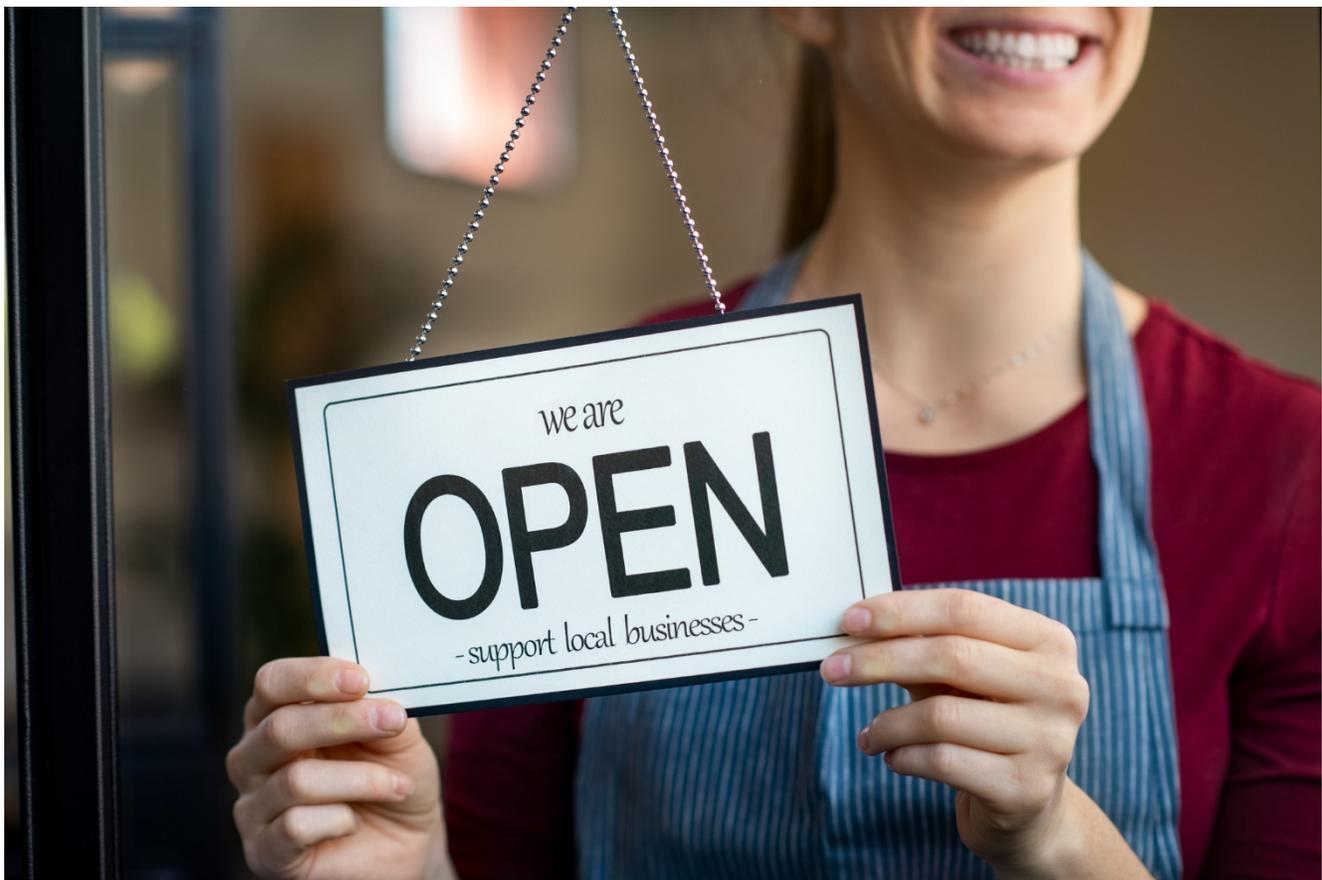


COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Toolkit for Workplaces

Toolkit for Workplaces: Elgin County, Oxford County and the City of St. Thomas



Toolkit adapted with permission from Peterborough Public Health

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Toolkit for Workplaces

April 20, 2021

Version 6.0

This toolkit was created to provide public health guidance around COVID-19 for workplaces in Elgin County, Oxford County, and the City of St. Thomas. This toolkit includes a checklist to help workplaces maintain operations in a way that reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19. The practices outlined in this document do not apply to healthcare settings. Links to online resources are also provided.

