



# Best practices for the prevention of COVID-19 in the workplace

This advice was gathered from Canadian public health agency websites and best practices observed in essential businesses that have remained in operation at the peak of the crisis. Every entrepreneur should check with federal and provincial public health agencies to ensure their operations comply with current regulations and best practices.

## Basic rules for hygiene

### Do

- Every worker needs to clean their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds—before eating, at the end of the workday, during work whenever possible and when returning home from work.
- Practice social distancing of two metres (six feet).
- Encourage remote work as much as possible.
- Regularly clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and tools.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the crease of your elbow when sneezing or coughing.
- Require that sick workers stay home.

### Don't

- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands (i.e., when smoking, drinking water, eating, etc.).
- Do not shake hands; avoid physical contact.
- Do not share food, drinks, cigarettes and personal hand tools.



# Workplace

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## Lunchrooms

- Post signage to remind workers to wash or disinfect their hands before and after eating.
- Stagger coffee/lunch breaks to reduce the number of workers in the lunchroom at the same.
- Maintain social distancing by staggering the seating arrangement, or by sitting workers in separate rooms.
- Remove garbage often.
- Routinely disinfect the tables and other commonly handled items such as microwave doors/handles, refrigerator doors, taps, etc.
- Ensure sufficient fresh air supply to avoid “recirculating” the air inside the lunchroom. Set-up negative air if required.
- Separate personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing that is hung up in the lunchroom to avoid touching.

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## Clothing

- If you have to take your spare work clothing home, place it in a plastic bag and do not take it out of the plastic bag until it goes into the laundry to be washed—ideally separately.

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## Tools

- Avoid sharing tools or equipment. If possible, designate tools for each work area along with disinfectant supplies.
- If you have to share equipment, clean and disinfect points of contact on the equipment. For example, on a shared extended work platform, wipe down controls, gate, guardrails, and any other parts touched by hands before use. Disinfect it when you are done.

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## Stairwells

- Avoid passing each other on the stairs. Wait on the landing until another person has exited stairs.

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## Offices and trailers

- Restrict access and place contact information (phone number) outside on doors.
- Limit the number of workers or restrict who is allowed to enter interior workspaces.
- Maintain the social distance requirements.
- Do not touch items—“keep your hands to yourself”.
- Do not share keyboard or mouse, pens, clipboards, or documents.
- Disinfect commonly touched items like door handles, chairs, tables, etc.
- Handrails leading up to the trailer or office: do not slide your hand down them and routinely disinfect.

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## Hoist/elevator operation

- Outside the hoist/elevator, post signage and remind workers to maintain social distancing of two metres (six feet) while they are waiting to enter the hoist/elevator.
- Inside the hoist/elevator, maintain social distancing (as best as possible) and reduce the number of passengers at any one time.
- Passengers are to face the outside to avoid being inside each other’s breathing zone.
- Provide the operator with disinfectant to routinely disinfect commonly touched items—call buttons, door handles, etc.

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## Project radios

- Disinfect radios at start of and regularly throughout the day.



# Employees

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## Work meetings and employee orientation

- Limit the number of people in a meeting to a strict minimum, with a chair spacing between workers. Where practical, move meetings outdoors or conduct them remotely.
- Use the Canadian government self-assessment questions to verify that workers are not feeling sick and remain aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 so they can self-monitor.
- Disinfect used pens, chairs and table after each meeting.
- As part of the verbal orientation discuss:
  - Social distancing of two metres (six feet).
  - Hygiene and location of hand washing and hand sanitizing stations.
  - What the company is doing at the site to promote a safe workplace and remind them that their health is the primary concern.
  - Where the safety posters are located.
  - The importance of informing their supervisor if they are feeling unwell and leaving the project.

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## Work crews

- Maintain social distancing of two metres (six feet) between workers. Tape off distances so personnel have a visual reference.
- Stagger work crews to reduce the number of people on site, if possible.
- Where possible, reduce the number of partner workers, keeping only those who are essential to the project or service. Don't mix workers on crews.

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## Role of the supervisor

- The supervisor should question all visitors on the current status of their health using the Canadian government self-assessment questions.
- The supervisor should confirm the health status of any contractor through discussion and inform the health and safety manager any issues.
- The supervisor, each day, is to ask for updates of workers who have left work for self-isolation.

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## When wearing gloves

- Do not touch your face, eyes or mouth.
- Make sure that hands are washed thoroughly or disinfected with hand sanitizer as soon as possible after gloves are removed.

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## First aid treatment

- First aid team members are to wear N95 mask or ½ mask respirator, face shield, and medical gloves when treating workers.
- If conscious and capable of answering, ask the worker the Canadian government self-assessment questions to verify the current status of their health.