

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Update

Getting Your Workplaces Ready for COVID-19

Revised May 13, 2020

Southwestern Public Health
1-800-922-0096
www.swpublichealth.ca



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The following document is designed to highlight the **basics** for preventing and managing novel coronavirus (COVID-19) within workplaces. The recommendations that follow are **broad and overarching** and would apply to all workplaces. Meanwhile, each business and service sector will need to monitor and adhere to the **emergency orders** put in place by the Provincial government. The Ontario Government has been releasing sector specific guidelines as Ontario reopens and we advise businesses/services to review them as they are released at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace>.

As a business owner/manager, it is your responsibility to determine how the guidance within this document would specifically apply to your business/service (e.g., consider the policy changes you would need to make to ensure the 2 metre physical distancing requirement within the footprint of your business).

The first three sections of this document outline the basics for preventing and managing COVID-19:

Section 1: Physical distancing and minimizing points of contact.

Section 2: Cleaning and disinfection.

Section 3: Use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

The final section guides the reader to additional resources that support businesses as Ontario re-opens the economy:

Section 4: Includes frameworks, government and occupational health and safety documents, tools and checklists.

The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving rapidly, so this guidance is subject to change. Please visit the Southwestern Public Health website regularly for updates or call the Southwestern Public Health 'COVID-19 Call Centre' for assistance at: 1-800-922-0096 x9.

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Section 1: Physical distancing and minimizing points of contact

- Stay informed about [emergency orders](#) from the Province of Ontario and what limitations may still exist for your business
- Post screening and physical distancing signage at entrances
 - [Visitor's sign](#) (please click link or see [Appendix A](#))
 - [Physical Distancing poster](#) (please click link or see [Appendix B](#))
- Add floor markings and barriers to create one direction for traffic flow and physical distancing. Post physical distancing signs sporadically in the facility (above). *where applicable
- Create a receiving area for customers at the front of the premises to limit number of people entering the premises
 - Provide clients with instructions to maintain distance while picking up orders: operator requests client to maintain distance while they deliver the item to a table/designated space, wait for operator to provide 2m distance then approach item for pick up
- Stagger start times, shifts, breaks, and lunch times.
- Create workflows to minimize number of people in one area of the premises, limit number of people working in one space at the same time/people sharing equipment according to business needs.
- Utilize teleconferencing and video conferencing to hold meetings. If holding in person meeting, hold in large spaces to accommodate 2m distance between workers.
- Install barriers where practical; this can include plexiglass.
- Text/call appointment time for appointment/drop off/pick up/physical distancing
- Deliver items to vehicles where feasible to limit interaction with clients
- Encourage clients to pay with tap where possible to limit need to handle money, limit need to touch Interac machines

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Section 2: Cleaning and Disinfection

Develop your Plan:

Determine what needs to be cleaned and disinfected

**commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19*

- Clean visibly dirty surfaces with soap and water or appropriate cleaning product for the type of surface
 - Cleaning physically removes germs, dirt, and impurities on surfaces
- Disinfect surfaces with solutions that have a DIN or NPN #
 - Disinfecting kills germs that may remain on surfaces after cleaning
 - DIN = Drug Identification Number; NPN = Natural Product Number. These are present on products approved for use by Health Canada and have been proven to disinfect according to the claims made on the label
 - Follow manufacturers directions and allow for contact time listed on directions to ensure surface is thoroughly disinfected
- Use pre-mixed solutions where possible
 - ALWAYS follow the directions on the label and NEVER mix different disinfectant solutions as it can create by-products that can be harmful to your health
- Check the expiry date for disinfectants and replace them if they are expired



Determine how areas will be disinfected

- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least twice per day and when visibly dirty
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection, revise your plan to meet the needs of your business

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Consider resources and equipment needed

- See guidance for cleaning/disinfecting by type of material below
- Limit the amount of stock placed out for sale to minimize contact, if possible.

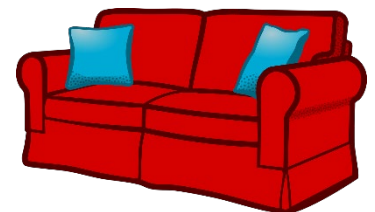
Maintain safe practices

- Keep employees informed with up-to-date internal COVID-19 policies
- Complete the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#) before reporting to work. Additional advice is available though Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 or though your primary health care provider.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water often, for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your sleeve.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch objects and surfaces frequently.
- Stay 6 feet/2 m away from others.

