

ISSofBC is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for reopening the workplace that eliminates the risk of COVID-19 infection. This document provides interim guidance protocols for the prevention and control of COVID-19 among staff, volunteers and clients as of June 12, 2020. It is based on the latest available best practices and scientific evidence and is in keeping with BC's COVID-19 Go Forward Management Strategy and WorkSafeBC's [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#) guidelines.

This document may be updated from time to time as information and guidance change or are updated.

Each site will adopt and make available the plan to staff, volunteers and clients. Management and staff are responsible for implementing and complying with these protocols. Managers/Supervisors will ensure staff follow these protocols as well as any site-specific guidelines. Planning for staff providing in-person services to clients will be done in accordance with all guidelines.

Step 1: Assess the risks at the workplace

Assessment

- √ Risk-prone areas where individuals gather including shared offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, lunchrooms, photocopy rooms, and public washrooms were identified;
- √ High-touch surfaces such as door knobs, elevator buttons and light switches and shared workplace equipment and tools were identified;
- √ Job tasks and processes where staff are close to one another or members of the public were identified;
- √ Frontline staff, managers, and health and safety committee representatives were involved in identifying areas where there may be risks, either through close physical proximity or through contaminated surfaces.

Step 2: Implement protocols to reduce the risks

In implementing protocols to protect against identified risks, information and guidance were sought from the following:

- √ WorkSafeBC industry-specific protocols;
- √ Orders, guidance and notices issued by B.C. health officer that's relevant to our industry;
- √ ISSofBC's managers, frontline workers and the Occupational Health & Safety Committee; and,
- √ ISSofBC's [Policy and Procedures on Communicable Diseases](#).

Reducing the risk of person-to-person transmission

To reduce the risk of the virus spreading through droplets in the air, we have implemented protocols to protect against identified risks. Different protocols offer different levels of protection. Wherever possible, we have used the protocol that offers the highest level of protection. We considered controls from additional levels if the first level wasn't practicable or does not control the risk and in corporate controls from various levels to address the risk at our workplace.

FIRST-LEVEL PROTECTION (elimination): Limiting the number of people at the workplace and ensuring physical distance whenever possible.

Measures in place

- √ Physical layout of the workplace was reconfigured to keep staff and others 2 metres/6 feet apart.
- √ Only a minimum number of staff are allowed to return to the workplace by implementing staggered or rotating schedules, reorganizing work tasks and allowing for work-from-home, where feasible.
- √ Visits to the workplace by visitors and vendors are limited to essential visits only. Visits are pre-arranged, staggered, and safety protocols communicated before entry into the workplace. A record of visitors and vendors to the workplace is retained for contact tracing.
- √ Visitors are advised to attend appointments alone and reduce time spent in waiting area before their appointments (e.g. request to wait in the vehicles, text message or call when ready).
- √ [Occupancy limits](#) are established for the number of people allowed in the elevators, meeting rooms, lunchrooms, washrooms, reception, and common areas.
- √ No meeting or event of more than 50 people will be organized or attended by staff.
- √ Use of meeting rooms for non-essential activities and events is discouraged.
- √ Non-essential travel to other work locations is not allowed.
- √ Staff will work at one site only. If it is essential for staff to work in more than one location, their direct supervisor will ensure it is kept at a minimum and safety protocols are in place and observed.
- √ Staff is encouraged to hold virtual meetings over in-person meetings.
- √ Where reasonably practical, interior doors are to remain open to avoid regular touching and contact.
- √ Deliveries are directed to the main entrance or pre-arranged area.
- √ Site managers will work with the fire department to determine best practices for holding fire drills while physical distancing measures are in place.

Restricting entry to public

- √ Reception staff wearing recommended PPE will manage a sign-in sheet for all persons entering any ISSofBC site.
- √ Clients will only be seen by appointment. Staff will advise reception of client name and appointment time.
- √ Reception and/or staff (if required by need for first-language) will ask the client to confirm that:
 - They have not been diagnosed with COVID 19 nor had any symptoms in the last ten (10) days that could be COVID 19 (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath etc);
 - Have not been directed by Public Health to [self-isolate](#);
 - Have not arrived from outside Canada in the past fourteen (14) days, and,
 - Have not been in contact with a confirmed COVID 19 case in the past fourteen (14) days.

If the answer to any of the above questions is positive, the person will not be allowed entry.

