

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Guidance for Food Service Establishments and Liquor Services, Including Restaurants, Cafés and Pubs

Version 2
July 9, 2020

Developed by Regional Health Authorities,
Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control



KEY Principles Going Forward



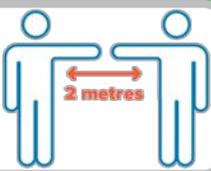
Stay Home if you are Sick

Stay away from others if you are feeling ill, isolate at home, do not go to work.



Practise Good Hygiene

Wash your hands often, avoid touching your face, cough/sneeze into your elbow or a tissue.



Make Space between People

Maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from others and replace close contact greetings like handshakes, hugs or high fives with waves and smiles.



Learn how to use Personal Protective Equipment as an Additional Control

Learn how to choose and use PPE correctly, know the limitations of PPE, and always have other controls in place.



Modify the Environment

Make your environment safer for interacting with others by reducing common touch surfaces, using non-porous barriers, or by changing room design.



Increase Sanitation

Disinfect common touch surfaces frequently using a chemical that will destroy the Coronavirus.



Manage Information

Stay informed, follow public health advice, keep records, and make sure information you communicate is clear, accurate and easy to find.

Guidance for Food Service Establishments and Liquor Services, Including Restaurants, Cafés and Pubs

Under [Phase 2 of British Columbia's Restart Plan](#), operation of dine-in service in food service establishments as well as liquor services, including restaurants, cafés and pubs may resume. However, the COVID-19 pandemic continues and in the absence of a vaccine, there is still a need to reduce the risk of transmission through physical distancing, and ensuring essential hygienic practices and cleaning processes are followed.

In all cases, it remains important for everyone to stay home if you are sick, to wash your hands often, to keep your distance, and to disinfect high touch surfaces often.

All food service establishments must comply with the [Provincial Health Officer's Orders](#).

All [BC Food Premises Regulation](#) requirements remain unchanged and in place.

Continue to maintain food safety practices: [Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill](#).

You will need to develop and implement a [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#), post a copy on your website (if you have one) and at your workplace so that it is readily available for review by anyone who may attend the site, including the public. A copy must also be available to Environmental Health Officers or WorkSafe BC Officers, upon request.

This guidance provides information on ways to comply with the Provincial Health Officer's Order on Food Service Establishments and Liquor Services, and will support you when preparing your COVID-19 Safety Plan. It is based upon current knowledge and it should be understood that the guidance is subject to change as new data becomes available and developments arise with this new virus. Furthermore, unique situations may require some discretion in adjusting this guidance document which is meant to be supportive, not prescriptive.

PART 1 of this document provides general information about COVID-19 and explains why various control measures can be more or less effective at preventing transmission of the virus.

PART 2 of this document is organized into the following series of tip sheets:

- PHO Orders
- Employee Sickness
- Personal Hygiene
- Make Space between People
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Modify the Environment
- Sanitation
- Managing Information
- Staff Scheduling & Meetings

PART 3 includes sample diagrams to illustrate physical distancing requirements and partition requirements.

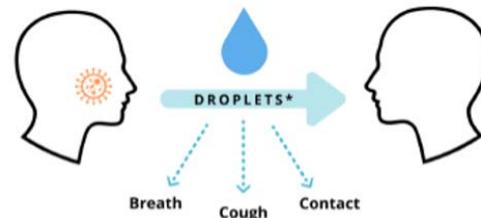
COVID-19 General Information

WHAT is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory infection caused by a newly identified virus (SARS-CoV-2). The infection has symptoms similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and common cold: cough, sneezing, fever, sore throat and difficulty breathing. Other symptoms can include fatigue, muscle aches, diarrhea, headache or lost sense of smell. While most people infected with COVID-19 experience only mild illness, severe illness can occur in some people, especially in the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions.

HOW COVID-19 Spreads

COVID-19 is spread through liquid droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus in these droplets can enter the body directly through the eyes, nose or mouth of another person if they are in close contact with the person who coughed or sneezed. COVID-19 is not transmitted through viral particles floating in the air and is not something that can enter the body through the skin.



Resources:

- Video: [Transmission of the COVID-19 coronavirus](#)
- Video: [Cough & sneeze etiquette](#)

WHERE can I get more Information about COVID-19?

The province of British Columbia has created a phone service to provide non-medical information about COVID-19 which is available from 7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m. at 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319) or via text message at 604-630-0300.

More information on COVID-19 can also be found online:

- BC Centre for Disease Control
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>
- BC Provincial Health Officer – Orders, Notices, and Guidance
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>
- WorkSafe BC - Restaurants, cafés, and pubs: Protocols for returning to operation
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/restaurant-cafes-pubs>

How to use this Guidance

This guidance contains suggested protocols for reducing the risks of COVID-19 transmission for food service establishments and liquor services including restaurants, cafés and pubs. Each business must assess and understand their own risks when developing their COVID-19 Safety Plan, and then implement their protocols accordingly.

Understanding the Risk

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, and from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face. Higher risk situations require adequate protocols to address the risk.