Soft surfaces:

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes

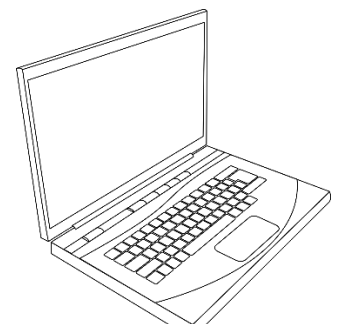
- Launder items (if possible) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely
- Vacuum as usual



Electronics:

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines

- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics.
- Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting



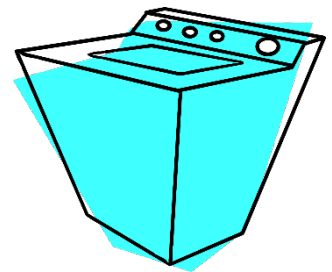
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- If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing 70-90% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

Laundry:

For clothing, towels, linens, and other items

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items.
- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance for surfaces.
- Wash hands before and after using gloves.



Hand Hygiene:

- Make available to staff a handwashing station stocked with hot and cold running water, soap in a dispenser, and paper towel. Keep handwashing stations stocked.
 - Where this is not possible supply employees with hand sanitizer with 60-95% alcohol
 - If possible, make hand sanitizer available at individual workstations for employees
 - If hands are visibly soiled, staff must wash hands with soap and water
- Make hand washing or hand sanitizer stations available for patrons with signage on how to properly sanitize hands
- Wash hands when: you touch your face, hair, eyes, nose, mouth; when you change tasks; after making/receiving deliveries; come in contact with high-touch surfaces; finished using the washroom; finished handling waste



[Handwashing How to Poster](#) (please use link or see [Appendix C](#))

[Hand Sanitizer How to Poster](#) (please use link or see [Appendix D](#))

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Maintaining Restrooms that Remain Open:

- If restrooms will be closed notify visitors ahead of time so they can prepare appropriately
- Ensure toilets are functional and restrooms are supplied with toilet paper, hot and cold running water, soap, paper towel or air dryer, plastic lined waste container, and hand sanitizer with 60-95% alcohol
- Clean and disinfect twice daily – more often if possible
 - Disinfect high touch surfaces frequently with appropriate disinfectants including faucets, toilets, handles, doorknobs, and light switches



Cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment (i.e. tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, ATM machines, etc.).
- Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space. Once space has been cleaned and disinfected turn HVAC system on.
- Vacuum the space if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particular air (HEPA) filter, if available.
 - Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work after disinfection but must self-monitor for any symptoms.
- Re-open the facility and continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.



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Resources:

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

[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#) (CDC)

[Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) (CDC)

[Guidance for Retail](#) (CDC)

Section 3: Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Businesses

Use of Masks:

Public Health Agency of Canada – information on non-medical masks statement: Medical masks, including surgical, medical procedure face masks and respirators (like N95 masks), must be kept for health care workers and others providing direct care to COVID-19 patients.

Non-medical masks

When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of his or her own infectious respiratory droplets. Homemade masks are not medical devices and are not regulated like medical masks and respirators. Their use poses a number of limitations, including:

- they have not been tested to recognized standards
- the fabrics are not the same as used in surgical masks or respirators
- they are not designed to form a seal around the nose and mouth
- they may not provide complete protection against virus-sized particles
- they can be difficult to breathe through and can prevent you from getting the required amount of oxygen needed by your body
- there is an increased risk of self-contamination as the external surface may become contaminated by touching one's face, mouth, nose and eyes

If you are using a mask, ALWAYS perform hand hygiene before and after putting on a mask EVERY time.

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Removing Masks:

- If you need to remove your mask (i.e. to eat), place mask face down on paper towel and avoid touching the outside surface when removing or re-applying.
- Wash your hands immediately after removing the mask.
- When removing your masks to be washed, place in a bag if you are not washing immediately and dispose of bag after use. Otherwise remove and wash immediately.
 - Wash on sanitizing cycle (or hottest setting) with your regular detergent.