SECOND-LEVEL PROTECTION (engineering): Barriers and partitions

Measures in place

- √ Plexiglass barriers are installed in areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained such as

- receptions, meetings rooms.
- √ Portable barriers are provided, as needed, to allow for extra security and distancing between staff and client.

THIRD-LEVEL PROTECTION (administrative): Rules and guidelines

Measures in place

- √ All staff returning to work in their office receive information on reopening protocols and guidelines through a combination of training and signage.
- √ Signage is posted at the main entrance, restricting access to the workplace to those who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. (e.g. anyone who experiences fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache, loss of taste and smell or anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate will not be allowed in the building).
- √ Anyone who has been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, or has travelled outside of Canada, must isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- √ Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza or COVID-19 prior to entering the workplace.
- √ Posters on physical distancing, occupancy limits and hygiene practices are displayed at the workplace.
- √ Floor decals and arrows to indicate “one way” traffic are placed in hallways; and queuing markers are visible in elevator lobbies as needed.
- √ No communal food or drinks are allowed.
- √ Sharing of tools and equipment (e.g. keyboards, pens, telephones) between and among staff is discouraged. If sharing is required (e.g. photocopiers), staff is provided with cleaning solution to clean and disinfect after each use.
- √ All communal items (e.g. brochures, magazines, utensils, plates, coffee makers) are removed.

FOURTH-LEVEL PROTECTION: Using masks (optional measure in addition to other control measures)

Measures in place

- √ Staff are provided with washable, reusable masks.
- √ Masks must be used by a symptomatic person or where physical distancing is a challenge or, to provide a physical barrier that may help to prevent the transmission of the virus. The use of mask is primarily to protect others, as opposed to protecting the individual wearing the mask. Frontline workers (e.g. receptionists, service assistants, registrars, etc.) and maintenance team will wear a mask and/or face shield if they are unable to maintain proper physical distance from others.
- √ PPEs will only be used in combination with other control measures.
- √ Staff should avoid touching the mask or eye protection unnecessarily, and if they have to, they must perform hand hygiene immediately.
- √ Reusable PPE (face shields, cloth masks) must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
- √ Single-use PPE (gloves, masks) must be properly disposed of in trash bins with covers or lids.

- √ Instructions on the [correct use and handling of masks](#) are disseminated through training and signage.
- √ Managers will monitor and maintain the distribution and replacement of PPE supplies as needed.

Reducing risk of surface transmission through effective cleaning and hygiene practices

Measures in place

Facilitating frequent handwashing and good hygiene practices are a priority during the reopening of any ISSofBC site. Information on how and when to wash hands and other hygienic practices is communicated through training and signage:

- √ Wash hands with hot water and soap for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum concentration of 60% alcohol.
- √ Handwashing is essential:
 - when arriving at work
 - before and after eating or drinking
 - after using the washroom facilities
 - before and after handling any tools or equipment
 - before putting on and removing the mask
 - before putting on and removing the gloves
- √ Maintain good respiratory etiquette:
 - coughing into a sleeve
 - sneezing into a tissue
 - avoid touching the face
- √ Using gloves alone is not a substitute for handwashing.
- √ Hand sanitizer is provided at the entrance and multiple locations in the workplace.
- √ Safe place for visitors to dispose of used sanitizing wipes and other PPEs is provided.
- √ Handshakes and other contact methods of greetings are strongly discouraged.

Cleaning protocols in compliance with health guidelines and physical adjustments to simplify the cleaning process are in place:

- √ Janitorial contractor provides extensive cleaning in the evening, and adopts the cleaning procedures recommended by the BC Centre for Disease Control and local health authorities including:
 - using disinfectants such as Comet Disinfectant with bleach and Quat Plus;
 - providing their crew with adequate PPE, supplies and products; and,
 - Increasing frequency of cleaning and disinfection in high-traffic areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g. doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons, light switches).
- √ Maintenance team/staff conducts daytime [cleaning and disinfecting](#) of high-contact items, shared tools and frequently-touched areas such as washroom door handle, toilet flush.
- √ Staff will clean and disinfect surfaces, while wearing gloves, after meeting with clients or volunteers.
- √ If a person becomes ill or tests positive for COVID-19, the affected and common areas will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by a qualified service provider.

Step 3: COVID 19 Related Policies

ISSofBC has developed the necessary [policies and procedures](#) to manage the workplace, including policies around who can be at the workplace, how to address illness that arises at the workplace, and how staff can be kept safe in adjusted working conditions.