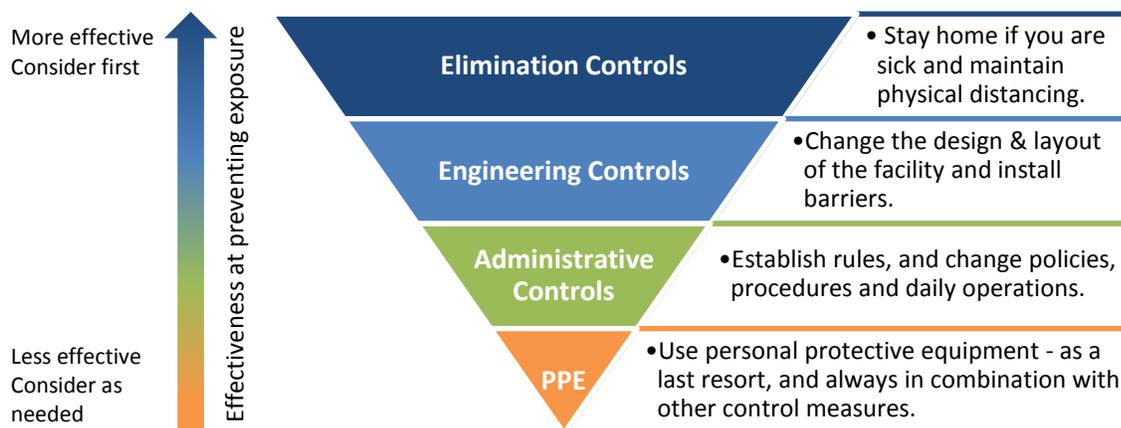
- The risk of person-to-person transmission can vary depending on the closer you come to other people, the amount of time you spend near them, and the number of people you come near. Physical distancing measures help mitigate this risk.
- The risk of surface transmission is increased when many people contact same surface, and when those contacts happen in short intervals of time. Effective cleaning and hygiene practices help mitigate this risk.

Selecting Protocols for your Workplace

When selecting the appropriate combination of protocols for your workplace, it may be helpful to understand the relative impacts each can have on controlling the risk of transmission in your workplace. Some controls will be more difficult to implement but provide a greater level of protection, while other controls will be easier to implement but provide less overall protection.

Levels of Protection

Control measures throughout this document will be divided based on this model:



Elimination and engineering controls are designed to prevent people from coming into contact with an infectious person or contaminated surface in the first place and should be considered first. Following this model normally leads to the implementation of inherently safer systems, where the risk of illness exposure and/or transmission can be substantially reduced.

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Tip Sheet – PHO Orders

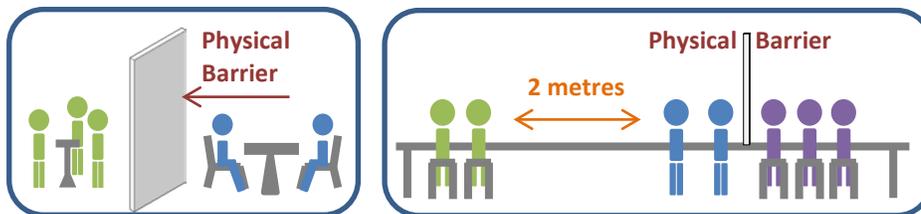
[Click here to view a full text copy of all Orders](#)

SEATING ARRANGEMENTS:

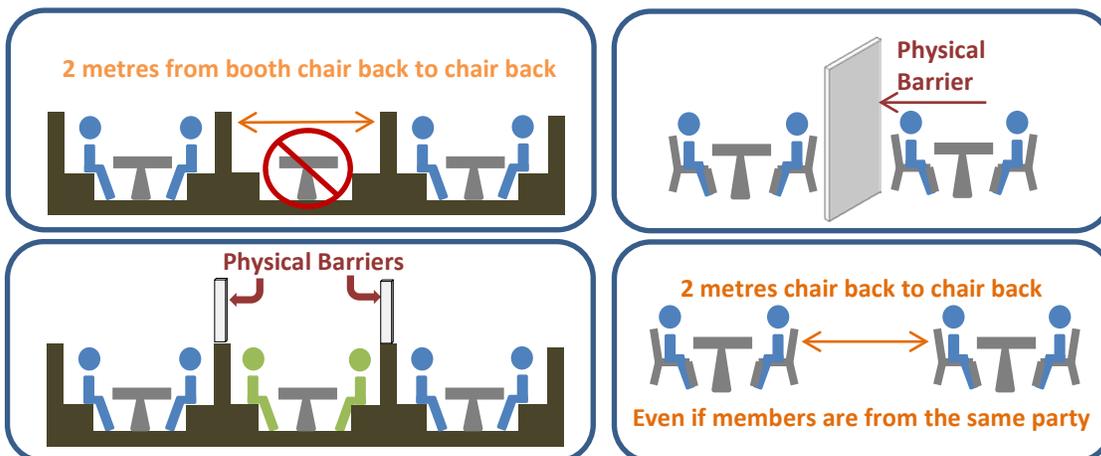
1. Patrons must be able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from other patrons, whether seated or standing, unless they are in the same party or they are separated by physical barriers.



