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|  | <b>IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC</b><br><b>POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL</b>                          | <b>APPROVED BY:</b><br><br><b>DATE:</b> | <b>PAGE: 1 of 1</b>                |
| <b>SECTION</b><br><br><b>SUBJECT</b>  | <b>Communicable Disease</b><br><b>Public Health Declaration</b><br><b>Communicable Disease – Policy</b> | <b>REVISION DATE:</b>                   | <b>EFFECTIVE:</b><br><br>June 2020 |

**POLICY:**

ISSofBC is committed to providing a safe workplace and to take all reasonable measures to protect employees from health risks. During an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic local, provincial and/or federal governments may prohibit or curtail individuals’ access to and use of public services and public transportation; close buildings or prevent access to buildings; isolate or quarantine buildings or sites; or prevent transportation and transfer of goods and services. ISSofBC cannot predict nor control such 3<sup>rd</sup> party decisions but will comply with any proposed recommendations.

ISSofBC will communicate to all staff on either a regular or as needed basis throughout the public health emergency as it affects the business operations (including OH&S) via text messaging or utilizing platforms such as SharePoint. Once the public health emergency has been declared to be at an end by government or health officials, the Leadership Team of ISSofBC organize a comprehensive plan to re-open any offices that were closed and return any staff affected by such closure to working in their office setting.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Outbreak:** An *outbreak* is a sudden rise in the incidence of a disease and typically is confined to a localized area or a specific group of people. Disease outbreaks are usually caused by an infection, transmitted through person-to-person contact, animal-to-person contact, or from the environment or other media.

**Epidemic:** An *epidemic* is a disease that actively spreads quickly and affects many individuals at the same time, spreading from person to person in a locality where the disease is not permanently prevalent.

**Pandemic:** A *pandemic* is a disease that spreads globally affecting a significant portion of the global population.

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**PROCEDURE:**

ISSofBC will take the following actions to minimize to the extent practicable exposure to and spread of a communicable disease in the workplace that has been declared a public health emergency. A decision to close part or all of the work site locations will be made by the CEO and Leadership team.

**1. Stay Up-To-Date**

In the situation of a declared outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic, updates will generally occur on a daily basis. ISSofBC will rely on local and/or provincial directives for any planned service disruption or site closures(s). ISSofBC will provide periodic updates, service protocols and communication tools to employees, as appropriate. Staff to stay up to date on the latest official news, updates, and advisories by visiting credible sources, such as:

BC Centre for Disease Control  
Public Health Agency of Canada  
World Health Organization

**2. Education**

ISSofBC will provide information to employees encouraging employees to follow good hygiene practices as noted below, as first step. These practices are applicable to all types of contagious illnesses, especially during cold/flu season:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing using your bent elbow or a tissue
- Discard used tissues immediately after use.
- Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, and mouth).
- Use a paper towel to turn off washroom taps and to open the door.
- Use alcohol-based sanitizers where soap & water are not available.
- Clean high-touch areas at your workspace such as keyboards, telephones, armrests on chairs, desk surfaces. Very important if you share desks with another staff member.

Employees experience who do not feel well should not report for work. If you are at work and develop symptoms such as a fever, sore throat, coughing, sneezing then you should wipe down your workspace if you are able, notify your Manager you are having to leave work due to illness and then go home.

Seek medical attention early if you have a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing. Call ahead to your health care provider or call 811 for advice re medical management of your symptoms. In case of significant problems with breathing call or have someone nearby call 911 on your behalf.

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#### Procedures cont'd.

Maintain a social distance of two (2) metres from others.

### 3.0 Building/Office Space Cleanliness

ISSofBC will coordinate with cleaning and waster-removal contractors to maintain physical space in top conditions, requesting extra services as required and approving the use of equipment or cleaning methods to guard against the spread of infection in the workplace. ISSofBC will regularly take actions to make sure the workplace remains clean and hygienic by ensuring:

- Public spaces such as reception counter tops, elevators, light switches etc. are cleaned regularly.
- Contractors who clean the workplace use approved wipes, towels and cleaning supplies and discards used materials safely to prevent transmission of infection.
- Hand-sanitizer will be placed in prominent places around the workplace and replenished regularly.

Employees will refrain from using DIY cleaning and/or sanitizing products brought from home to be used in the office and the ingredients may not meet established standards of effectiveness, thereby providing a false sense of security the established standards are being met.

### 4.0 Take Reasonable Precautions

To minimize the potential risk to employees during a declared public health emergency the following actions may be taken:

- Minimize and/or eliminate large group gathers, meetings, events, and presentations.
- Use video conferencing or teleconference options either more frequently or exclusively.
- Restrict non-essential business travel, especially to area of high risk.
- Display posters in prominent places around the workplace to promote hand washing and other healthy habits.
- Amending client service protocols during the outbreak i.e. no in-person visits
- Depending on the severity, other protocols may be temporarily put in place to minimize risk factors.

### 5.0 Employee Assistance Program Services

ISSofBC's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to employees. Employees who feel the need for additional support during a public health emergency are encouraged to contact EAP who may be able to provide direct assistance or link staff up with providers specific to their needs.