Measures in place

- √ All required engineering (e.g., installation of plexiglass barriers, rearrangement of lobby furniture) and administrative adjustments are made prior to reopening to protect staff and others at the workplace.
- √ All staff being asked to return to work receive an in-person and on-site orientation on the physical changes made to the office, the location-specific safety plan including all procedures to be followed. Mandatory training of the proper use of PPE (e.g. face protection, gloves) is delivered and each returning staff member is provided two (2) washable, reusable face masks.
- √ All staff returning to work will be updated on any changes made to the safety plan as it evolves, and will notify their Manager by email or verbally follow-up by an email, any questions or concerns regarding the safety plan.
- √ All returning staff have access to service procedures that address issues such as:
 - log in/out process,
 - ensuring compliance with posted maximum capacity for the office at any one time,
 - screening questions to be asked of clients or others to meet threshold level to enter the office.
- √ Staff, volunteers, clients and others are not allowed to enter the workplace if they:
 - Have symptoms of COVID-19 – i.e, fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache – in the last 10 days;
 - Are directed by Public Health to self-isolate; or
 - Have arrived from outside of Canada or who have had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case who must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- √ Staff at work who subsequently feel symptomatic from the onset of an illness including but not limited to: fever, sore throat, beginning to cough, should:
 - immediately notify their Manager by email or phone.
 - use disinfectant wipes to clean their desk, chair, keyboard and mouse, as well as any other high- touch area before exiting the building.
 - contact a friend, family member or emergency contact to pick them up if they do not feel able to get themselves home. When waiting to be picked-up, staff should wait outside the building.
 - If they become ill and are in clear medical distress such that they need to be transported by ambulance to hospital, either call 911 themselves or have a staff member do so on their behalf.

- √ If the assistance of first aid attendant is sought, assistance rendered will be guided by the [OFAA Protocols during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).
- √ Staff working from home will follow the [ISSofBC Guidelines for Remote Work during COVID-19](#).

Step 4: Communication Plans and Training

Management will ensure that everyone entering the workplace, including workers from other employers, knows how to keep themselves safe while at our workplace.

Measures in place

Training

- √ All staff returning to work in their office receive an on-site/in-person orientation by a Manager to ensure they understand the workplace changes that have been made, the procedures to be followed, and how to properly use and handle any PPE issued by ISSofBC.
- √ All staff have access to the ISSofBC Return-to-Work Safety Plan posted on the ISSofBC website.
- √ Staff at specific sites have access to any addendums to the safety plan that are applicable to that site.

Communication Plan

This communication plan ensures that everyone entering the workplace, is provided with information to keep themselves safe while at our workplace. Measures include:

- √ Coordinating and providing communication support in disseminating timely announcements, updates, and policies and procedures, related to reopening to staff as well as the public, through online (website, social media, SharePoint, email, texts) and traditional communication platforms (printed copies, bulletin boards). Information includes:
 - Reopening schedules
 - Reopening safety plan
 - Reopening contact person
- √ Providing communication support for training initiatives related to reopening.
- √ Posting signage at site entrance restricting entry by anyone with identified risk conditions.
- √ 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 key hygiene practices;
- √ Posting occupancy limit for frequently-accessed common areas.
- √ Publishing and disseminating policies and procedures to staff (and posted on ISSofBC website and SharePoint) related to reopening with contact info for staff questions/concerns.
- √ Maintaining and providing timely communication support as conditions, regulations, government rulings change.

Step 5: Monitor workplace and update plans as necessary

Things may change as operations resume. As new areas of concern are identified, steps to update the policies and procedures are taken.

Measures in place

- √ A plan to monitor risks that involves regular check-ins with program supervisors and the Occupational Health & Safety Committee is in place.
- √ Staff will direct any safety concerns to their immediate supervisor or manager.
- √ Representatives of the Occupational Health & Safety Committee are involved in resolving safety issues.

Step 6: Assessing and addressing risks from reopening

Risks for reopening after prolonged period of remote work operations are identified and addressed.

Measures in place

- √ All required engineering and administrative adjustments are made before reopening.
- √ Staff returning to work receive an on-site/in-person orientation by a Manager to ensure they understand the workplace changes that have been made and the procedures to be followed.
- √ Where applicable, staff receive training on any new roles or responsibilities assigned, and any new equipment or processes being used.