2. There must be 2 metres between parties of patrons, whether seated or standing, unless the parties are separated by physical barriers.



3. There must be no more than 6 patrons seated at one table or booth or standing together, even if they belong to the same party.
4. There must be a distance of 2 metres between the backs of the seats of patrons seated at adjacent tables or booths, even if members of the same party are seated at adjacent tables or booths, unless the adjacent tables or booths are separated by physical barriers.



5. You must determine the maximum number of patrons that can be accommodated safely on your premises, taking into consideration the factors set out in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 above, and must document this maximum number in your safety plan.

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Tip Sheet – PHO Orders

[Click here to view a full text copy of all Orders](#)



MONITORING:

6. You must monitor the number of patrons present on your premises and ensure that the number present does not exceed the maximum number in your safety plan.
7. You must assess your premises for places where patrons may congregate or stand in line and, in those places, you must use physical devices, install markers or use other methods to guide and assist patrons in maintaining a distance of two metres from other patrons or parties of patrons.
8. You must monitor places where patrons congregate or stand in line and must remind patrons, or parties of patrons, to maintain a distance of two metres from one another, or from other parties of patrons.

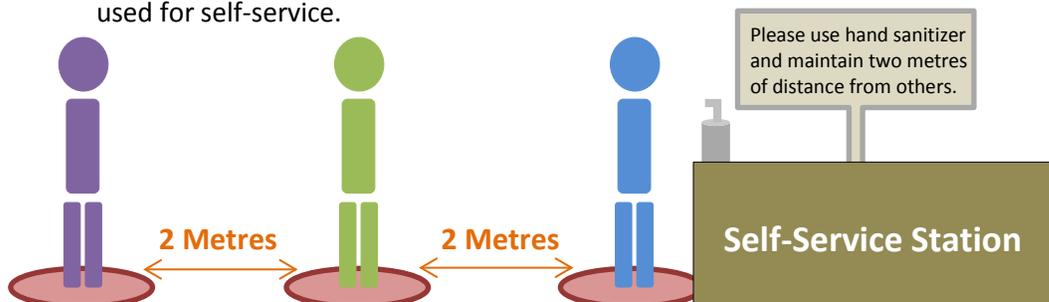
BARRIERS:

NOTE “physical barrier” means a barrier which is designed, installed and maintained in accordance with Worksafe BC guidelines: [Designing Effective Barriers](#)

9. If there are physical barriers between tables or booths, the tops and bottoms of the physical barriers must be positioned so that the physical barriers block the transmission of droplets produced by breathing, talking, coughing or sneezing between patrons who are seated or standing at adjacent tables or booths.

SELF SERVICE:

10. If there is a self-service station on your premises, you must:
 - Provide hand washing facilities or alcohol-based sanitizers within easy reach of the station;
 - Post signs reminding patrons to wash or sanitize their hands before touching self-service food or other items and to maintain a two metre distance from other patrons or parties of patrons; and
 - Frequently clean and sanitize high touch surfaces at the station and utensils that are used for self-service.



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Tip Sheet – PHO Orders

[Click here to view a full text copy of all Orders](#)



RECORDS:

11. If in the ordinary course of business, you collect information from patrons for the purpose of making reservations or seating patrons,
 - you must collect the first and last name and telephone number, or email address, of one member of every party of patrons, and
 - you must retain this information for thirty days, in the event that there is a need for contact tracing on the part of the medical health officer.

EVENTS:

NOTE An “event” refers to anything which gathers people together, whether on a one-time, regular or irregular basis, including a ceremony or celebration of any type, reception, musical, theatrical or dance entertainment or performance, art show, magic show, puppet show, fashion show, book signing, reading, recitation, display, movie, film, dancing, singing, meeting, lecture, talk, educational session, auction, fund raising benefit, contest, quiz, game, rally, festival, presentation, demonstration, or sporting or other physical display, but does not include background music.

12. If there is an event on the premises, you must collect the first and last name and telephone number, or email address, of one member of every party of patrons, and you must retain this information for thirty days, in the event that there is a need for contact tracing on the part of the medical health officer.
13. During an event
 - subject to subparagraph (b), there must be no more than fifty patrons present in total on the premises, even if this number is less than the maximum number of patrons permitted on the premises under the safety plan,
 - fifty patrons may only be present if this is not more than the total number of patrons permitted on the premises under the safety plan.
14. Despite paragraph 13 (a), if the event is taking place in an area completely separated from the rest of the premises, there may be additional patrons present in other parts of the premises, if the total number of patrons present on the premises does not exceed the maximum number of patrons permitted on the premises under the safety plan.
15. During an event, patrons who leave the premises, or the area of the premises in which the event is being held, must not be replaced by other patrons

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Tip Sheet – Employee Sickness

Goal: To prevent sick employees from spreading the virus to the public by ensuring employees stay home if they are ill.

Elimination Controls

- Tell your employees if they are sick with any symptoms consistent with cold, influenza or COVID-19, even if symptoms are mild, they must remain at home, and contact their family physician/primary care provider or Health Link BC at 8-1-1 for further assistance.