Completing this checklist is not mandatory; however, workplaces are strongly encouraged to consider the information provided. Workplaces should also follow the Ontario Government's [Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#).

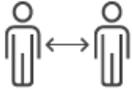
General Infection Prevention and Control

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2. COVID-19 is commonly spread from an infected person through:

- Close, prolonged contact with an infected person (e.g., in a household, workplace, or health care setting)
- Respiratory droplets or aerosols present in the air from coughing or sneezing
- Respiratory secretions (e.g., a runny nose or saliva)
- Touching surfaces contaminated with the virus, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

Those infected with COVID-19 may have mild to no symptoms, and symptoms vary from person to person. Common symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the following infection prevention and control measures are recommended:

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Practice physical distancing.

Keep employees, clients, and customers 2 metres (6 feet) apart.

[Physical Distancing](#) - Public Health Ontario



Wear a face covering while inside a business or organization.

In the Province of Ontario, face coverings are mandatory in the indoor area of the workplace or in a vehicle that is operating as part of the business or organization (including taxis and rideshares). Face coverings must cover the mouth, nose and chin. Workplaces are also required to follow additional requirements of a local [Letter of Instruction](#). For more information, see the face covering section within the checklist below and the [FAQ for Face Coverings](#).



Wash your hands often.

Make soap and water and/or alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) available for all employees, clients, and customers. At a minimum, ABHR must be provided at the establishment's entrance and exit and be 60% alcohol concentration.

[How to Wash Your Hands](#) - Public Health Ontario



Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm or cover your nose and mouth with a tissue.

Provide tissues and lined garbage bins for their disposal.

[Cover Your Cough poster](#) - Southwestern Public Health



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.



Frequently clean and sanitize high-touch surfaces.

(e.g., desks, phones, door handles, railings, elevator buttons, toilets, light switches, countertops, and payment terminals).

[Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#) - Public Health Ontario



Where possible, encourage employees to work from home.



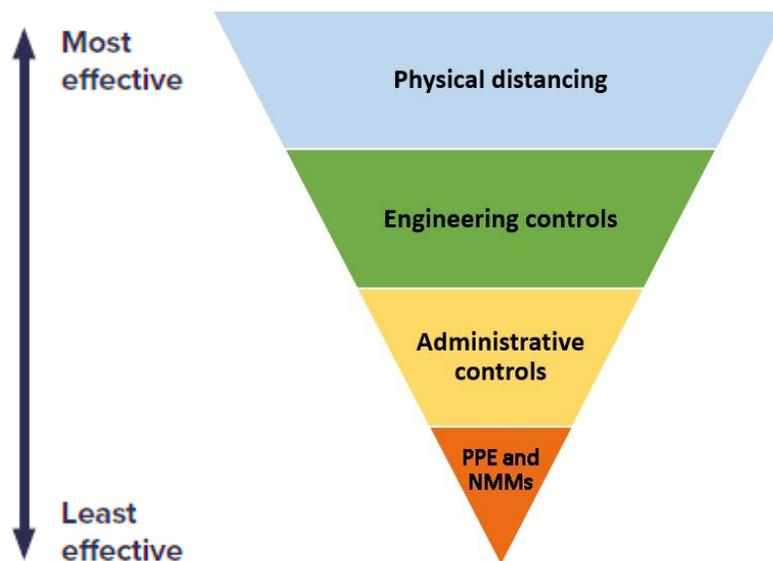
Stay home if you are instructed to do so by the daily workplace screening tool.

