



YWCA Organizational COVID-19 WORKPLACE SAFETY PLAN

**Note: Every workplace is different and practices may vary depending on the location and nature of the program/department as such, customized YWCA site specific work plans have been developed and kept on-site**

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## **Introduction**

COVID-19 is a respiratory infection spread by droplets, which are small particles that are dispersed one to two metres when people cough or sneeze. Droplets can land on surfaces, and people who touch those surfaces and contaminate their eyes, nose or mouth may become infected. This is similar to how influenza spreads.

COVID-19 can cause severe illness in certain populations, particularly the elderly and adults with chronic or underlying health conditions. For most of the population, including children and healthy adults, disease symptoms are relatively mild and similar to a common cold.

This document is provided as a guide for staff working at the YWCA during the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan is meant to reduce the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus and protect employee's health and wellbeing while still allowing normal work to proceed. This document covers engineering controls, administrative controls, supplies, and policies specific to the YWCA. Notwithstanding anything noted in this document, common sense shall prevail – if it doesn't feel right, don't do it. Contact your supervisor or safety representative regarding any concerns.

\*Please note that this information is subject to change to ensure compliance with Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, BC Centre for Disease Control, and BC Ministry of Health' most recent guidelines.

Since the novel COVID-19 outbreak began, we have been following the directions of Dr. Bonnie Henry, our Provincial Health Officer.

Everyone coming to the YWCA must consistently adhere to our plan and protocols. Concerns and questions can be directed to your supervisor / manager.

## **When to come to work**

To ensure that we do not exceed our maximum capacity and to maintain adequate physical distancing, employees may only attend the work site for work, under the following conditions:

- a. If you have been assigned a regular schedule of set days and times per week, or
- b. If you need to attend on an occasional basis, you must email the designated person at the workplace who will assign you with a date and time when you may be onsite.
- c. You are not permitted to come to the office under the following conditions:
  - If you have not been scheduled to be at the worksite;
  - If you have COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (Fever, Dry Cough, Tiredness, Loss of sense of taste / smell or sore throat);
  - if you have travelled internationally in the last 14 days; or
  - If you are in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19

Anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms, will be provided with a surgical mask and immediately asked to leave the workplace.

## **Sick policy during COVID-19:**

Anyone who is sick MUST stay at home especially when experiencing the symptoms of a cold, flu, or COVID-19 including a cough, sneezing, runny nose, sore throat, fatigue.

Procedure:

- a. No employees or clients can be at a YWCA workplace if they are known to be sick
- b. Anyone who is sick while at the workplace will be provided with a surgical mask and sent home immediately
- c. Any employee must go directly home and/or stay at home if they have:
  - Been diagnosed with COVID-19, or waiting to hear the results of a COVID-19 test
  - Has any symptom of COVID-19, even if mild and have been in contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19, or been informed by public health that you may have been exposed to COVID-19
- d. According to the BC Centre for Disease Control, isolation must occur for anyone:
  - with symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, must self-isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days from when their symptoms started;
  - under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate must follow those instructions;
  - who has arrived from outside of Canada, or who is a contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, to self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- e. An individual may return to a YWCA facility, provided that they have:
  - Met the required isolation period AND
  - Their fever has resolved without use of fever-reducing medication And
  - Symptoms (respiratory, gastrointestinal and systemic) are no longer present.
- f. If an individual has met the isolation requirements AND they no longer have a fever (without using fever-reducing medication) AND their symptoms are no longer present, other than still coughing, they may return to a YWCA facility provided they wear a mask at all times. (BC CDC recognizes that coughing may persist for several weeks and it does not mean the individual is infectious and must self-isolate).

### **High Risk Considerations**

Please speak with your supervisor if any of these circumstances applies to you:

- If you are immunocompromised or have an underlying health condition. According to the BCCDC, those who are at high risk for severe illness are: 60 years and older; at risk due to underlying medical conditions (heart disease, diabetes, respiratory diseases, cancer) for self or immediate family member (related to COVID), at risk due to compromised immune system from underlying medical condition or treatment (chemotherapy)
- If you need to care for children / elderly, when there are no other options.
- If you are pregnant.

### **Maximum Capacities:**

Maximum capacities have been determined for workspaces and are contained within individual site workplans and/or posted in the workspace.

Under no circumstances, may these maximum capacities be exceeded. We recognize that maximum capacities may change as BC's Restart Plans change and as such, staff should pay attention to signage within the worksite, regarding changes to maximum capacities as this plan will not change, each time the maximum capacity changes.

### **Controls:**

**a. Limiting Number of Employees, Members and Guests**

- Where possible, staff will work from home.
- To ensure that we do not exceed the maximum capacity set, we will:
  - schedule staff who need to attend on a regular basis;
  - set appointments for clients to attend.
  - Drop-ins, by staff, clients, volunteers, guests and visitors are not permitted unless there is capacity.
- For staff, wanting to attend the worksite on occasion, they must contact the designated person at the site who will assign them with a date and time that they may be at the site. No staff may be at the site unless scheduled.
- We are discouraging visits from guests / clients at this time
- Signage will indicate that members, guests and staff may not access the site if they are sick.