Administrative Controls

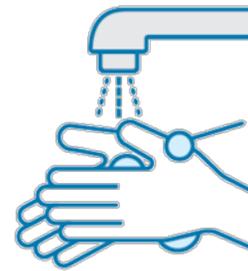
- Thoughtfully plan your sick leave policy to create an environment where employees feel supported in staying home when they are sick, and communicate the policy to all staff.
- Have operational contingency plans in cases where employees must remain home when sick (e.g. modifying systems to operate with fewer employees).
- Have employees declare they are symptom-free when signing in for the day.
- If while at work, an employee starts experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness consistent with COVID-19, even if symptoms are mild, ask the employee to don a mask, to leave work immediately, go straight home, and contact their a family physician/primary care provider or Health Link BC at 8-1-1 for further guidance.
- Ensure that objects and surfaces touched by sick employees who have gone home are cleaned and disinfected before being used by others.
- Sick employees should use the BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool.
- Anyone with symptoms can now be assessed and receive a COVID-19 test.
- Testing is not recommended for people who do not have symptoms.
- If an employee has a COVID-19 diagnosis, the local public health department will identify any co-workers who may have been exposed to the sick employee.
- The employer and employees should be reassured that if they haven't been contacted by public health then there is no issue or concern that was identified by public health.

Resources:

- [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)

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Tip Sheet – Personal Hygiene

GOAL: To limit spread of the virus by promoting good personal hygiene including hand washing, hand sanitizing, and cough/sneeze etiquette.

Elimination Controls

- Consider replacing physical greetings such as handshakes and hugs with non-contact greetings.

Engineering Controls

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer could be provided at entrances with posters reminding of the importance for handwashing/sanitizing following contact with common touch surfaces.
- Washrooms and dedicated hand washing sinks should have liquid soap, paper towels and warm running water at all times.
- Consider providing designated uniforms laundered by a service, or encourage workers to wear clothes that can be washed frequently.

Administrative Controls

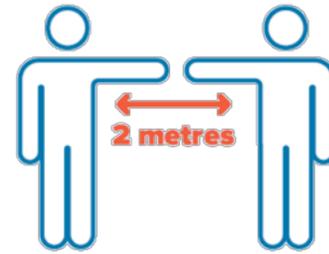
- Employees should wash their hands with soap and water at the start and end of their shift, after using the bathroom, before eating, after returning from a break, and when hands are visibly soiled.
- Employees should avoid the use of hand sanitizer when handling food.
- Employees should practice good hygiene throughout their shift including proper hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Employees should avoid touching their face without washing hands first.
- There should be no sharing of cigarettes or vaping equipment.
- Employees should be educated about the virus so they know how to minimize its spread.
- Consider providing electronic COVID-19 resources to all employees.

Resources:

- Poster: [BCCDC Handwashing](#)
- Video: [Hand Washing](#)
- Video: [Cough and Sneeze Etiquette](#)
- Link: [BCCDC Vaping, Smoking and COVID-19](#)

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Tip Sheet – Make Space between People

Goal: To increase space between people and avoid unnecessary contact to eliminate transmission of the virus through respiratory droplets.

Elimination Controls

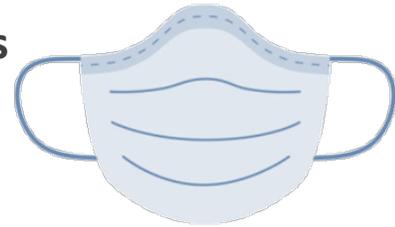
- Empty floor space could be increased by removing unnecessary materials, equipment, and merchandise displays, especially in foyers, high traffic areas, and other small spaces.
- 2 metre increments could be marked on floors where crowds normally form (e.g. line-up areas inside and outside the restaurant, payment areas etc.).
- Only essential personnel required to run the business should be allowed in the kitchen.
- Consider extending operating hours to compensate for reduced total capacity. This may have implications on your liquor license. Check with your liquor inspector.
- Where feasible, consider expanding outdoor patios to further spread out seating, and encourage guests to sit outside. Check with local government for requirements.
- Delivery or take-out services could be offered as an alternative to dine-in options.
- “Drop at the door service” for delivery could be used to avoid close contact with individuals who may be in isolation or who are symptomatic.
- A policy for receiving deliveries and supplies could be developed to reduce contact between people.

Resources:

- Poster: [BCCDC Physical Distancing](#)
- Video: [Why do we need to socially distance?](#)

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TIP Sheet – Personal Protective Equipment

Goal: To understand the limitations of using personal protective equipment and to ensure that if used, PPE is selected and used appropriately.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Service employees and food handlers are not required to wear masks unless they are normally used to perform job duties.
- Masks should never be relied upon as a sole protective measure.
- In situations where the other controls cannot be maintained, service employees and food handlers may choose to wear non-medical masks and face shields.
- Employees who choose to wear a mask should be aware of the following:
 - Masks can become contaminated on the outside when touched by hands so employees should avoid touching or adjusting them often.
 - Masks that become wet, soiled or damaged are less effective and should be replaced immediately.
 - Masks should be put on and taken off correctly, including not touching the front of the mask, and washing hands.
 - Cloth masks should be washed every day using the warmest water setting, and stored in a clean dry place to prevent contamination.
 - Never share masks with others.
 - If a non-cloth mask is used (e.g. medical mask), employees should be reminded these items are single-use. In addition to following safe procedures for putting them on and taking them off, they cannot be cleaned or reused.
- Gloves for service employees and front-of-house staff are not recommended.
- If food handlers wear gloves for cleaning, if they have a cut, or for any other reason, the gloves should be taken off correctly (see video below), they must be changed between tasks, and hands must be washed between glove changes.
- Glove use is not substitute for hand hygiene.