Before entering the work environment all workers or essential visitors must complete the online [COVID-19 worker and employee screening](#) tool AND follow all directions and recommendations that are given, including staying home and not entering the workplace.

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Hierarchy of Infection Control

The hierarchy of infection control pyramid can be used to determine effective strategies to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace. The top tiers are generally considered more effective at minimizing risk or exposure to COVID-19 than the lower tiers. Often, a combination of strategies is needed to reduce risk effectively.



Modified Hierarchy of Controls. Retrieved from: Government of Canada. (2020, Nov. 19). Community-based measures to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Canada. Retrieved from: www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html, pg.7.

Elimination

To prevent the entry of COVID-19 into a workplace, businesses or organizations must operate in compliance with **screening regulations** for COVID-19 for both workers and patrons:

For workers: Screening for COVID-19 is mandatory for any workers or essential visitors entering the work environment. Visit the [COVID-19 Screening Tool for Businesses and Organizations \(Screening Workers\)](#) for more information.

For patrons: Screening requirements for patrons in the various sectors (e.g., cinemas, restaurants, personal care settings) is dependent on the zone our health unit region is currently in under the colour-

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coded [COVID-19 response framework](#). You can check which zone we are in by visiting www.swpublichealth.ca. Then check the [COVID-19 Screening Tool for Businesses and Organizations \(Screening of Patrons\)](#) for specific directions for that colour zone.

Engineering Controls

Design or modify the workplace facility and processes to reduce the source of exposure to COVID-19 (e.g., physical distancing; install impermeable barrier (e.g., plexiglass) between employees and customers; improve ventilation; install handwashing stations). Please see our [Guidance on Physical Barriers](#) for more information.

Please note (as it pertains to plexiglass barriers): while there are exemptions to the use of face coverings, there is no exemption for removing face coverings when behind an impermeable barrier.

Administrative Controls

Alter how the work is done through policies and work practices such as standards and operating procedures (e.g., employee training; permit working from home and flexible work hours; personal hygiene and environmental cleaning practices).

The Province requires that **all workplaces** within **all colour zones** have a written COVID-19 safety plan that is on-site, referred to daily, and made available upon request. The template for preparing this safety plan can be found [here](#).

Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Workplace owners and operators are responsible for ensuring employees, clients and customers wear the correct protection while in the workplace to reduce their exposure to COVID-19. Please see the *face covering and personal protective equipment* section within the checklist below for a full listing of your responsibility.

Workplace COVID-19 Prevention Checklist

This checklist can be used to help non-healthcare workplaces maintain operations in a way that reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19. It may be used by workplaces in many sectors, such as agriculture, construction, finance, food processing, hospitality, manufacturing, retail, and transportation. Workplaces should also follow the Ontario Government's [Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#).

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Screening

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
Signs are posted at entrances instructing workers and customers not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms or risk factors.				Southwestern Public Health: Visitor's COVID-19 Screening Sign
Workers are actively screened for COVID-19 symptoms and risk factors at the beginning of each workday (mandatory). Screening is done verbally or using a written form that is reviewed by a screener or by electronic attestation. Questions include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you had close contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or anyone with acute respiratory illness in the past 14 days? • Have you travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days? • Do you have any symptoms of COVID-19? A list of symptoms is in the Patient Screening Guidance Document. 				Ontario Ministry of Health: COVID-19 worker and employee screen COVID-19 Screening Tool for Businesses and Organizations (Screening Workers)
Where mandatory, active screening of patrons for COVID-19 symptoms and risk factors are completed pre-appointment or on arrival.				Depending on the colour zone Southwestern Public Health is in, active screening of patrons may be mandated in specific sectors (such as restaurants, fitness facilities and personal service settings). Please review COVID-19 Screening Tool for Businesses and Organizations (Screening Patrons) to see if screening

