

Best Practices to Avoid the Spread of COVID-19



As you are adapting to this new reality you may wish to consider the following options:

- Have you implemented additional cleaning/sanitizing efforts?
- Are you limiting the number of persons in your store to one per company or family? Suggest customers pick up what they came for and allow no browsing or loitering. Suggest browsing to be done on-line.
- Have you considered implementing no-charge delivery services or curbside pick-up? What arrangements are you making to ensure orders are correctly received?
- How are you managing social distancing with staff and customers?
- Are you masking off walkways for staff and customers?
- Have you installed sneeze screens at customer service areas and at the cash?
- Do you have an e-commerce presence or are you taking phone orders? How will you process orders and ensure customers can get them safely?
- Wireless credit card machines are one way to accept mobile payments to minimize handling cash.
- You may wish to limit use of store washrooms to Staff only.
- Are you offering extensions on project payments?
- Have you been in contact with your suppliers to review next steps or to work together to ensure business operations can be sustained?
- Have you considered suspending returns for the moment and allowing extended return times where refunds can be handled later as the Health Crisis settles down?

Communication Plan

- Getting your message out is critical, as well as continually assessing changes and ensuring up-to-date messages are communicated to all stakeholders.
- Do you have a crisis communications plan?
- How will you continue to assess changes and communicate them?
- What methods of communication will you use to communicate the steps you have taken to continue operating? You may wish to consider social media, phone calls, email, text messaging, mail and fax.
- You may wish to be in touch with your local media outlets to consider opportunities to get the message out that your business is still open. Are you effectively using signage around and outside your store?
- Have you been communicating with builders and contractors to make them aware of any changes to your normal business operation?
- Is your staff aware and up to date with any changes you are carrying out so that the message being delivered to your customers is consistent?

Financial Resources

- Banks understand the importance of the business community and are a valuable resource to help you during this difficult time.
- Have you been in contact with your bank or financial institution?
- Have you looked to the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)? (They take on-line business applications for up to \$100K. Contact a local BDC representative for working capital loans over \$100K. Loan terms are interest only for 12 months. Click [here](#) to be re-directed to their website.)
- Register for BDC's [FREE](#) webinar "How to cope with the impacts of COVID-19 on your Business"

Credifax Atlantic "FREE TRIAL": Early Warning Systems & Credit Risk Management Services

www.credifax.com contact covid19upgrades@credifax.com

Employment Resources

The Federal and Provincial Governments are still releasing information, but here are the current resources:

Federal

The Canadian Government announced initiatives to provide financial supports to employers and employees. Please visit the following link to access current information:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/maintaingrowimprovebusiness/resources-for-canadian-businesses.html>

The Canadian Government Federal package includes C\$27 billion in direct support for individuals and companies and C\$55 billion in temporary tax deferrals for households and businesses (temporary liquidity support). This was a revised proposal as the original was defeated by opposition parties as they were not comfortable giving the government the ability to raise taxes without Parliament, while also having the emergency spending power over almost 2 years rather than the now approved 6 months.

Federal Links:

- Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance for Small Business (CECRA) [CECRA Program Information](#)
- The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) [CEWS Program Link](#)
- The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) Update July 17th [CEWS Program Update July 17th Link](#)
- BDC has launched the New Small & Medium-Sized Enterprise Loan & Guarantee Program [BDC Program Info](#)
- Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) [BCAP Program Link](#)
- Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) [CEBA Link](#)
- Federal Wage Subsidy Program has been extended to Summer, 2021.

Please keep in mind these are Federal programs and each Province has been coming out with their own initiatives.

The following links will assist with keeping up to date in the Atlantic Provinces:

Nova Scotia

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

New Brunswick

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc/content/respiratory_diseases/coronavirus.html

New Brunswick Mandatory Order, as of October 8th, 2020

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Corporate/pdf/EmergencyUrgence19.pdf>

Newfoundland & Labrador

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/>

Prince Edward Island

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/covid-19>

Important additional information...click links below

- [Staying Safe at Work & Personal Protective Equipment](#)
- [Managing anxiety & worry during COVID-19](#)
- [Working Safely From Home](#)
- [Right to Refuse](#)
- [Policy 21-109 Conditions for Entitlement – Infectious Diseases](#)

Worksafe NB [Information click here](#)

Worksafe NS [information click here](#)

Workplace NL [Information click here](#)

WCB PEI [Information click here](#)

Additional links from Worksafe NS

- [Supporting workers and employers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- wcb.ns.ca/COVID19
- Ideas and activities for Safety and Health Week in your workplace worksafeforlife.ca/COVID19
- Print or order [posters for your workplace](#).



What should an employer do when an employee tests positive for COVID-19 and may have been in the workplace interacting with co-workers before the diagnosis was confirmed?

The employee must immediately isolate themselves and follow guidance from the appropriate regional public health officials. Public Health will determine if there is a need to inform the employer of the test results. Public Health will advise anyone who has been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 to identify any control measures that are required to be put in place.

For the management of cases and contacts, Regional Public Health will provide the direction for follow up and advise if there is a need for employer action.