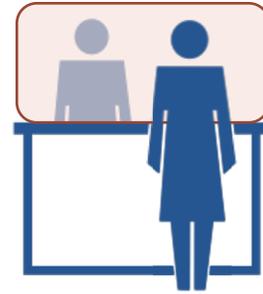
Resources:

- Video: [How to remove disposable gloves](#)
- WorkSafe BC: [Selecting and Using Masks](#)
- Worksafe BC [How to Use a Mask](#)
- BCCDC: [Guideline on Types of Masks](#)

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Guidance for Food Service Establishments and Liquor Services

TIP Sheet – Modify the Environment



Goal: Change the environment to reduce common touch points and make interacting with others safer.

Engineering Controls

- Where physical distancing cannot be maintained between employees, barriers of non-porous materials like plexiglass may be used between employee work stations.
- Eliminate communal storage areas for employees' personal belongings, and consider providing separate sealable bins or lockers instead.
- If possible, increase the amount of outdoor air being brought in, and/or natural ventilation. Open windows where possible, but be cautious about not allowing pests to gain entrance.
- Dining room tables could be kept clear of utensils, menu boards and shared condiment containers; instead these items could be provided to customers on request.
- Consider using single-use condiments and replacing re-usable menus with single-use menus or touchless menu options (e.g. online menus, sandwich board displays etc.).
- Self-service areas must be set-up according to the PHO's Order (see page 7).

Administrative Controls

- Encourage customers to book reservations as much as possible.
- If a table is not immediately available, instead of having clients wait in the lobby, consider sending them off site and using electronic notification when their table is ready (e.g. recommend text messages instead of common-touch pagers).
- Consider temporarily suspending any valet parking or coat check services.
- Only offer bulk foods if they are safely dispensed by staff.
- Consider allowing children to keep coloring crayons, rather than re-using.
- Encourage use of touch-free payment options.
- When cash is the only payment option, staff must avoid touching their eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.

Resources:

- [Worksafe BC: Guideline to Designing Effective Barriers](#)

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Tip Sheet – Sanitation



Goal: Increase cleaning and disinfection of common high touch points to prevent COVID-19 from spreading through contaminated surfaces.

Engineering Controls

- Consider keeping separate cleaning supplies for front of house and back of house areas.
- Multiple plastic lined waste containers should be available to dispose of used tissues, wipes, gloves, and other cleaning materials.

Administrative Controls

- In addition to following your regular [sanitation plan](#), consider creating a checklist of high-touch surfaces that must be cleaned and disinfected more frequently throughout the day. Examples include: door handles, light switches, debit machines, counters, coat racks, break room appliances, railings, trollies, faucets, menus, and condiments etc.
- The daily disinfection schedule could be posted in a high-visibility area.
- Team members could be assigned to specific disinfection responsibilities and to sign-off.
- It is recommended that any person required to clean has received the appropriate training.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Employees responsible for cleaning should be equipped with any required personal protective equipment depending on chemicals used (e.g. gloves, goggles, apron and mask).

SELECTION and USE of DISINFECTANTS for NON-FOOD CONTACT SURFACES:

- Most disinfectants approved for use in restaurants are sufficient to kill COVID-19 as long as manufacturer's instructions are followed; special products are not necessary.
- Disinfectants will have a DIN (drug identification number) and clear set of instructions.
- Make sure the appropriate contact time is met (i.e. surfaces must remain wet with disinfectant for the correct length of time in order to destroy any contamination).
- Surfaces that are dirty must be cleaned with soap and water first, before disinfecting.

Resources:

- [Health Canada approved disinfectants for COVID-19](#)
- [BCCDC Guideline for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

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Tip Sheet – Managing Information

GOAL: To stay informed, follow public health advice, keep records, and make sure information you share is clear, accurate and easy to find.

Engineering Controls

- Consider using signage as follows:
 - On front doors to tell anyone entering not to enter if they are feeling ill.
 - In common areas to remind patrons about physical distancing
 - Above or beside all bathroom and kitchen sinks to explain proper hand washing.

Administrative Controls

- A table numbering system could be used to track which table patrons are seated at. This could also assist with contact tracing, should it be necessary.
- Team members or a manager should keep daily records of the people who worked together and retain these records for at least 30 days.
- Consider maintaining up-to-date and consistent messaging on websites, social media, emails, press releases, and when speaking with customers so details are aligned, timely and accurate.
- Employees may be encouraged to provide regular feedback on any issues with COVID-19 prevention measures. Consider providing a means for employees to do this anonymously.