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### Reopening Offices after a Closure

The following actions will be taken to minimize to the extent practicable exposure to and spread of infection in the workplace when re-opening office(s) after a closure due to an infectious disease.

1. The decision whether to and when to re-open specific work site locations or not remains at the discretion of the CEO in conjunction with the Leadership Team and following best practice recommendations from guiding bodies such as WorkSafeBC and the Provincial Medical Health Officer for example. Depending on circumstances such as:

- limitations as to how many occupants may be in a building at any one time,
- the requirement to maintain social distancing,
- availability of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment),
- confirmation of which staff are able to return to work etc. and
- identification of clients without accesses to technology alternatives

Not all sites will be opened at the same time nor will all staff return to working out of their office location all at once.

2. Prior to the re-opening of any office location:

- An organization-wide health and safety plan will be developed by the Facilities Manager with input from OH&S committee members, representative Manager(s) and at least 1 representative of the Leadership Team.
- Consistent with the above-noted document, each location that is re-opening will have a location-specific safety plan which may include the accommodation on variables unique to the specific location.
- All required supplies (hand sanitizers, gloves, face masks etc.) will be on hand in sufficient quantities for project usage minimum of a 2-month period (if required).
- Changes to the physical space of the office (i.e. plexiglass barriers etc.) to ensure the protection of staff and clients will be completed.
- Each site will be reviewed by a Director(s) responsible for programming at that location, the Manager(s) of the site, and one member of that site's OH&S committee to ensure all necessary Health and Safety Plans for their specific location are in place.
- All staff returning to work in their office will receive an on-site/in-person orientation by a Manager to ensure they understand the changes that have been made, the procedures to be followed, and how to properly wear any PPE that is required.
- OH&S Safety Plan(s) will be posted on the ISSofBC website and at the main entrance of each location in a manner clearly visible to all clients, visitors, repairpersons etc. and in languages appropriate for that location.

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### **Re-opening of Offices cont'd.**

3. At the opening of any office location:

- No public washrooms will initially be available to clients and the general public to limit the risk of exposure.
- Lunchroom areas, including fridges and microwaves should not be used by staff in order to reduce the risk of inability to maintain social distancing. Staff may either go outside to eat or eat at their desk. When eating at their desk, as per Employment Standards, they are on their lunch break and should not be performing any work activities during their ½ hour break.
- Only clients with appointments should enter the location. No drop-in's will be seen, instead they will be encouraged to leave and phone back for an appointment.
- If, at the time office are re-opened to the public the use of face masks remains either in effect or is strongly recommended, anyone entering the building (clients, staff, contractors etc.) who does not have a face mask will be provided with a mask to be worn for during the time on-site and will be reminded that the mask is to cover both their nose and mouth.
- Those entering will be asked to sign-in and sign- out and be asked some basic pre-screening questions: have you travelled, do you have any symptoms now(i.e of a cough, sore throat or fever), have you or any member of your household been asked to self-quarantine, and to the best of your knowledge have you or any member of your household been in contact with someone who has Covid-19.
- Staff should not report to work if they feel unwell for any reason. Staff who begin to feel unwell while at work should leave work immediately.
- Staff should notify their immediate supervisor if they have any concerns regarding gaps in the safety plan or other concerns.

### **Communication Plan**

This communication plan ensures that everyone entering the workplace, knows how to keep themselves safe while at our workplace. Measures include:

- Coordinating and providing communication support in disseminating timely announcements, updates, policies and procedures, and any changes in the workplace, related to reopening to staff as well as the public, including:
  - Reopening schedules
  - Reopening protocols
  - Reopening contact person
- Providing communication support for training initiatives related to reopening.

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### Communication Plan cont'd

- Posting signage at facility entrance restricting entry by anyone:
  - with fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of smell or taste, headache or anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate;
  - who has been in contact with confirmed COVID-19 case (must isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms);
  - who has travelled outside Canada (must isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms).
- Posting delivery instructions for suppliers at main entrance or designated area;
- Displaying posters in visible common areas promoting the following messages:
  - Physical distancing (translated into major languages)
  - Infection control tips (translated into major languages)
- Installing floor decals to indicate “one way” traffic in gathering areas, e.g., reception areas, elevators;
- Displaying posters in target areas inside the workplace on:
  - Effective handwashing practices (washrooms, lunchrooms, classrooms, meeting rooms);
  - Covering cough and sneezes (elevators, reception areas, classrooms, meeting rooms, lunchrooms);
  - No communal food or drinks (lunchrooms, classrooms, meeting rooms)
  - No or limited sharing of tools and equipment (reception areas, photocopy rooms, shared staff offices)
  - Reminder to use disinfecting solution after touching shared equipment
  - Proper use and handling of facial masks (shared staff offices, elevators, classrooms, meeting rooms)
- Posting occupancy limit for frequently-accessed common areas including:
  - Reception area
  - Visitors waiting area
  - Elevators
  - Lunchroom
  - Kitchenette
  - Photocopy room
  - Staff and public washrooms
  - Shared offices
  - Classrooms
  - Meeting rooms
- Publishing and distributing policies and procedures to staff (and posted on SharePoint) related to reopening with contact info for staff questions/concerns.
- Maintaining and providing timely communication support as conditions, regulations, government rulings change