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				patrons is required for your business or organization.
If a customer answers 'yes' to any of the screening questions, they are asked not to enter, and are advised to contact their primary care provider or a COVID-19 Assessment Centre or Telehealth Ontario.				Ontario Government: COVID-19 test and testing location information Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000
If a worker answers 'yes' to any of the screening questions, they should self-isolate, not attend work and seek COVID-19 testing. If results are negative, they can return to work after symptoms have been resolved for 24 hours. If results are positive, they must self-isolate as directed by public health. If the worker chooses not to get tested, they must self-isolate for 10 days after their symptoms began, as COVID-19 cannot be ruled out without a test. Additionally, workers with a household member who has symptoms and awaiting COVID-19 test results must self-isolate and not attend work until results are known. If the household members' results are positive, the worker must self-isolate as directed by public health.				Public Health Ontario: How to Self-Isolate Fact Sheet

Physical Distancing

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
Wherever possible, workers are encouraged to work from home and are equipped with the means to do so.				Public Health Ontario: COVID-19 Physical Distancing Fact Sheet
Flexible hours or staggered start times and break times are permitted.				

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Wherever possible, workers are divided into teams that do not interact in person.				Ontario Government: Stay 2 metres apart while working If one team becomes unwell or requires self-isolation, operations can continue with the other team.
Provide employees with a safe space to take their breaks, allowing for physical distancing to occur between employees when face coverings are removed for eating and drinking.				
Where possible, in-person meetings are replaced with teleconferences or video conferences.				
Signs are posted reminding workers and customers to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from one another.				Southwestern Public Health: Physical Distancing Poster
Seating is separated by at least 2 metres (6 feet) in waiting areas and break rooms. Desks are separated by at least 2 metres (6 feet).				
Line-ups/patrons congregating outside a venue must be managed by the venue. Assign an employee to ensure customers are maintaining 2-metre physical distancing (create 2-metre markings on the floors or walls using tape or pylons) and wearing mandatory face coverings while in line.				
Specific hours are dedicated to high-risk populations (e.g., elders).				
Contactless methods of payment are encouraged.				
Vehicle passengers stay 2 metres (6 feet) from the driver.				Ontario Government:

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				Maintain space between crew members during transport
Where physical distancing between customers and workers is not possible, barriers are erected (e.g., clear acrylic or polycarbonate).				National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health: Physical Barriers for COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control in Commercial Settings Southwestern Public Health Guidance for Physical Barriers

Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
<p>Staff and patrons must wear a face covering at all times while in indoor spaces ("indoor spaces" refers to the indoor area of the premises of the business or organization). Face coverings may be temporarily removed during athletic or fitness activities or while eating and drinking. Face coverings should be worn when patrons enter and exit the facility and in common areas such as locker rooms or washrooms.</p> <p>If a worker, in the course of providing a service indoors, is required to come within two metres of another person who is not wearing a face covering (e.g., a server in a restaurant where a patron temporarily removes their face covering to eat), the employer must ensure the worker wears appropriate personal protective equipment. At a minimum, this would include a medical mask and eye protection (face shield or</p>				<p>Southwestern Public Health: Sample Face Covering Policies (See Appendix A)</p> <p>Southwestern Public Health: Face covering FAQ</p> <p>Ontario Government: Ontario – Face Coverings and Masks</p> <p>Public Health Ontario: Masking for Source Control of COVID-19</p> <p>Southwestern Public Health: Use of Face Covering</p> <p>Government of Ontario: Workplace PPE Supplier Directory</p> <p>Southwestern Public Health: Alternate PPE Suppliers</p>