Regional public health will lead the process of tracing the identity of other persons that may have been exposed. Public Health may require the employer's assistance in the process. As the employer, you are required to:

- Cooperate with Health officials and adhere to the advice provided. Additional information on the tracing process used is below.
- Report the potential exposure to your provincial Workers Compensation Authority:
 - NB WorkSafeNB (compliance.conformite@ws-ts.nb.ca) or call 1 800 999-9775
 - NS WorkSafe NS (info@wcb.ns.ca) or call 1 800 870 3331
 - NL WorkplaceNL (info@workplacnl.ca) or call 1 800 563 9000
 - PEI WCB PEI call 1 800 237 5049
- With the guidance of Public Health, communicate with your staff and other workplace parties about measures they must take following the potential exposure. Public Health will also identify if any communication is needed external to your workplace.
- Close or restrict access to the workplace to clean surfaces and equipment which the confirmed case was in contact with by following the guidelines developed by Health Canada for [Hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- Follow any specific guidelines by the [Public Health Agency of Canada \(PHAC\)](#) and your provincial Department of Health
 - NB [New Brunswick Department of Health](#)
 - NS [Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness](#)
 - NL [Newfound and Labrador Health and Community Services](#)
 - PEI [Prince Edward Island Health and Wellness](#)

This should be done before re-occupying the workplace to comply with your Provincial WCB requirements.

- Introduce a screening process for employees re-entering the workplace if such a process does not already exist. You can find information on the screening process and a screening tool developed by WorkSafeNB [here](#).

- Re-evaluate the workplace including the preventive measures to determine if changes are required. You can consult the following links for guidance:

WorkSafeNB COVID-19 Workplace Tips link:

<https://www.worksafenb.ca/safety-topics/covid-19/employer-tool-to-slow-the-spread-of-covid-19/>)

Government of NS COVID-19 Workplace Tips web link: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/working-during-covid-19/>

Government of NL COVID-19 Workplace Tips web link:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/Workplace-March-20th-Infograph.pdf>

Health & Wellness PEI COVID-19 Workplace Tips web link:

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/employers-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>

- If necessary, re-visit the business continuity plan.

Additional information on the difference between self-isolation and self-monitoring can be found below:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks.html#self>

Public Health Contact Tracing Information

- All positive COVID-19 cases are reported to the appropriate regional public health office.
- Public Health staff contacts the individual who tested positive the same day they receive the results to inform them of their test result, provide instruction, and determine who they have been in close contact with.
- Public Health conducts a risk assessment based on a detailed interview with the individual
- Public Health staff contacts all close contacts (and the workplace if appropriate) to identify any control measures that are required to be put in place.
- If one of these close contacts tests positive, then the contact tracing process begins for that individual.

As is the case for all contact tracing of cases, Public Health nurses and teams work daily with new cases to trace the contacts and have them self isolate. If there is workplace exposure or exposure to the public, Public Health determines what communications are needed within workplaces or with the public or media outlets.

Every individual is entitled to privacy when it comes to Personal Health Information and confidentiality is respected and adhered to during all aspects of the Public Health investigation.

Risk Mitigation Tool for Workplaces/Businesses operating during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Summary

Objective: This tool will assist workplaces/businesses in considering risks to employees, customers and clients during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and provide examples of measures that may be implemented at the workplace/business to mitigate potential risks.

What are the COVID-19 risks at my workplace/business?

The following facts about COVID-19 and associated questions can help you consider the risks of COVID-19 in your workplace/business.

The risk level is affected by the level of COVID-19 activity in the local community. If there is known COVID-19 activity in your community, the likelihood that it could be introduced into the workplace/business is higher. The risk of COVID-19 introduction and spread is also presumed to be greater if a higher proportion of individuals visit the workplace/business from outside of your community.

- COVID-19 spreads from person to person, most commonly through respiratory droplets (e.g., generated by a coughing, sneezing, laughing or talking) during close interactions (i.e., within 2 metres). COVID-19 can be spread by infected individuals who have mild symptoms, or who have not yet or who may never develop symptoms.
- COVID-19 can also be spread through touching something with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands.
- COVID-19 can cause more severe illness among people who are 65 and over, and those who have compromised immune systems or other underlying medical conditions.
- COVID-19 spread can occur when personal preventive practices are not consistently followed.

How can my workplace/business mitigate COVID-19 risks?

To prevent and/or limit the spread of COVID-19 in community-based settings such as your workplace/business, consider the following risk mitigation principles and measures. Risk mitigation measures that are more protective involve separating people from each other or shared surfaces through physical distancing and physical barriers. Measures that are less protective rely on individuals to consistently follow personal preventive practices (e.g., environmental cleaning, use of personal protective equipment, wearing of non-medical masks or cloth face coverings). In some settings, physical distancing or separation may not be possible. To maximize safety, use a "layered" approach with multiple measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread, including decreasing the number of interactions with others and increasing the safety of interactions. Layering of multiple mitigation measures strengthens the risk mitigation potential overall. The following examples of risk mitigation measures are provided for your consideration. The following list is not exhaustive - you are encouraged to find creative and adaptive ways to mitigate risk in your workplace/business setting that align with public health advice and are respectful of workers.

- Discourage people who are ill from entering the workplace/business.
- Promote and facilitate personal preventive practices. Everyone plays a part in making workplaces/businesses safer, including employers, employees, contractors, clients, and all others who interact with workplaces/businesses.
- Promote physical distancing (keeping a distance of 2 metres from others), which is one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness.
- Create physical barriers between employees/clients when physical distancing is not possible.
- Increase ventilation.
- Mitigate risks from exposure to high-touch surfaces (i.e., frequently touched by others).
- Mitigate risk for people at higher risk of severe illness.
- Modify practices to reduce how long employees/clients are in contact with each other and how many employees/clients come into contact with each other.

To Access the complete Risk Mitigation Tool click on the following link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>