

Preventing exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace

A guide for employers

Orders from the provincial health officer (PHO) and guidance to employers and businesses provided by the BC Centre of Disease Control represent the minimum standard that employers must meet, to comply with obligations to ensure worker health and safety. To address health and safety concerns in the workplace raised by COVID-19, ask yourself the following questions:

- 1 How are you telling your workers about COVID-19 (i.e. exposure to COVID-19 in your workplace)?
- 2 Do you have a system in place where workers (including joint health and safety committee representatives and worker representatives) can inform you of concerns relating to being exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace? Find out if there are any specific tasks that concern them (e.g. tasks that involve interacting with others).

Identifying exposure hazards and developing measures to control exposure

- 3 What are you doing to prevent your workers from being exposed to COVID-19?
 - Have you done a walk-through of your workplace, to identify specific conditions or tasks that may increase the risk of exposure of your workers to COVID-19?
 - Have you asked your workers (including your joint committee or worker representative) where potential exposures may occur and how they think exposures can be controlled?
- 4 Have you developed controls that will eliminate or minimize the risk of exposure?
 - What are those controls?
 - Have you put them in place?
 - How are they working (are they effective)?
 - How do you know how they are working?

Controlling the number of people on site

- 5 How are you controlling the number of workers and other people at your workplace?
 - Do all your workers need to come to work? Can some work from home? (Learn about [Health and safety responsibilities when working from home.](#))
 - Can you stagger shifts, to reduce the numbers present at one time?
 - Are you ensuring there is adequate cleaning between shifts?
 - Can you prioritize the work that needs to be done at the workplace to help your business operate as close to normal under the circumstances? This will require a determination of core work and where it can safely and productively be performed.

- 6 If you have workers who need to come to the workplace, how are you ensuring the following steps are being taken to reduce their risk of COVID-19 exposure? Different workplaces will have different needs but the following steps are a good start:
- Position workers to allow for physical distancing. Keep 2 metres distance between workers and customers, clients, and other workers.
 - Provide soap and water or hand sanitizers and encourage workers to wash their hands frequently.
 - Enhance cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace, particularly high-contact items such as door handles, faucet handles, keyboards, and shared equipment (e.g., photocopiers).
- 7 How are you checking and tracking whether the above steps are being taken?

Prohibition of workers who are sick and those returning from outside Canada

- 8 What are you and your supervisors and managers doing to prohibit the following workers from coming to work?
- Workers who are displaying symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, sneezing), whether or not the illness has been confirmed as COVID-19.
 - Workers who have travelled internationally. It is mandatory for all travellers returning to Canada to self-isolate for 14-days.
 - Workers who live in the same household as a confirmed or clinical COVID-19 case who is self-isolating, or who have been exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 infected person and advised by 811 (public health) to self-isolate.
- 9 How are you communicating these messages to your managers, supervisors, and workers?
- 10 What are you doing to track and communicate with workers who fall into one of the above categories?

For more information about preventing workplace exposure to COVID-19 visit worksafebc.com and the [BC Centre of Disease Control](#).

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