



Reopening for Business

When considering if your business should reopen, understand that:

- The coronavirus will still be circulating, and new infections are possible. A reduction in distancing and isolation measures does not mean the virus is gone. It means that infection rates have slowed down enough that the health care system is expected to be able to handle the probable cases.
- Another period of higher restrictive measures may be reintroduced if infection rates increase.
- It is important to follow any physical distancing or safety measures that remain necessary.
- Continue to monitor announcements for your area and follow instructions from the government, public health, or other appropriate authority.

Employers must:

- Make sure workers know about the virus and how to minimize its spread.
- Set a clear policy for what is expected of workers if they get sick, have symptoms, or if an exposure is reported at the organization.
- Do everything possible, under the circumstances, to protect the health and safety of workers and customers by providing adequate information, training, sanitation, and personal protective equipment.
- Consider having a phased-in approach when recalling workers, such as only recalling those workers that are needed for specific functions initially. If it is possible for some workers to continue working remotely, they should do so. Individuals living with immunocompromising health conditions (including chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart or lung issues, cancer, etc.) or who live with individuals who are immunocompromised may need to continue to work remotely.

Workers must:

- Practice physical distancing by keeping more than 2 metres (6 feet) apart from co-workers and customers.
- Continue to follow all safe work procedures. If it is unsafe to work, they should talk to their supervisor, health and safety committee or representative, and/or union.
- Stay home if they are sick or might be sick. Follow the Public Health Agency of Canada's steps for self-assessment: <https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>
- Avoid touching their face.
- Wash their hands at the start of their shift, before eating or drinking, after touching shared items, after using the washroom, and before leaving work. Remove jewellery while washing.

Many protective measures may still be necessary. Continue to use guidance from CCOHS' other coronavirus (COVID-19) tip sheets for your workplace:

<https://www.ccohs.ca/products/publications/covid19/>



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Sanitation Steps

- Increase ventilation and fresh air return where possible.
- Make sure washrooms are cleaned frequently, have running water, and are stocked with soap, paper towels and a plastic lined waste container. Visibly dirty hands must be washed with soap and water.
- Provide hand sanitizer at customer service areas, entrances and exits, checkouts, and help desks.
- Clean offices, lunchrooms, and workspaces at least once per day, and more often for high-traffic areas and contact surfaces. Focus on frequently touched and shared surfaces such as keys, doors, handles, carts, handrails, light switches, shelves, countertops, drawers, keyboards and mice, touchscreens, payment keypads, cash drawers, pens, tools, phones, radios, vending machines, tables, chairs, and kitchen equipment.
- Provide enough items for each worker such as phones, tablets, walkie-talkies, tools, etc. If items must be shared, clean with alcohol or disinfectant wipes between users.
- Continue to wash your hands often. Supply soap and water, or hand sanitizer.
- Provide workers with wipes or other ways to clean their workspace.
- Line waste containers with plastic bags to reduce exposure when emptying the container.

When Using Cleaning Products

- Make sure workers understand the risks and safety precautions when using cleaning products.
- Provide workers with the personal protective equipment they need to safely use cleaning products and make sure they use them correctly.
- Dispose of used tissues, wipes, gloves, and other cleaning materials in a plastic lined waste container.
- Use disposable gloves when handling garbage.

Staff Management

- Ask all workers to check in when they arrive for work. Do not allow people on-site if they are sick or might be sick.
- Minimize contact during sign-in. Have the supervisor do roll call and sign in for people (or provide separate pens), or have people text their supervisor. Clean any sign-in devices between users.
- Make sure workers are trained to work safely, including when replacing the duties of others.
- Train workers on how to work with and care for personal protective equipment, and to understand its limitations.
- Submit all documents, such as reports and forms, electronically, or wash hands after handling papers.
- Remove communal coat check areas and shared footwear or clothing. Have workers store their personal items in separate lockers or in sealed bins/bags. Provide designated uniforms that are laundered by a service or encourage workers to wear clothes that can be washed frequently.
- Stagger meetings, breaks, team talks, and orientations to minimize the number of workers in one place.
- Hold in-person meetings outdoors or in large areas that allow for physical distancing.
- Communicate corporate information electronically.
- Hold worker orientations verbally to avoid touching papers.
- Consider designating work teams into groups and alternating or scheduling when groups report to work to minimize contact.



