

COVID-19 Guidance for Industry Operators

Version 1 – March 29, 2020

This guidance document provides basic information only. It is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment or legal advice. It is advised to consult with your local [public health unit](#) regarding specific questions.

Please check the Ministry of Health (MOH) COVID-19 [website](#) regularly for updates to this document, case definition, FAQs, and other information

COVID-19

Coronaviruses are spread mainly from person to person through close contact, for example, in a household, workplace or healthcare centre. There is no vaccine available to protect against the novel coronavirus

Symptoms

- Symptoms range from mild – like the common cold and other common respiratory infections – to severe, and can include: fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, muscle aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat, and runny nose.
- Complications from the novel coronavirus can include serious conditions, like pneumonia or kidney failure, and in some cases, death.
- Self-isolate for 14 days after any suspected exposure, unless essential worker for critical service
- Drink plenty of fluids, get rest and sleep as much as possible, and try a humidifier or a hot shower to help with a sore throat or cough.

How to protect yourself and others

The 2019 novel coronavirus is spread through respiratory droplets:

- from person to person through coughing, sneezing, close contact; and
- touching contaminated surfaces.

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses. Take these everyday steps to reduce exposure to the virus and protect your health:

- wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- sneeze and cough into your sleeve;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
- avoid contact with people who are sick;
- physical distancing (maintain 2m/6 ft distance from others); and
- stay home if you are sick.

Physical distancing

Practice physical distancing to reduce your exposure to other people. Do your best to avoid close contact with people outside of your immediate family. Close contact includes being within two (2) meters of another person.

If you believe you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms, you should begin to self-isolate for a period of 14 days. This means that, in addition to physical distancing, you should track how you feel. You should take your temperature daily and log any other symptoms that may develop (for example, sore throat, new cough). You can share these records with your primary care provider over the phone if you seek assessment services.

General Guidance for Workplaces

- Maintain current contact information for employees and visitors entering the facility
- As much as possible, maintain a spatial distance of at least 2 metres from others within the facility
- All employees should be aware of early signs and symptoms of acute respiratory infection
- Notify employees prior to arrival of new screening measures and policies at the facility pertaining to entrance to the facility.
- All employees should be instructed to immediately isolate themselves should they become symptomatic; and
- Contact the local public health unit for additional site-specific consultative advice

Screening

Consider using both passive (e.g. signage) and active (e.g. asking questions) screening measures:

Passive screening ([visitor signage](#)):

- Existing signage should be clear and visible and warn individuals to not enter the facility if experiencing respiratory symptoms, to practice hand hygiene, and to follow proper respiratory etiquette.

Active screening

- Instruct employees to self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing ([self-monitoring](#));
- All staff, vendors and visitors should actively and prior to arriving at the facility use the [Ministry of Health's online COVID-19 self-assessment tool if they need help determining whether they should seek further care](#);
- Consider having a screener at facility entrance(s) to conduct active screening of employees and visitors and ensure the following conditions are in place:
 - Ensure the privacy of screening participants is secure, including the methods of tracking of screening information and personal information.
 - Screening tables are located in an area away from others and away from any high traffic areas; and
 - There is an appropriate supply of hand sanitizer at the screening table.
- If the screeners are able to maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from those being screened, or if they are able to be separated by a physical barrier such as a plexiglass barrier, the screener does not need to wear personal protective equipment while screening, otherwise, the appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn:
 - surgical/procedure mask;
 - gown;
 - gloves;
 - eye protection (goggles or face shield).
- Consult community partners for sourcing PPE locally, if needed.
- Ensure to protect all personal information in such a manner as to protect personal privacy of employees.

- Symptomatic individuals should be instructed to immediately leave the facility and self-isolate.
- It is advised to contact the notify the local public health unit if a food handler is COVID-19 confirmed or suspected.

Additional Precautions

Temperature Checks:

- In addition to active screening questions, the facility may consider temperature checks to monitor for fever (over 38 degrees Celsius) and advise to immediately self-isolate if symptoms develop. Refer to active screening precautions (i.e., PPE or barrier).
- Keep a list of local public health screening centres and locations with any additional local screening information that may be needed.