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<p>goggles), unless separated by plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier (i.e., the face covering is still mandatory but the eye protection would not be necessary). A face shield is not a replacement for a medical mask.</p> <p>Important Note: With the current threat from the variants of concern, while eye protection is not a requirement of the regulation (unless within 2 meters of an individual not wearing a face covering), it is a strong public health recommendation that workers wear a surgical mask AND eye protection when the worker comes within 2 metres of another individual, <u>whether they are wearing a mask or not</u>. For clarity, requiring your workers to wear a surgical mask and eye protection if they come within 2 metres of any patron or work colleague (masked or not) would reduce their risk of being identified as a high risk exposure should they come in contact with a case of COVID-19 while in the workplace.</p> <p>Staff working in indoor areas accessible only to employees who can distance from all other staff members in that space physically do not need to mask while in this area.</p> <p>Minimize instances of more than one individual per vehicle for driving associated with work. But where unavoidable, ensure face coverings (preferably medical masks) are supplied and used by each individual.</p>				<p>Public Health Ontario: Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings</p> <p>Southwestern Public Health: Use of Non-Medical (Cloth) Masks Infographic</p> <p>Southwestern Public Health: SWPH Video: how to properly put on and take off a cloth mask</p> <p>Ministry of Health: Variant of Concern: Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance</p>
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<p>Increase the flow of fresh air through a partially open window, where possible.</p> <p>A full list of exemptions and more information on the use of face coverings can be found here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As per the local Letter of Instruction, Employers must also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Have a policy in place outlining how the provincial face covering requirements will be implemented. o Provide staff with a sufficient supply of face coverings. o Consider having a supply of face coverings for customers. o Train staff on implementing the provincial face covering regulation, including how to manage individuals claiming exemptions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If a person does not meet exemption criteria and does not have a face covering, or refuses to wear a face covering, they can be offered service in alternative ways if available (i.e. curb side pick up). o Provide all staff with information on proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings. 				
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Post signs at entrances to remind customers of face covering requirements. 				
Alcohol-based hand rub is located in a visible location with adequate signage immediately upon entry, and immediately prior to exit, to enable the safe use of face coverings. Ideally, hands-free or foot-operated dispensers are used.				Public Health Ontario: Hand Sanitizer How-To Poster
Gloves and other personal protective equipment are only required in appropriate circumstances, such as when there is a risk of contact with droplets, body fluids, or contaminated surfaces.				Ontario Government: Find PPE Suppliers Southwestern Public Health: Alternate PPE Suppliers
Workers who use gloves, gowns, facial coverings, and eye protection can demonstrate how to don (put on) and doff (take off) correctly.				Public Health Ontario: Taking Off Full PPE video Public Health Ontario: Putting On Full PPE video

Hand Hygiene

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) is available in public areas, elevators, workstations, and for use in vehicles or off-site work.				Public Health Ontario: Hand Sanitizer How-To Poster
ABHR is located in a visible location with adequate signage immediately upon entry, and immediately prior to exit. Ideally, hands-free or foot-operated dispensers are used.				

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ABHR is 60% to 90% alcohol and is not expired.				
Pictorial signs of how to use ABHR are posted.				Public Health Ontario: Hand Sanitizer How-To Poster
In restrooms, soap and paper towels are available near the sink.				Public Health Ontario: How to Wash Your Hands
Hand washing signs are posted in restrooms.				Hand Washing How-To Poster
Workers clean their hands every time gloves are removed.				
Workers clean their hands every time after handling cash.				

Respiratory Etiquette

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
Signs are posted reminding workers and customers to cough or sneeze into their elbow, not their hand; or to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue and to clean their hands.				Southwestern Public Health: Cover Your Cough Poster
Workers are reminded not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.				

