



# Exposure Control Plan for COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

## Company information

Vancouver Regional Construction Association  
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## Health hazards of COVID-19

COVID-19 has been declared a global pandemic and a public health emergency in British Columbia. It is a virus that can cause respiratory illness and can lead to hospitalization and death. The effects of COVID-19 are expected to be much more severe than seasonal influenza because most people will not have any immunity to the virus. Seniors and people with underlying health issues (including heart disease, diabetes and lung disease) are at a higher risk of hospitalization and death, but young and healthy people are also at risk.

## Symptoms

Symptoms of COVID-19 are likely to include fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat and difficulty breathing.

## Transmission

Exposure to COVID-19 can occur by:

- Breathing in droplets in the air that are generated when people cough or sneeze
- Close contact with other people (e.g. shaking hands or hugging)
- Touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the face, mouth, or food.

Note that touching a contaminated surface and then touching another surface may cause the virus to transfer from one surface to another.

COVID-19 can be transmitted even by people who are not displaying symptoms of the disease. People who may be infected with COVID-19 should not come to work. This includes people who:

- Have symptoms of COVID-19
- Have travelled outside of Canada with then previous 14 days
- Have been exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Share a home with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19
- Share a home with someone who has been exposed to COVID-19



## **Statement of purpose**

Our company is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all of our employees. A combination of measures will be used to minimize staff exposure to COVID-19, including the most effective control technologies available. Our office and work procedures will protect not only our employees, but also customers and visitors who enter our facilities. All employees must follow the procedures outlined in this plan to prevent or reduce exposure to COVID-19.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Employer responsibilities**

Our company will:

- Ensure that the materials (for example, gloves, alcohol-based hand rubs, and washing facilities) and other resources (for example, training materials) required to implement and maintain the plan are readily available where and when they are required.
- Ensure that employees are able to maintain social distancing (2 meters apart), at all times, while completing their work safely.
- Select, implement, and document the appropriate office control measures.
- Ensure that managers and employees are educated and trained to an acceptable level of competency.
- Conduct a periodic review of the plan's effectiveness. This includes a review of the available control technologies to ensure that these are selected and used when practical.
- Ensure that a copy of the exposure control plan is available to everyone.

### **Manager responsibilities**

Our managers will:

- Ensure that staff are adequately instructed on the control measures for the office.
- Ensure that social distancing is maintained, and office measures followed.
- Ensure that the COVID-19 Safety Plan is available to everyone.

### **Staff responsibilities**

Our staff will:

- Maintain social distance when working at the office.
- Follow established processes, measures and occupancy limits when working at the office.
- Report any unsafe conditions or acts to the Director of Operations.



## **Risk identification and assessment**

Three primary routes of transmission are anticipated for COVID-19, all of which need to be controlled. These include contact, droplet, and airborne transmission.

### **Breathing in droplets in the air**

BCCDC advises that coronavirus is not transmitted through airborne transmission, however, if somebody coughs or sneezes they do generate droplets which are airborne for at least a short period of time but do not float in the air and generally fall to the ground within one to two meters. Anybody who is near the individual may risk breathing in these droplets. Social distancing (*maintaining 2 meters of distance from other people at all time*) will reduce the risk of this occurring.

### **Close contact**

Close contact refers to physical contact with another person, for example shaking hands or hugging. When people cough or sneeze droplets may deposit on their skin or clothing, especially if they cough or sneeze into their hands. People who are carriers of COVID-19 may transfer the virus from their hands or clothing to others during close contact.

- Touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the face, mouth, or food.

### **Surface contact**

Surfaces can become contaminated when droplets carrying COVID-19 deposit on them, or when they are touched by a person who is infected. Surface contact involves a worker touching a contaminated object such as a table, doorknob, telephone, or computer keyboard or tool, and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth. Surface contact is important to consider because COVID-19 can persist for several days on surfaces.



The following risk assessment table is adapted from Regulation Guideline G6.34-6. Using this guideline as a reference, we have determined that the risk level of our on-site employees is low to moderate when they maintain social distancing.

**Risk assessment for COVID-19**

	<b>Low risk</b> Workers who typically have no contact with people infected with COVID-19	<b>Moderate risk</b> Workers who may be exposed to infected people from time to time in relatively large, well ventilated workspaces	<b>High risk</b> Workers who may have contact with infected patients, or with infected people in small, poorly ventilated workspaces
<b>Hand hygiene</b>	Yes (washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand rub, or using hand wipes that contain effective disinfectant)	Yes (washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand rub, or using hand wipes that contain effective disinfectant)	Yes (washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand rub, or using hand wipes that contain effective disinfectant)
<b>Disposable gloves</b>	Not required	Not required (unless handling contaminated objects on a regular basis)	Yes in some cases (for example, when working directly with COVID-19 patients)
<b>Aprons, gowns, or similar body protection</b>	Not required	Not required	Yes in some cases (for example, when working directly COVID-19 patients)
<b>Eye protection - goggles or Face shield</b>	Not required	Not required	Yes in some cases (for example, when working directly with COVID-19 patients)
<b>Airway Protection - respirators</b>	Not required	Not required (unless likely to be exposed to coughing and sneezing)	Yes (minimum N95 respirator or equivalent)



