

Employers must develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan. To develop your plan, follow the six-step process described at COVID-19 and returning to safe operation.

This planning tool will guide you through the six-step process. Each step has checklists with items you need to address before resuming operations. You may use this document, or another document that meets your needs, to document your COVID-19 Safety Plan.

Employers are not required to submit plans to WorkSafeBC for approval, but in accordance with the order of the provincial health officer, this plan must be posted at the worksite. This Safety Plan can also be completed from any mobile device using the COVID-19 Safety Plan app.

Step 1: Assess the risks at your workplace

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways. It can spread in droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face.

The risk of person-to-person transmission increases the closer you come to other people, the more time you spend near them, and the more people you come near.

The risk of surface transmission increases when many people contact the same surface and when those contacts happen over short periods of time.

Involve workers when assessing your workplace

Identify areas where there may be risks, either through close physical proximity or through contaminated surfaces. The closer together workers are and the longer they are close to each other, the greater the risk.

- We have involved frontline workers, supervisors, and the joint health and safety committee (or worker health and safety representative, if applicable).
- We have identified areas where people gather, such as break rooms, production lines, and meeting rooms.
- We have identified job tasks and processes where workers are close to one another or members of the public. This can occur in your workplace, in worker vehicles, or at other work locations (if your workers travel offsite as part of their jobs).
- We have identified the tools, machinery, and equipment that workers share while working.
- We have identified surfaces that people touch often, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, and light switches.

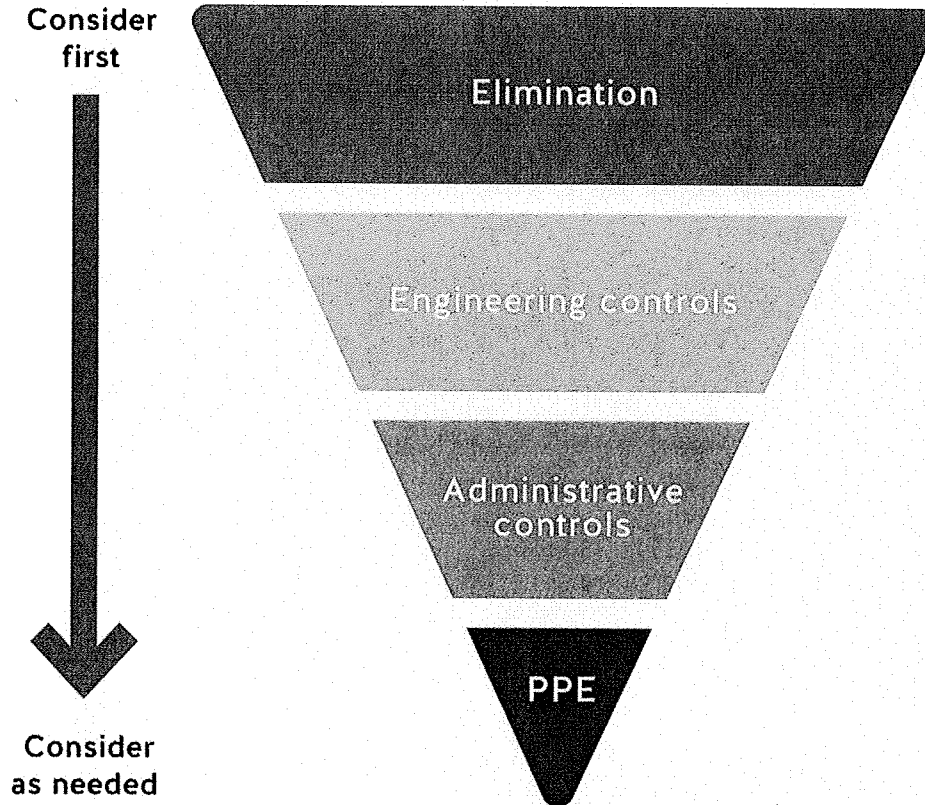
Step 2: Implement protocols to reduce the risks

Select and implement protocols to minimize the risks of transmission. Look to the following for information, input, and guidance:

- Review industry-specific protocols on [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com) to determine whether any are relevant to your industry. Guidance for additional sectors will be posted as they become available. If protocols are developed specific to your sector, implement these to the extent that they are applicable to the risks at your workplace. You may need to identify and implement additional protocols if the posted protocols don't address all the risks to your workers.
- Frontline workers, supervisors, and the joint health and safety committee (or worker representative).
- Orders, guidance, and notices issued by the provincial health officer and relevant to your industry.
- Your health and safety association or other professional and industry associations.

