



## Introduction

This tip sheet provides an overview of COVID-19 related hazards that on-site service providers (e.g., electricians, plumbers, gas-fitters, repairmen, technicians, and janitors) could be exposed to, and recommends controls to minimize or avoid COVID-19 transmission.

## General Guidance

- Continue to comply with all federal, provincial or territorial labour laws and requirements.
- To avoid contaminating tools, toolboxes, and equipment, place a disposable sheet on surfaces before setting them down. Dispose of the sheet safely after each service is completed.
- Reduce the number of shared objects between workers (e.g., tools, paperwork, and equipment).
- Have workers avoid sharing equipment and paperwork. When touching shared items is unavoidable, require hand washing or sanitizing before and after (e.g., service records, clipboards, tools, pens).
- In situations where multiple service providers are present at the same job site (e.g., new construction), work with site supervisor to minimize the number of workers present at the same time and make sure all workers follow mask wearing and physical distance policies.
- Adjust or waive cancellation fees for clients or customers who cancel appointments or do not pick up merchandise due to quarantine, isolation, or illness.
- Request that the client designate only one person to interact with the on-site worker and keep pets, children and other household members away from the work area.

## Worker Training

- Provide COVID-19 specific training to your workers, at minimum include the following:
  - [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and what to do if they start having symptoms
  - [How the virus spreads](#)
  - How to protect themselves and others by layering multiple hazard controls and [personal preventive practices](#)
  - Ways to stay informed (using [reputable sources](#))
  - Good [respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene](#)
  - Changes to health and safety policies/procedures
- Monitor compliance and repeat the training as often as needed.
- Instruct workers to stay home if they feel sick, even if symptoms are mild.
- Instruct workers to politely decline social conversations during the service. Conversations increase the risk of viral transmission.
- Teach workers to avoid unnecessary physical contact such as hugs, handshakes, and high fives, as well as after-work gatherings.
- Discourage the sharing of personal items such as cellphones, lighters, etc.
- Consider including training to address customer conflict resolution techniques. Some workers may have to deal with clients who react aggressively to COVID-19 health measures and organizational changes.
- Provide training on proper cleaning and disinfection techniques, to make sure disinfection is properly carried

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out.

- Train workers on the proper techniques for cleaning and disinfecting equipment such as controls, screens, keyboards, tools, equipment, carts, vehicles, radios, personal devices (e.g., cellphones). Give them supplies and time to disinfect their work as necessary.
- Make sure workers understand how to protect themselves from the chemicals they use (including cleaners and disinfectants) i.e., wear appropriate PPE, ventilate area during cleaning, etc. Make sure that all workers are trained, understand and use the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System ([WHMIS](#)).

## Screening and Contact Tracing

- During the booking process, and within 24 hours of the scheduled visit, screen clients for COVID-19. Include questions on current symptoms (if any), recent travel and potential COVID-19 exposures (templates are available from your local public health authority, or the [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety \(CCOHS\)](#)).
- If the client reports having symptoms or recent exposure, or that a person in the home or workplace is currently isolating, quarantining or is sick, reschedule the service call to a later date. If they report no concerns, continue with the service call as planned.
- Consider having workers complete a pre-shift screening using a company portal or app before starting their shift.
- Workers that pass the screening (no symptoms or exposures) can work. Workers who do not pass the screening should contact their supervisor. The supervisor should instruct them to stay (or return) home and monitor themselves for symptoms. Suggest that they contact their health care provider or local public health authority if they develop symptoms or symptoms worsen.
- Log all workers service call visits (dates, times, and locations). This record is critical for contact tracing. This information should only be provided to public health authorities. Make sure that privacy is protected, and that the information is stored and destroyed in a safe and secure manner, as required by privacy laws.
- Promote the use of the [national COVID alert app](#) to your workers, if your province is participating. The app will alert the worker of potential COVID-19 exposures, it does not collect location data and maintains user privacy.

## Communication

- Employers should keep up to date and comply with public health orders from their local public health authorities or regulators. This compliance may require the closure of part or all your operation.
- Communicate changes such as new practices, policies, and service limitations that will affect your workers and clients.
- Provide updated information, guidance, and government orders to workers as the pandemic situation evolves.
- Remind workers about safe behaviours such as hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and to follow physical distancing and mask wearing policies by email or other communication methods.
- Use accessible formats (written, infographics, verbal) in language(s) appropriate to the audience to make sure they can understand the instructions.
- Encourage workers to report any COVID-19 concerns to their employer, supervisor, health and safety committee or representative, or union if present.
- Provide information on government [economic support resources](#).
- Provide [mental health](#) support and resources.

## COVID-19 Response Plan

- When a worker reports having [COVID-19 symptoms](#), immediately have them wear a medical (surgical) mask. If not available, they should properly wear a well-constructed and well-fitting non-medical mask.
- The worker should be instructed to stop work immediately and contact their supervisor.

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- The sick worker should be instructed to make the job site safe and return home to begin their self-isolation.
- Instruct them to seek medical care, if necessary, and to follow instructions from their [local public health authority](#).
- Follow established procedures and inform the client a job must be left unfinished.
- Return to work should be determined by medical professionals or public health officials and will depend on the type, duration, and severity of symptoms, and on the results of any COVID-19 test.
- If a worker informs you of a positive COVID-19 test result, report it to your local public health authority and cooperate with any contact tracing efforts. You may also be required to inform other workers and clients who might have been exposed unless that is the responsibility of your public health authority.
  - Provide the list of clients that interacted with the worker to public health authorities for contact tracing, if requested.
- If the case is work-related involving a worker, additional notifications may be required, contact your **jurisdictional** [OHS regulator](#) and [workers' compensation board](#) for guidance. Complete an incident report and begin an investigation.

## Vaccines

- Encourage workers to get the COVID-19 [vaccine](#) once eligible and available in your region.
- Consider supporting workers who are interested in receiving the vaccine by providing paid time during work hours to get the vaccine or arranging for an at-work vaccine clinic.
- Share the Government of Canada vaccine information website "[What you need to know about the COVID-19 vaccine for Canada](#)" with workers.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

Refer to the CCOHS "[Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)" tip sheet for further guidance and examples of objects and surfaces.

- On-site service providers should focus on shared equipment, vehicles, touch screens, tools, access panels and clean and disinfect client equipment before starting work.
- Make sure that all disinfectants used are effective against coronaviruses. Refer to this Health Canada guidance for [hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers](#). Verify that selected products have a drug identification number (DIN) from Health Canada.
- High touch and transmission risk or touch objects and surfaces should be disinfected multiple times a day.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis, please contact your local hospital, call 911 immediately, or contact a [Crisis Centre in your area](#).**



It is important that mental health resources and support are provided to all workers, including access to an employee assistance program, if available.

For further information on COVID-19, refer to the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#).

Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs.

**Disclaimer:** As public and occupational health and safety information is changing rapidly, local public health authorities should be consulted for specific, regional guidance. This information is not intended to replace medical advice or legislated health and safety obligations. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.