Cleaning and Disinfection

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
There is a schedule for routine cleaning of environmental surfaces.				
All high-touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected twice per day, including doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, toilet handles, faucet handles, counters, handrails, touch screen				Public Health Ontario: Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings Ontario Government:

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surfaces, keypads, credit and debit machines, vehicle controls.				Clean regularly touched items
The disinfectant in use has a Drug Identification Number (DIN).				Health Canada: What is a DIN?
The disinfectant is mixed and applied according to the label instructions, including contact time.				Public Health Agency of Canada: List of Disinfectants with Evidence for Use against COVID-19
The disinfectant is not expired.				
Workspaces are adequately ventilated.				Ontario Government: Open doors and windows to let in more fresh air Ontario Government: Get fresh air by going outside during breaks

Entering Homes and Other Workplaces

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
Whenever possible, workers are assigned to only one workplace.				
Customers are screened prior to the worker's arrival. If anyone in the home or workplace is unwell, they self-isolate while the worker is present.				
A daily log is kept of all homes and workplaces visited.				
Physical distancing is maintained during visits.				
Workers perform hand hygiene immediately after finishing work.				

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Workers clean and disinfect all items and tools used in the home or workplace.				
Delivery personnel are equipped with ABHR and disinfectant wipes and are instructed on how to use them appropriately.				
Deliveries are contactless and signatures are not required.				

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
Conduct, a regular review of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in the workplace to ensure they are functioning and in good working order.				

Occupational Health Services

Checklist	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Resources and Notes
A written Workplace Safety Plan is mandatory for all business sectors and must be on-site and referred to daily. It is available for review by provincial offence officers (e.g police, bylaw officers) or inspectors (e.g Ministry of Labour, public health inspectors) should it be requested.				Written Workplace Safety Plans are now mandatory in all sectors, regardless of our regions current colour zone within the COVID-19 response framework .
Workplaces must support all aspects of investigations and outbreak management related to communicable				

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diseases, including COVID-19, conducted by Southwestern Public Health. For example, ensure adherence to public health isolation orders issued to employees.				
Workers have received basic training in infection prevention and control.				Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development: Infection Prevention and Control Workplace Safety and Prevention Services: JHSC Certification
A policy is in place that encourages all ill workers to stay home and does not penalize them financially for missing work.				
Signs are posted at worker entrances and in the staff break room, reminding workers to monitor themselves for illness and to stay home when they are sick.				
A plan is in place to manage a worker who becomes ill at work.				
Instruct workers on what to do if they develop COVID-19 symptoms. How to contact their occupational health service. How to contact a COVID-19 Assessment Centre or Telehealth Ontario. Remain off work until they have been assessed and receive further instructions.				Southwestern Public Health: Getting tested for COVID-19 Ontario Government: Telehealth Ontario Public Health Ontario: How to Self-Isolate
Workers understand what to do when they return from travel or have been exposed to someone who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.				Public Health Ontario: How to Self-Monitor

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How to contact their occupational health service. Remain off work until they have been assessed and receive further instructions.				
Influenza vaccination is offered annually on site.				
Employees are encouraged to keep immunizations up to date.				
For any worker with probable or confirmed COVID-19, public health communicates regularly with the worker until their isolation period is completed (i.e., when they no longer pose an increased health risk to anyone around them). Workers are clear to return to work at this time.				Ministry of Health: COVID-19 Quick Reference Public Health Guidance on Testing and Clearance
A list of workers' names, dates of birth, phone numbers, and a log of shifts worked is available for contact tracing purposes.				

Appendix A: SAMPLE POLICY

Mandatory Use of Face Coverings for COVID-19 Prevention within [Name of Establishment]

Preamble:

Respiratory infections may spread from respiratory droplets or aerosols from infected individuals through coughing, sneezing, and speaking. COVID-19 transmission can occur even when someone is not showing symptoms. When businesses and organizations are open during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to implement policies and safety measures to prevent the spread of the virus and protect employees, patrons, and residents' health and well-being. Using face coverings is a method of source control, accompanied by other measures including, physical distancing, respiratory etiquette and good hand hygiene. Wearing face coverings helps to keep each other safe. As such, requiring face coverings in any indoor space, especially where physical distancing may be difficult, is an important strategy to

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control COVID-19 transmission. The term "indoor space" refers to the indoor area of the premises of a business or organization, or in a vehicle that is operating as part of the business or organization.