TIPS for EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE:

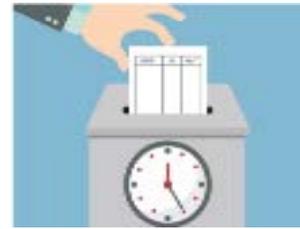
- Communicate information in multiple languages and use diagrams or pictures.
- The font size on signage should be large enough for everyone to read from a distance (i.e. if the person was standing 2 metres away from the sign).
- In wet areas or outside, posters could be placed in plastic sleeves to protect them from water damage.
- Consider placing important signage in conspicuous areas and away from other posted information so it is clearly visible (i.e. avoid posting signs by to product advertisements, coupon boards etc.).

Resources:

- Link: [Translated training materials and signage](#)
- Poster: [BCCDC Do Not Enter if Sick](#)

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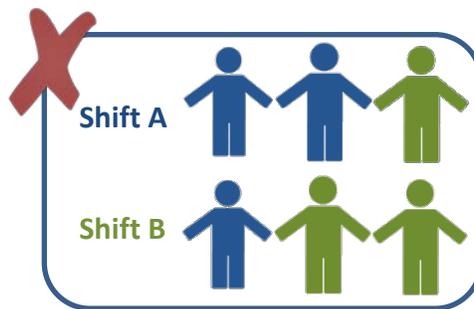
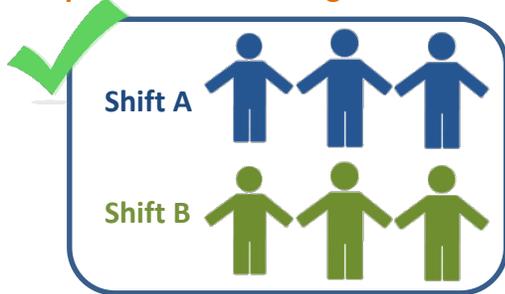
TIP Sheet – Staff Scheduling & Meetings

Goal: To adjust schedules, rotations and shift activities to limit contact between team members.

Elimination Controls

- Team members who can work from home should do so.
- Consider implementing ‘cohort staffing’ – this means forming small groups of team members who will consistently work together without crossover.

Example of cohort staffing:



- Stagger breaks for individuals or cohorts, and maintain a predictable break schedule.
- If prep shifts are scheduled, consider staggering start times so there is no overlap with service shifts to minimize the number of employees on site at one time.

Engineering Controls

- If possible, designate extra rooms or areas for breaks; encourage use of outdoor spaces.
- Consider using large rooms, outdoor spaces, or virtual options for team meetings.
- Staff training should be done in small groups with social distancing, or online.
- Employee-only areas could be clearly demarcated so clients know not to enter these spaces.

Administrative Controls

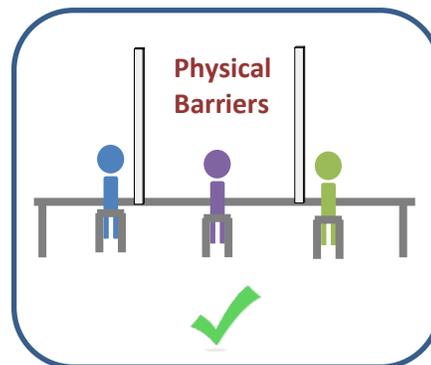
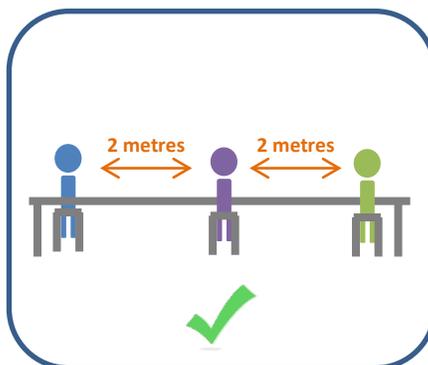
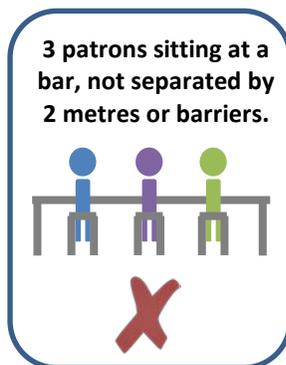
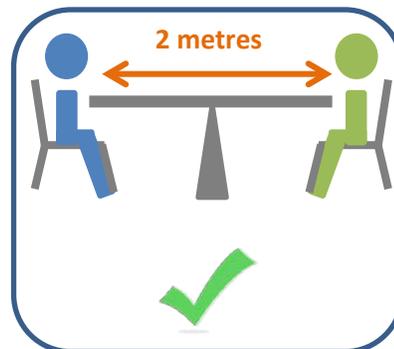
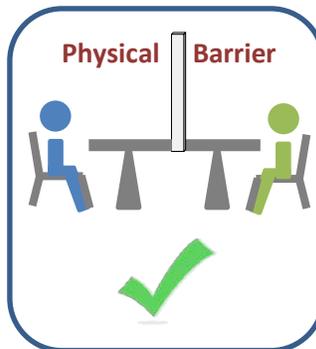
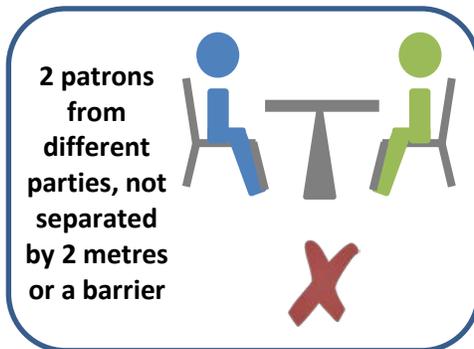
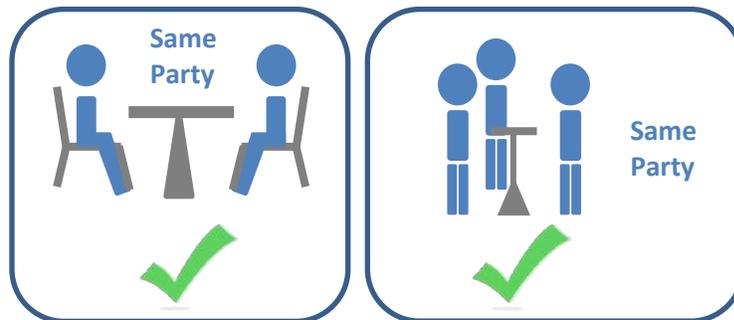
- If your company owns multiple restaurant outlets, consider identifying team members who work at multiple outlets and find a way to eliminate or reduce travel between sites

