COVID-19 and health and safety responsibilities
Employers, workers, owners or prime contractors, and other people at the workplace all have a responsibility to prevent exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace.
The employer is responsible for:

• The health and safety of their workers, and all other workers at their workplace
• Completing and posting the COVID-19 Safety Plan
• Training and providing education on the contents of that plan
• Having a system in place to identify the hazards of COVID-19, control the risk, and monitor the effectiveness of the controls
The worker is responsible for:

• Taking reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and the health and safety of other people at workplace.
  • Includes personal self-care, e.g., frequent hand washing and staying home when sick
• Reporting unsafe conditions to their employer
• Following the procedures put in place by the employer to control the risks associated with COVID-19
The owner or prime contractor is responsible for:

- Coordinating health and safety at a workplace where workers of two or more employers are working at the same time
  - Doing everything that can reasonably be done to establish and maintain a system or process to ensure compliance with WorkSafeBC laws and regulations
  - Ensuring an effective system to control the risks associated with COVID-19
The contractor:

- Might be a worker, employer, or independent operator and have the corresponding responsibilities
Developing your COVID-19 Safety Plan to control the risk of exposure in the workplace
Every employer is required to have a COVID-19 Safety Plan that assesses the risk of exposure at their workplace and implements measures to keep their workers safe.

- WorkSafeBC will not review or approve the plans of individual employers in advance, but will review them during our inspections of your workplace.
- We will ask employers about the steps they have taken to protect their workers and to see the plan if it has been developed.
- By order of the Provincial Health Officer, your plan must be posted to your worksite.
Orders, notices, and guidance

Follow the orders, notices, and guidance from the provincial health officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

The basics

• Physical distancing (2 metres / 6 feet)
• Cleaning and disinfecting
• Personal hygiene:
  • Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use your elbow.
  • Wash your hands.
  • Avoid touching your face.
  • Do not share food, drinks, or items.

Source: BC Centre for Disease Control, Government of BC
COVID-19 Safety Plan steps

Follow these steps to create your COVID-19 Safety Plan:

1. Assess the risk at your workplace
2. Implement measures to reduce the risk
3. Develop policies
4. Develop communication plans and training
5. Monitor your workplace and update your plans as needed
6. Assess and address risks from resuming operations
Step 1: Assess the risk at your workplace

• Assess workplace to identify where risk of transmission is introduced.
• Involve frontline workers, supervisors, JHSC/worker representatives
• Consider questions like:
  • Where do people congregate?
  • What job tasks or processes require workers to come into close proximity with one another or members of the public?
  • What tools, machinery, and equipment do people come into contact with?
  • What surfaces are touched often?
Involve your workers

Joint health and safety committees

• Work with joint occupational health and safety committee (JOHSC) members or worker representatives to:
  • Identify and find solutions to workplace health and safety issues.
  • Includes concerns about exposure to COVID-19.
  • Joint committees must continue to meet regularly as required under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.
Step 2: Implement protocols to reduce the risk

- You must select and put protocols in place to minimize the risk of transmission, with an emphasis on:
  - Maintaining physical distance
  - Other measures where physical distance cannot be maintained
  - Cleaning and hygiene
Selecting protocols for your workplace

- Elimination
- Engineering controls
- Administrative controls
- PPE
Protocols for workers in vehicles

• Limit essential work travel and ban non-essential travel.
  • For instances where work travel is required, consider practices to encourage physical distancing between workers.
  • Follow other preventative measures related to cleaning and hygiene.
Protocols for cleaning and hygiene

• Enhance cleaning and hygiene measures:
  • Provide adequate handwashing facilities.
  • Put up reminders for personal hygiene practices.
  • Provide supplies.
  • Disinfect high-contact areas and items.
  • Remove shared items.

• Train, supervise, and document.

** No definition for “enhanced” cleaning – refer to your own workplace risk assessment and the BCCDC guidelines.
Step 3: Develop policies

- Develop the necessary policies to manage your workplace, including policies around:
  - Who can be at the workplace
  - Rules and policies for working remotely
  - How to address illness that arises at the workplace
  - How workers can be kept safe in adjusted working conditions
Step 4: Communication plans and training

- Ensure that everyone entering the workplace, including workers from other employers, knows how to keep themselves safe while at your workplace.
  - Train everyone on the measures and policies you have put in place.
  - Post signage.
  - Ensure supervisors have been trained on monitoring workers and workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.
Step 5: Monitor workplace and update plans

- Update policies and procedures as needed, involving workers in this process.
- Ensure workers can raise safety concerns.
Step 6: Assess and address risks from resuming operations

• Have you had any staff turnover, or are workers being required to change or adapt job roles, or to use new equipment? Consider training or new employee orientation.

• Will workers need time or training to refresh their skills after having been out of the workplace?

• Have you changed anything about the way you operate, such as the equipment you use or the products you create?

• Are there any processes required for start-up that might introduce risks? Consider the impact of restarting machinery, tools and equipment, or clearing systems and lines of product that may have been left when your business was closed.
COVID-19 Safety Plan Template

• Fillable PDF you can download and save with the details of the plan for your workplace.

• This tool will guide you through a six-step process to help you create your plan.

• Visit www.worksafebc.com/covid-19-resources to access.
What workers should do

• Know when not to come to work.
• Follow preventative measures while at work:
  • Comply with the employer’s instructions around minimizing exposure.
  • Practice physical distancing, cleaning and disinfecting, and personal hygiene.
• Report hazards and refuse unsafe work.
• Take steps to minimize exposure to COVID-19 while away from work.
WorkSafeBC’s support
Accessing WorkSafeBC services

• WorkSafeBC has been deemed an essential service.

• Check worksafebc.com for regular updates and announcements.

• We are committed to continuing to provide core services for workers and employers around the province, which includes helping employers prevent workplace injury, illness, and disease.
WorkSafeBC’s prevention efforts

Prevention field officers and occupational health and safety consultants are still performing inspections, education, and consultations.

Online resources:
• Inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic: Frequently asked questions for employers
• Prevention Services data for COVID-19

Refusal of Unsafe Work:
Process found in Occupational Health and Safety Guideline G3.12

Prevention Information Line:
• Workers and employers can speak to a prevention officer to get answers to questions.
• If required, a prevention officer will be assigned to assess the health and safety risk at your workplace.
• Call 604.276.3100 in the Lower Mainland or 1.888.621.SAFE toll-free within B.C.
Key WorkSafeBC health & safety resources

- COVID-19 safety plan template
- Selecting and using masks info sheet
- How to use a mask poster
- Designing effective barriers resource
- Cleaning and disinfecting info sheet
- Handwashing poster
- Occupancy limit poster
- Entry check for visitors poster
- Entry check for workers poster
- Coming soon: Community Social Services industry specific guidance & YouTube Safety Plan walk-through

Find these and other COVID-19 resources at [www.worksafebc.com/covid-19-resources](http://www.worksafebc.com/covid-19-resources). Translations of resources are also available in Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), French, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
Psychological health and safety during a pandemic
Mental Health: Helping your workers cope

Psychological health is of equal importance to physical health.

Here’s how you can help:

• Support the mental well-being of workers by helping them manage stress, anxiety and uncertainty created by the COVID-19 outbreak.

• Leverage existing resources
  • Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression (Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions)
  • Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak (World Health Organization)
  • Coronavirus: Managing Stress and Anxiety (Canadian Mental Health Association)
  • Mental Health and COVID-19 (Conference Board of Canada)
  • Taking Care of Your Mental Health (COVID-19) (Public Health Agency of Canada)