

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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