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Physical Distancing

- Continue to allow workers to work remotely where possible. Assess the need to report directly to the workplace on an individual or job role basis.
- Spread out workers to increase distancing. Use every other workstation, and/or use spare rooms or meeting spaces as work areas to help separate workers.
- Provide barriers (such as plexiglass, plastic sheeting, partitions, etc.) when workers cannot be spaced appropriately. Do not use items that have gaps or holes, such as plants or trolleys. Do not create tripping hazards or “blind spot” areas when setting up barriers.
- Post signs to remind people to practice physical distancing, good respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene.
- Consider how people will use shared spaces such as the cafeteria, lunchroom, changing rooms, and washrooms. Keep close contact to a minimum and less than 15 minutes. Allow only one person at a time if spacing cannot be maintained, and post signs to indicate the space is being used.
- Continue to postpone non-essential face-to-face events or meetings.
- Manage pedestrian traffic flow by using markings, posters or barriers.
- Encourage private transportation where possible, including bicycles (and provide storage). Stagger working hours to avoid crowded public transit.
- Limit visitors. Reschedule or limit appointments with suppliers, vendors, service technicians and others where possible.

Conducting Business

- Continue to use and/or offer low contact services, such as online ordering, online or phone check-ins/meetings, delivery, curbside pickup, or barriers.
- Limit how many customers can enter at one time.
- Mark standing distances and traffic flow using tape, posters, etc.
- Consider offering services by appointment only to limit the number of appointments per day.
- Provide supplies and time to clean commonly touched items, including cash registers, laundry carts, grocery carts, etc.
- Remove communal items such as glassware, utensils, and in-store or in-room tea or coffee machines.
- Do not offer services that involve close person-to-person proximity (e.g., garment fittings) or hold activities such as buffet-style food or drink events, valet services, face-to-face meetings, large gatherings, or conferences.
- Ask passengers of public transit to enter and exit using rear doors, away from the driver.
- Provide areas to change clothes at the end of a shift. Bring clothes home in a separate bag and wash before re-wearing.
- Determine if the use of face coverings or personal protective equipment is appropriate and acceptable to your workplace, workers, and/or customers. Consider any current recommendations from public health or other authorities when determining these measures.



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Mental Health

- Understand that each person will have had a different experience and reaction to the pandemic, and to the physical distancing and isolation measures. Some individuals may be ready to reintegrate into everyday activities, while others may wish to continue to practice physical distancing. Some will choose to cover their face with a mask or other face covering even if not required by the workplace.
- Provide information and reassurance about the measures the workplace is taking.
- Address any anxiety or fear that may be expressed.
- Understand that individuals may be experiencing grief over the loss of a friend or family member.

If you or someone you know is struggling:

- Talk to your employer or supervisor, someone trained in mental health first aid, or someone else you trust about what you are experiencing.
- Contact your employee assistance service, if available.
- Contact your local public health or community resources that offer mental health services.
- Check out organizations online:
 - Canadian Mental Health Association <https://cmha.ca/news/covid-19-and-mental-health>
 - Canadian Psychological Association <https://cpa.ca/psychologyfactsheets/>
 - Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/were-here-for-you-during-covid-19-novel-coronavirus/>

If a Co-worker Has Been Severely Ill

While many people recover from COVID-19 without needing hospitalization, estimates are that 1 in 6 become severely ill. While the knowledge of this illness and its effects will continue to grow, it appears that individuals who required intensive care may have further challenges with muscle weakness and problems with memory and concentration. In some cases, people take a long time before they can return to work; be supportive. Collaboration between the worker and employer will be necessary to develop and support an appropriate accommodation plan for return to work when needed.

Provide mental health support to all workers, including access to an employee assistance program (EAP) if available.



For further information on COVID-19, refer to the Public Health Agency of Canada <https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>

Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs. Continue to monitor announcements for your area and follow instructions from the government, public health, or other appropriate authority.