Scope:

[Name of Establishment] will implement a policy on mandatory face coverings within our establishment. It is the duty of all owners, operators, and employees of *[Name of Establishment]* to ensure this policy is implemented and adhered to. The scope of this policy is the following:

1. Require persons¹ who enter or remain in the indoor public space of *[Name of Establishment]* to wear a face covering² that covers the nose, mouth, and chin. The face covering should be worn in the indoor area of *[Name of Establishment]* unless exempt. A full list of exemptions and more information on the use of face coverings can be [found here](#).
2. Best efforts shall be made to ensure that persons entering are wearing a face covering. The face covering must be worn inside *[Name of Establishment]* at all times, unless it is reasonably required to temporarily remove the face covering for services provided by *[Name of Establishment]* (such as eating or drinking).
3. No person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions described in #1 above.
4. Visible signage indicating that face coverings are required inside *[Name of Establishment]* will be posted at all entrances and exits.
5. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer of 60% or more will be available at all entrances and exits of the establishment, for the use of all persons entering or exiting.
6. All employees and volunteers will receive training on the policy, learn how to respond to anyone who arrives without a face covering or removes their face covering while inside *[Name of Establishment]*, and learn where within *[Name of Establishment]* employees/volunteers are allowed to remove their face covering.

¹ A **person** means any customer, patron, employee or visitor, who enters the establishment, public transit vehicle, or commercial transportation vehicle.

² A **face covering** means a non-medical mask or other face covering that covers the nose, mouth and chin that provides a barrier that limits community transmission. Bandanas and scarves are not recommended. Face shields (clear plastic coverings to protect the eyes and possibly the lower part of the face) are not an acceptable alternative to a face covering for the purpose of the Provincial regulation (as they are less supported by research regarding their effectiveness). However, they may be used by individuals in addition to a face covering for added protection; in addition, anyone exempted in the Provincial regulation from using a face covering may, but are not required to, use a face shield for added protection.

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Training requirements:

- Train staff on [how to safely wear a mask](#).
 - Before putting on your facial covering, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - Secure the elastic loops of the facial covering around your ears. If your facial covering has strings, tie them securely behind your head.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with the facial covering and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the facial covering.
 - Do not touch the front of the facial covering while you wear it. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you accidentally touch your facial covering.
 - Conduct hand washing and/or sanitizing prior to removing the facial covering, and again once the facial covering is removed.
- Train staff on the policy, including how to respond to the various circumstances:
 - Customer arrived without a facial covering because they forgot or didn't have one
 - Customer who is exempt from wearing a facial covering
 - Customer wanting more information about the policy
 - Customer who becomes aggressive about the new requirement
 - Customer wanting information about the importance of wearing a facial covering or the science on the use of facial coverings
 - Customer asking about the availability of alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol concentration)
 - Customer who removes the face covering for any other purpose than eating or drinking, prior to exiting the premise
- Clearly outline areas within the establishment that employees should wear facial coverings and where they can be safely removed.
- Identify where face coverings are available in *[Name of Establishment]* to be sold or given free of charge to anyone who arrives without one.
- Identify the receptacles for safe facial covering disposal.

Implementation:

- This policy will take effect on *[insert date]*.

Resources

- [Use of non-medical masks](#)
- [Face coverings and face masks \(Ministry of Health\)](#)
- Video: [How to safely wear and remove a non-medical mask](#)
- Video: [How to make your own face covering](#)
- Poster: [Wear a Face Covering \(Ministry of Health\)](#)

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- Poster: [Visitor's COVID-19 Screening Sign](#)
- Poster: [How to Wash Your Hands Poster](#)
- Poster: [Hand Sanitizer How-To Poster](#)
- Poster: [Face Covering Mandatory](#)

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