Occupational Health & Safety

- If COVID-19 is suspected or diagnosed for a staff member, return to work should be determined in consultation with their health care provider and the local public health unit.
- The staff member must report to Occupational Health and Safety prior to return to work. Detailed general occupational health and safety guidelines for COVID-19 are available on the [MOH COVID-19 website](#).
- Environmental, frequently touched and food-contact surfaces should be disinfected as soon as possible.
- If the staff members illness is determined to be work-related: In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations, an employer must provide a written notice within four days of being advised that a worker has an occupational illness, including an occupationally-acquired infection, or if a claim has been made to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) by or on behalf of the worker with respect to an occupational illness, including an occupational infection, to the:
 - Ministry of Labour;
 - Joint health and safety committee (or health and safety representative); and
 - Trade union, if any.
- Any instances of occupationally-acquired infection shall be reported to WSIB within 72 hours of receiving notification of said illness.

- For more information please contact the [Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development](#):
 - Employment Standards Information Centre: Toll-free: 1-800-531-5551
 - Health and Safety Contact Centre: Toll-free: 1-877-202-0008

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Please refer to the [Cleaning and Disinfection Information Sheet](#).

Step 1 Cleaners: break down grease and remove organic material from the surface.

- Used separately before using disinfectants.
- Can be purchased with cleaner and disinfectant combined in a single product.

Step 2 Sanitizers: reduce the level of microorganisms to a level that will not compromise the safety of food products. If utensils or food contact equipment is used, a food premises may sanitize equipment and utensils by:

- clean water at a temperature of at least 77° Celsius, or more, for at least 45 seconds;
- a clean chlorine solution of not less than 100 parts per million of available chlorine at a temperature not lower than 24° Celsius for at least 45 seconds;
- a clean quaternary ammonium compound solution of not less than 200 parts per million at a temperature not lower than 24° Celsius for at least 45 seconds;
- a clean solution containing not less than 25 parts per million of available iodine at a temperature not lower than 24° Celsius for at least 45 seconds; or
- other sanitizing agents if,
 - they are approved for use by Health Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency or the medical officer of health for the intended purpose,
 - they are used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and
 - a test reagent for determining the concentration of sanitizer is readily available where the sanitizing takes place.
- Refer to the Public Health Ontario website for a [chlorine dilution calculator](#).

Step 3 Disinfectants: have chemicals that kill most germs. Disinfectants are ideal for frequently touched surfaces.

- Applied after the surfaces have been cleaned.
- Have a drug identification number (DIN).

Disinfectant wipes

- Have combined cleaners and disinfectants in one solution.
- May become dry due to fast drying properties. Should be discarded if they become dry.
- Not recommended for heavily soiled surfaces.

Prepare products for use

- Where possible, use pre-mixed solution.
- Read and follow manufacturer's instructions to:
 - properly prepare solution;
 - allow adequate contact time for disinfectant to kill germs (see product label);
 - wear gloves when handling cleaning products including wipes;
 - wear any other personal protective equipment recommended by the manufacturer.

Additional Information

- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
- Frequently touched surfaces are most likely to be contaminated.
- Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms it is approved for use in Canada.
- Check the expiry date of products you use and always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day and when visibly dirty.
- Examples of frequently touched surfaces include doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, counters, hand rails, touch screen surfaces, table tops, chairs, food contact surfaces, meal trays and kitchen and buffet serving utensils.
- Food should be protected from contamination at all times. This may include safe distancing or ensuring guards or coverings for food, and utensils.
- Ensure all hand wash sinks are supplied with soap and paper towels or a working hot air dryer.

Definitions

- **Physical distancing:** maintain 2m/6ft distance from anyone coughing or sneezing.
- **Close contact:** a person who provided care for the patient, including healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers, or who had similar close physical contact OR who lived with or otherwise had close prolonged contact with a probable or confirmed case while the case was ill.