PHYSICAL DISTANCING & BARRIERS

Order by Provincial Health Officer (mandatory elimination controls)

[Click here to view a full text copy of all Orders](#)

Patrons must be able to maintain a distance of two metres from other patrons, whether seated or standing, unless they are in the same party or separated by physical barriers.



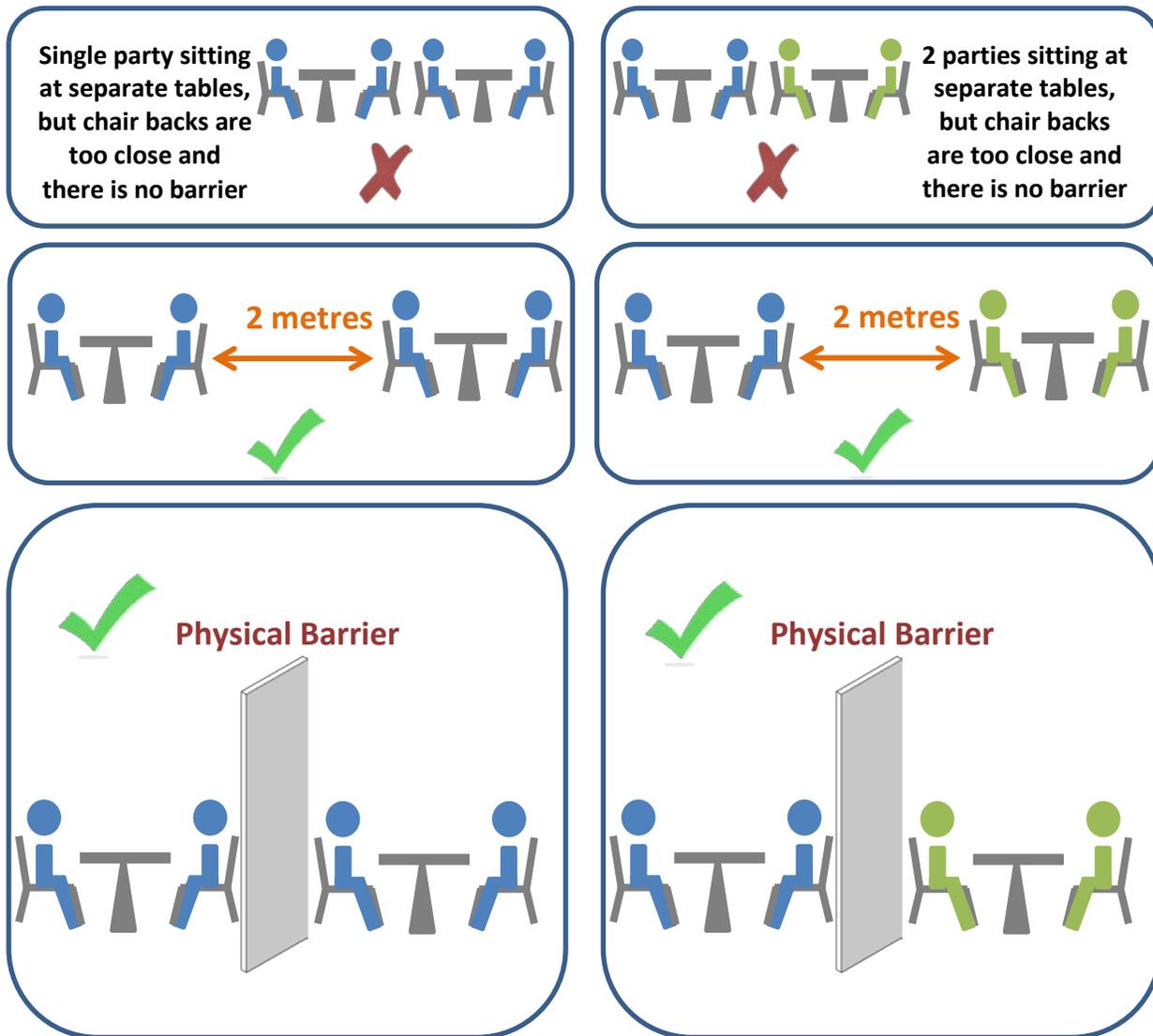
[Link: WorkSafe BC Guideline: Designing Effective Barriers](#)

