that employees can maintain as much distance from one another as possible.
- If physical distancing is not possible in a vehicle other control measures should be used, such as face masks and gloves.
- Physical distancing should be maintained while exiting and entering the vehicle.
- Employees should wash or sanitize their hands before entering and upon exiting the vehicle when traveling together.
- High contact surfaces within vehicles should be cleaned regularly (e.g. seatbelts, headrests, door hand).

Washrooms

- Washroom facilities must be maintained in proper working order.
- Washrooms should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Handwashing or hand sanitizing stations must be available at all washrooms.
- WorkSafeBC G4.85(1)-1 guidance for sufficient washroom requirements must be followed.
 - 1 washroom for 9 or fewer workers.
 - separate washrooms for male and female washrooms if there are more than 9 workers.

- In each male and female washroom, one toilet for 9 or fewer workers, 2 toilets for 10 - 24 employees.

Handwashing and Hand Sanitizing Stations