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Different protocols offer different levels of protection. Wherever possible, use the protocol that offers the highest level of protection. Consider controls from additional levels if the first level isn't practicable or does not completely control the risk. You will likely need to incorporate controls from various levels to address the risk at your workplace.



First level protection (elimination) — Limit the number of people in your workplace where possible by implementing work-from-home arrangements, establishing occupancy limits, rescheduling work tasks, or other means. Rearrange work spaces to ensure that workers are at least 2 m (6 ft.) from co-workers, customers, and members of the public.

Second level protection (engineering controls) — If you can't always maintain physical distancing, install barriers such as plexiglass to separate people.

Third level protection (administrative controls) — Establish rules and guidelines, such as posted occupancy limits for shared spaces, designated delivery areas, cleaning practices, and one-way doors and walkways to keep people physically separated.

Fourth level protection (PPE) — If the first three levels of protection aren't enough to control the risk, consider the use of masks. Ensure masks are selected and cared for appropriately and that workers are using masks correctly.

First level protection (elimination): Limit the number of people at the workplace and ensure physical distance whenever possible

- We have established and posted an occupancy limit for our premises. Public Health has advised that the prohibition on gatherings of greater than 50 people refers to "one-time or episodic events" (weddings, public gatherings), and is therefore not intended to apply to workplaces. However, limiting the number of people in a workplace is an important way to ensure physical distancing is maintained. [Public Health has developed guidance for the retail food and grocery store sector that requires at least 5 square metres of unencumbered floor space per person (workers and customers). This allows for variation depending on the size of the facility, and may be a sensible approach for determining maximum capacity for employers from other sectors that do not have specific guidance on capacity from Public Health.]
- In order to reduce the number of people at the worksite, we have considered work-from-home arrangements, virtual meetings, rescheduling work tasks, and limiting the number of customers and visitors in the workplace.
- We have established and posted occupancy limits for common areas such as break rooms, meeting rooms, change rooms, washrooms, and elevators.
- We have implemented measures to keep workers and others at least 2 metres apart, wherever possible. Options include revising work schedules and reorganizing work tasks.

Measures in place

The following control measures are in place for maintaining physical distance in our workplace:

We have a large work space and have confirmed with WorkSafe BC that using an overall posted occupancy limit would not be appropriate for our space or for the way in which our business is conducted. Rather than limiting the total number of people in our space, we are focusing on limiting the number of people congregating in certain areas and limiting unnecessary traffic and maintaining safe physical distancing for anyone in our space.

The occupancy limit in our reception area is 5 clients or visitors.

The occupancy limit in our board room is 5 clients plus a lawyer with a plexiglass barrier between the lawyer and clients.

- Clients are encouraged to wear masks if they cannot maintain social distancing. Clients are asked to sanitize hands.

We have limited the number of people in our office at any given time by doing the following:

-We have locked our public entrance and posted signs advising clients to make appointments to enter.

-We have limited the scheduling of in office appointments to those that require documents to be signed in person.

-The majority of appointments are conducted by telephone or video.

-We have enabled work from home computer access so that one of our lawyers can work from home during daytime business hours.

-We have staggered our in office appointments so that clients are not congregating in our waiting area or board room.

-One lawyer is routinely seeing clients for in-office appointments after regular business hours while two others see clients during business hours, only one lawyer has clients in office at a time and meetings are in the board room.