Non-medical face masks or face DOs and DON'Ts:

DO:

- Use masks made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- Make sure your mask allows for easy breathing
- Use masks large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping
- Fit mask securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- Make sure your masks fits comfortably without having to adjust it frequently
- Make sure masks maintain their shape after washing and drying
- Change damp/dirty masks as soon as possible
- Wash your mask after every use on a sanitizing cycle

DON'T

- Share masks with others
- Use masks made of plastic or other non-breathable materials
- Use masks that impair your vision or interfere with tasks
- Secure a mask with tape or other inappropriate materials
- Make masks exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- Place a mask on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing

Use of Gloves

The use of gloves is NOT recommended for the general public during daily activities. Glove use does not replace the need to practice hand hygiene.

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Disposable plastic gloves can be used instead of bare hands, but it is important to remember that gloves will pick up microorganisms the same way hands do. Therefore, it is important that gloves be used properly if used at all.

Make sure you wash your hands before and after using gloves, and always use a new pair of disposable plastic gloves when you change tasks or after any potential contamination. Throw away the used gloves immediately after use.

Step 1: Wash hands

Step 2: Put on new, clean gloves.

Step 3: Remove gloves when: you touch your face, hair, eyes, nose, mouth; when you change tasks; after making/receiving deliveries; come in contact with high-touch surfaces; finished using the washroom; finished handling waste.

- Remove gloves by carefully touching the outside edge of the glove near your wrist and peel away from yourself.

Step 4: Throw used gloves away- never re-use disposable gloves

Step 5: Wash hands

**Never wash hands while wearing gloves to extend their use. This can affect the material of the glove and put you at greater risk of contamination.*

When masks and gloves are used together it is recommended that you remove your gloves first, wash your hands, remove your mask, and wash your hands again.

Section 4: Information for Workplaces and COVID-19

Information for Workplaces and COVID-19

For official COVID-19 information visit: www.swpublichealth.ca

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Appendix A

A graphic for a visitor sign. It features a yellow curved banner on a black background. The banner contains the text "Attention Visitors" in bold black font, followed by a black warning triangle icon with a white exclamation mark. Below the banner, on a white background, are instructions and a list of symptoms. At the bottom right of the graphic is the Ontario logo.

Attention Visitors 

If you have at least one of the following symptoms: fever and/or new onset of cough or difficulty breathing
OR
At least two of the following symptoms:

- chills
- fatigue
- headache
- sore throat
- runny nose
- stuffy or congested nose
- lost sense of taste or smell
- hoarse voice
- difficulty swallowing
- digestive issues (nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain), or
- for young children and infants: sluggishness or lack of appetite

please delay your visit AND contact your health care provider, or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000)

Ontario 

Visitor's sign

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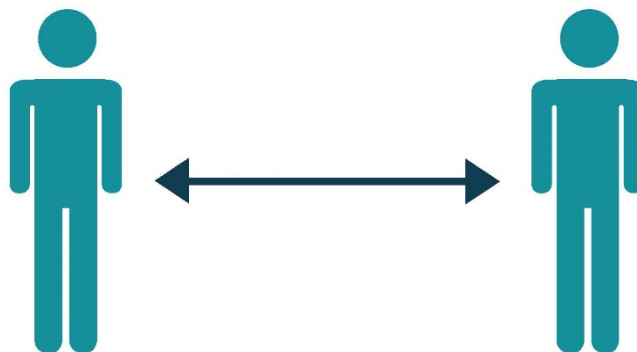
Appendix B

**HELP STOP THE
SPREAD OF COVID-19**

Keep your physical distance

Stay 2 metres apart

Roughly the width of a car



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Physical Distancing poster

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Appendix C

Correct Handwashing Procedures

1 <i>Wet hands</i> 	2 <i>Soap</i> 	3 <i>Lather</i> <i>(minimum 15 seconds)</i> 
4 <i>Rinse</i> 	5 <i>Towel dry</i> 	6 <i>Turn taps off with towel</i> 

Southwestern Public Health
St. Thomas Site: 1230 Talbot Street, St. Thomas N5P 1G9
Woodstock Site: 410 Buller Street, Woodstock N4S 4N2
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Handwashing How to Poster

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Appendix D

Correct Hand Sanitizer Use

- 1 Apply one squirt**

 - Use a sanitizer with 60% to 90% alcohol
For healthcare settings, at least 70% alcohol should be used
- 2 Rub hands together**

 - Make sure to spread sanitizer all over your hands, palms, and between fingers
- 3 Rub until dry**

 - This should take 15 seconds if enough product is used

REMEMBER
Hand sanitizer should only be used when hands are not visibly dirty. Wash with soap and water if you see dirt on your hands.

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