## Risk control

The Regulation requires employers to implement infectious disease controls in the following order of preference:

1. Engineering controls
2. Administrative controls
3. Personal protective equipment (PPE).

It is not necessary to implement Personal protective equipment (PPE) in our workplace because the risk of exposure can be controlled using engineering controls (for example, plexiglass barrier in planroom) and administrative controls (for example, social distancing, hand washing, surface cleaning and cough/sneeze etiquette).

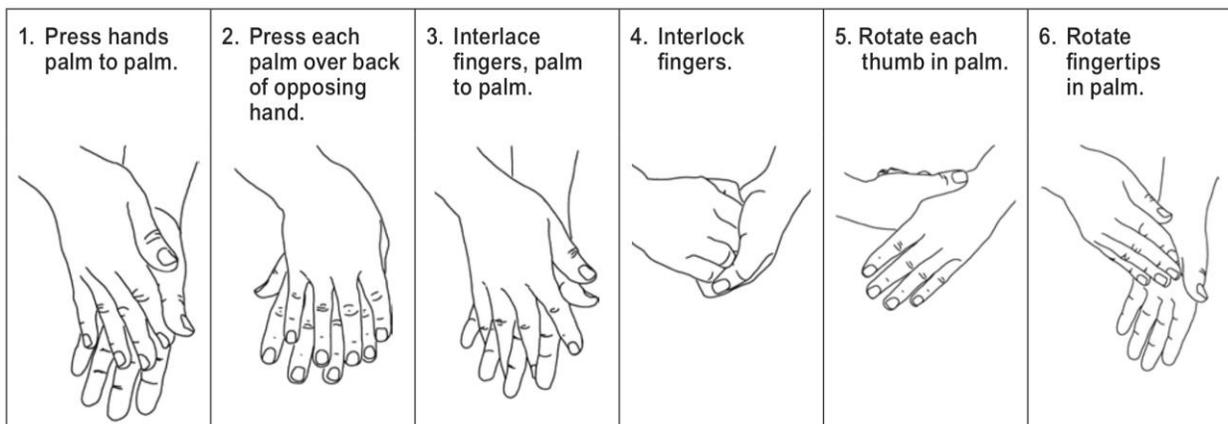
## Hand washing

Hand washing is one of the best ways to minimize the risk of infection. Proper hand washing helps prevent the transfer of infectious material from the hands to other parts of the body—particularly the eyes, nose, and mouth—or to other surfaces that are touched.

Wash/Sanitize your hands immediately:

- After handling materials that may be contaminated (for example, stat decs).
- Before eating, drinking, smoking, handling contact lenses, or applying makeup.

## Hand washing procedure



Use soap and warm running water. (It doesn't have to be hot to do the job.) If water is unavailable, use a waterless hand cleanser that has at least 70% alcohol. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use the cleanser. Alcohol-based hand rub dispensers are located in reception (x1) and the planroom (x2).



## **Cough/sneeze etiquette**

Our staff is expected to follow cough/sneeze etiquette, which is a combination of measures that minimizes the transmission of diseases via droplet or airborne routes. Cough/sneeze etiquette includes the following components:

- Educate staff in control measures, including hand washing.
- Post signs at entry points to instruct everyone about control measures.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a sleeve or tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Use tissues to contain secretions, and dispose of them promptly in a waste container.
- Turn your head away from others when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands regularly.

## **If staff show symptoms of COVID-19**

If staff are ill with COVID-19, they should stay home. If they develop symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, they should leave the workplace immediately. Workers should only return to the workplace once they have recovered from COVID-19. Workers should inform the Director of Operations or President if they are ill with COVID-19.

Employees who suspect they may have COVID-19 should use the BC Self-Assessment Tool: <https://covid19.thrive.health> or call 811 for assistance.

## **Employee training**

Our staff will have access to resources in the following:

- The risk of exposure to COVID-19, and the signs and symptoms of the disease
- VRCA's COVID-19 Safety Plan
- Safety measures, procedures and occupancy limits to be followed if working at office, including hand washing, social distancing and cough/sneeze etiquette
- Location of washing facilities, including dispensing stations for alcohol-based hand rubs
- How to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19.

## **Health monitoring**

Our employees will promptly report any symptoms of COVID-19 to their manager.

## **Annual review**

We will review the exposure control plan every year and update it as necessary.