-We are discouraging "walk-ins" and have a plexiglass barrier and hand sanitizer at the front desk in case of walk-ins.

We maintain distancing by:

-Staff have their own work spaces with cubicle walls separating desks. Work stations are already arranged to allow 2 metres of distance between staff members.

-Staff lunch breaks are staggered and most staff leave the office to eat, those who eat in the office, do so at their own desks.

-We have removed some of the chairs from our waiting room to increase physical distancing.

-We have posted signs asking clients to stay away when sick and to sanitize their hands upon entering the office.

We have reduced common high touch surfaces by:

-We have removed common use childrens' toys from our reception area.

-We have removed common use reading material from our reception area.

-Pens are in "clean" and "used" cups and used pens are disinfected before being re-used.

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Second level protection (engineering): Barriers and partitions

- We have installed barriers where workers can't keep physically distant from co-workers, customers, or others.
- We have included barrier cleaning in our cleaning protocols.
- We have installed the barriers so they don't introduce other risks to workers (e.g., barriers installed inside a vehicle don't affect the safe operation of the vehicle).

Measures in place

We have installed a plexiglass barrier at our front reception desk to facilitate safe face to face interaction with clients. Reception staff wipe down the payment machine between clients.

We have installed a plexiglass barrier on our conference room table to facilitate safe face to face interaction with clients.

Barrier cleaning- The plexiglass barriers will be sprayed with disinfectant and wiped down mid way through and at the end of the day.

We have locked our front public entrance and posted signs to deter walk-in traffic, clients are asked to call ahead for an appointment or to make arrangements to pay bills or pick up or drop off documents.

The door handles and front counter are wiped down regularly with disinfectant by the receptionist.

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Third level protection (administrative): Rules and guidelines

- We have identified rules and guidelines for how workers should conduct themselves.
- We have clearly communicated these rules and guidelines to workers through a combination of training and signage.

Measures in place

Rules that staff should follow:

- All staff should stay home when sick.
- All staff to wash hands frequently throughout the day including when arriving at work, after using the restroom, after coughing, sneezing or touching their faces, before and after eating and at the end of the day.
- Each staff member should use their own work station, with their own equipment such as pens, computers, phones, etc.
- Staff should wipe down the surfaces on their own work stations periodically and if it will be used by another staff person.

Common use items such as the photocopier, postage machine, fax machine, microwave, coffee maker, sink area, common stapler, hole punch, pens and stamps- should be wiped down regularly throughout the day. When possible, staff should use their own equipment.

- Most staff enter and exit through the back door, clients enter through the front door. Door handles wiped down periodically throughout the day.
- Staff should not congregate in common areas such as the photocopy/kitchen area or at the desks of others.
- All staff to maintain physical distancing when interacting with others. If unable to distance, wear a mask.
- If staff have safety concerns they should be reported so that appropriate steps can be taken to address them.

-All staff to follow all Provincial Health Officer directives.

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Fourth level protection: Using masks (optional measure in addition to other control measures)

- We have reviewed the information on selecting and using masks and instructions on how to use a mask.
- We understand the limitations of masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets. We understand that masks should only be considered when other control measures cannot be implemented.
- We have trained workers in the proper use of masks.

Measures in place

In the event staff cannot maintain distance from one another or from clients, they are encouraged to wear masks. Areas where clients are routinely seen have physical barriers in place.

Staff should strongly consider wearing masks when making home/hospital visits to clients.

Implement effective cleaning and hygiene practices

- We have reviewed the information on cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.
- Our workplace has enough handwashing facilities on site for all our workers. Handwashing locations are visible and easily accessed.
- We have policies that specify when workers must wash their hands and we have communicated good hygiene practices to workers. Frequent handwashing and good hygiene practices are essential to reduce the spread of the virus. [Handwashing and Cover coughs and sneezes posters are available at worksafebc.com.]
- We have implemented cleaning protocols for all common areas and surfaces — e.g., washrooms, tools, equipment, vehicle interiors, shared tables, desks, light switches, and door handles. This includes the frequency that these items must be cleaned (number of times per day) as well as the timing (before and after shift, after lunch, after use).
- Workers who are cleaning have adequate training and materials.
- We have removed unnecessary tools and equipment to simplify the cleaning process — e.g., coffee makers and shared utensils and plates

Cleaning protocols

Provide information about your cleaning plan. Specify who is responsible for cleaning, the cleaning schedule, and what the cleaning protocols will include (e.g., which surfaces, tools, equipment, and machines). If this information is in another document, identify that document here.