PHYSICAL DISTANCING & BARRIERS

Order by Provincial Health Officer (mandatory elimination controls)

[Click here to view a full text copy of all Orders](#)

There must be a distance of two metres between the backs of the seats of patrons seated at adjacent tables or booths, even if members of the same party are seated at adjacent tables or booths, unless adjacent tables or booths are separated by physical barriers.



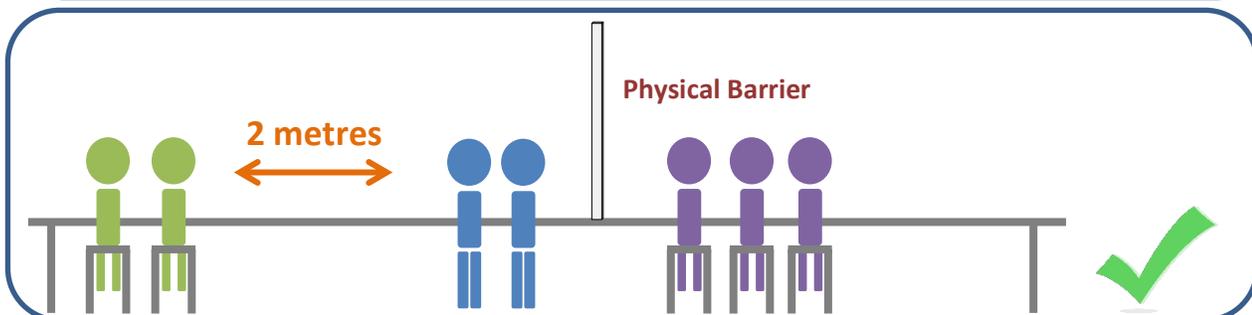
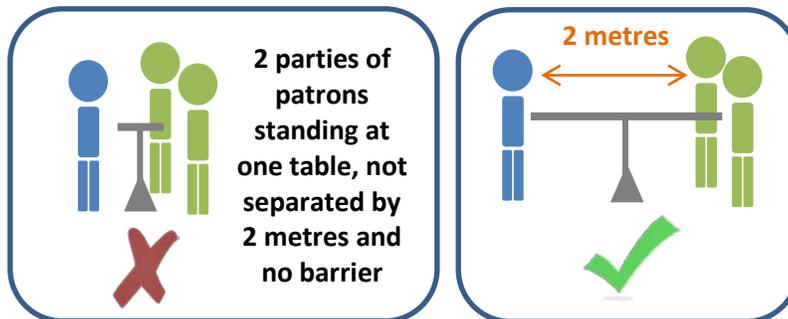
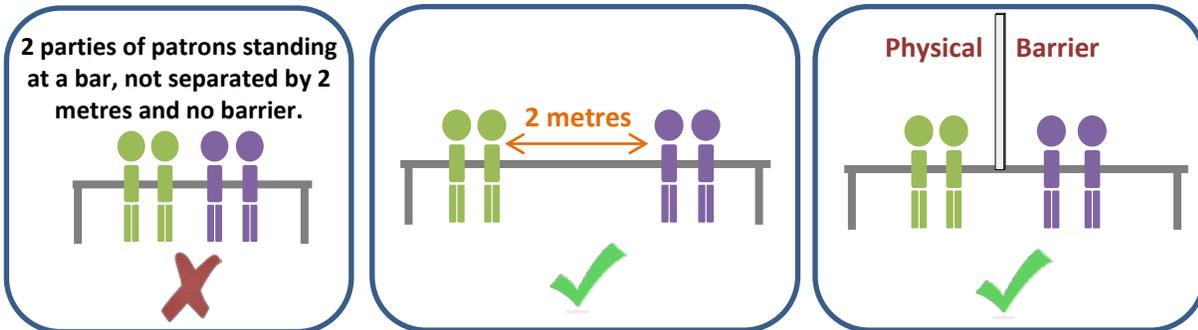
[Link: WorkSafe BC Guideline: Designing Effective Barriers](#)

PHYSICAL DISTANCING & BARRIERS

Order by Provincial Health Officer (mandatory elimination controls)

[Click here to view a full text copy of all Orders](#)

There must be two metres between parties of patrons, whether seated or standing, unless the parties are separated by physical barriers.



[Link: WorkSafe BC Guideline: Designing Effective Barriers](#)