**b. Physical Distancing:**

- Physical distancing will be compulsory in the site with wall signage and/or floor stickers indicating 2-meter / 6-foot distancing
- Directional arrows will be placed in areas with narrow corridors / spaces where distancing is an issue
- When a virtual meeting is not an option, staff will meet in large meeting spaces – not in enclosed offices
- Kitchens / washrooms will have maximum capacity numbers posted outside these areas
- Staff meetings will take place online / virtually.
- Health + Fitness staff training will be done in small groups

**c. Engineering Controls:**

- In areas where physical distancing between desks is challenging or not possible, plexiglass will be installed
- Maximum capacity numbers of staff, clients and members will be posted
- No dishes, mugs, or utensils will be available for use by guests or staff

**d. Cleaning:**

- In addition to regular cleaning, provided by Building Service Workers or other cleaning companies:
  - Staff will be expected to clean their workspace at the beginning and end of each day.
  - Disinfectant spray is available for staff to clean their work areas including computers, keyboards, desks, mice
  - High touch surfaces will be cleaned a minimum of twice per day with disinfecting solutions
  - Washrooms: High touch areas (lights, handles, counter) will be disinfected throughout the day, minimum 3 times
- If cleaning or sanitization is required due to an unforeseen event, please contact the designated individual on site.

**e. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- Physical distancing and engineering controls are our first line of defense, with PPE considered the last line of defense.
- PPE, including surgical masks and gloves will be provided should the job require it, and/or

if physical distancing and other control measures are not in place.

**f. Hygiene and Personal Health:**

- Handwashing with soap and water is still the single most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.
- If sinks for hand washing are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers (ABHS) containing at least 60% alcohol may be used.
- Staff are to wash their hands frequently (minimum of 20 seconds, with soap) throughout the day - including:
  - When they arrive / before they go home,
  - Before handling food
  - Between handling raw and cooked food - cross contamination is a risk
  - Before and after taking or applying medication or ointment
  - After using the toilet
  - After contact with body fluids (runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
  - After cleaning tasks
  - After removing gloves
  - After handling garbage
  - Whenever hands are visibly dirty
  - Before and after touching common surfaces.

**6 Steps for proper handwashing:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Wet hands with warm running water.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Apply a small amount of liquid soap.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds (sing the ABC's). Rub palms, backs of hands, between fingers and under nails and creating a lather</b></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>Rinse off all soap with running water.</b></li> <li>5. <b>Dry hands with a clean, disposable towel.</b></li> <li>6. <b>Discard the used towel in the waste container</b></li> </ol> |
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- Get plenty of sleep and regular exercise
- Speak to your supervisor about taking vacation days to help alleviate potential burnout
- Take breaks outside, while safely respecting social distancing measures.

**g. Respectful, Clean Working Environment:**

- Staff are responsible for keeping their work area tidy and clean. There should be no excess paper on desks, or storage under desks
- A culture of clean hands and cleaning is imperative for all e.g. when using common items, wash / sanitize hands before and then disinfect the area after use. i.e. photocopier

**h. Injury Reporting and First Aid Procedures:**

- Report all injuries and illnesses or any suggested changes to these protocols to supervisor
- Minor First Aid Treatment can be obtained by contacting the site first aid attendant. For major incidents contact 9-911.

## **General Operating Guidelines**

### **a. Office Sharing:**

- The maximum capacity for every office is 1 person
- Offices are for individual staff use only.
- For those who currently share offices, they must ensure that they are not in the office at the same time or one is able to work in a different area.
- In-person meetings may not occur in offices.
- We are also not encouraging desk sharing.

### **b. Staff Kitchen:**

- Staff kitchens must display the maximum capacity.
- Staff are encouraged to eat their lunch outside if possible, so that the kitchen is accessible to others.
- Wash your hands when entering the kitchen
- Use disinfecting-spray and paper towel to clean the high touch areas in the kitchen after utilizing (microwave door, counters, or eating area)
- The dishwasher will not be available, nor will there be communal plates, cups or utensils. As such, staff must bring in their own food, with whatever dishes, cups and utensils that they need and take it home with them or store in their own desk area.
- Long term storage of food in the fridge is not permitted.

### **c. Washrooms:**

- Washrooms must display the maximum capacity.
- If the washroom is fully occupied, please wait outside and allow others, using the corridor to pass safely.
- Wash hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap after using the washroom and dry with paper towel provided
- Avoid touching any doors / surfaces with clean hands upon exit
- Do not brush teeth or use the washroom for personal grooming

### **d. General Work Areas:**

- Please keep work areas clean and clutter free of papers, personal mementos and other items that prevent the surfaces from being cleaned regularly.

### **e. Meeting Room Use:**

- Each meeting room will display the maximum capacity.
- In-person meetings should not occur, with virtual meetings being the preferred option.



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APPENDIX A

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**Health Screening:**

- Are you experiencing any cold or flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, respiratory illness, difficulty breathing)?
- Have you traveled outside of Canada within the last 14 days?
- Have you been in close contact with anyone who has traveled outside of Canada with the last 14 days?
- Have you had close contact with or cared for someone diagnosed as a confirmed case of COVID-19?



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APPENDIX B

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**Additional Resources**

WorkSafe

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates> <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/news-events/announcements/2020/March/covid-19-and-the-workplace> <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-industry-information/construction>

BC Centre for Disease Control

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19> <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks>

BC Government

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>  
<https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/tranet/covid-19-update>