Spray bottles of disinfectant and canisters of disinfectant wipes are available at the front reception desk and in the conference room and in the common area used for photocopying, faxing, postage, and meal prep.

Receptionist wipes the front door handles, reception desk and conference room table and chairs periodically.

Receptionist wipe down common use items in the photocopy/kitchen area regularly.

Lawyers seeing clients in the conference room ensure that table and chairs are wiped down between clients.

Receptionist to periodically wipe surfaces in conference room including chairs, table, door handles, light switch and plexiglass barrier.

Step 3: Develop policies

Develop the necessary policies to manage your workplace, including policies around who can be at the workplace, how to address illness that arises at the workplace, and how workers can be kept safe in adjusted working conditions.

Our workplace policies ensure that workers and others showing symptoms of COVID-19 are prohibited from the workplace.

- Anyone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 10 days. Symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
- Anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate.
- Anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- Visitors are prohibited or limited in the workplace.
- First aid attendants have been provided OFAA protocols for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We have a working alone policy in place (if needed).
- We have a work from home policy in place (if needed).
- Ensure workers have the training and strategies required to address the risk of violence that may arise as customers and members of the public adapt to restrictions or modifications to the workplace. Ensure an appropriate violence prevention program is in place.

Our policy addresses workers who may start to feel ill at work. It includes the following:

- Sick workers should report to first aid, even with mild symptoms.
- Sick workers should be asked to wash or sanitize their hands, provided with a mask, and isolated. Ask the worker to go straight home. [Consult the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool, or call 811 for further guidance related to testing and self-isolation.]
- If the worker is severely ill (e.g., difficulty breathing, chest pain), call 911.
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces that the ill worker has come into contact with.

Step 4: Develop communication plans and training

You must ensure that everyone entering the workplace, including workers from other employers, knows how to keep themselves safe while at your workplace.

- We have a training plan to ensure everyone is trained in workplace policies and procedures.
- All workers have received the policies for staying home when sick.
- We have posted signage at the workplace, including occupancy limits and effective hygiene practices. [A customizable occupancy limit poster and handwashing signage are available on worksafebc.com.]
- We have posted signage at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the premises, including visitors and workers with symptoms.
- Supervisors have been trained on monitoring workers and the workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.

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Step 5: Monitor your workplace and update your plans as necessary

Things may change as your business operates. If you identify a new area of concern, or if it seems like something isn't working, take steps to update your policies and procedures. Involve workers in this process.

- We have a plan in place to monitor risks. We make changes to our policies and procedures as necessary.
- Workers know who to go to with health and safety concerns.
- When resolving safety issues, we will involve joint health and safety committees or worker health and safety representatives (or, in smaller workplaces, other workers).

Step 6: Assess and address risks from resuming operations

If your workplace has not been operating for a period of time during the COVID-19 pandemic, you may need to manage risks arising from restarting your business.

- We have a training plan for new staff.
- We have a training plan for staff taking on new roles or responsibilities.
- We have a training plan around changes to our business, such as new equipment, processes, or products.
- We have reviewed the start-up requirements for vehicles, equipment, and machinery that have been out of use.
- We have identified a safe process for clearing systems and lines of product that have been out of use.

Be advised that personal information must not be included in the COVID-19 Safety Plan

Personal information is any recorded information that uniquely identifies a person, such as name, address, telephone number, age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, fingerprints, or blood type. It includes information about a person's health care, educational, financial, criminal, or employment history. Visit <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/about/legislation/> for more information.