

Safety Guidance for Child Intervention Staff

Updated May 20, 2020

STAFF SAFETY

The Ministry of Children's Services takes employee safety very seriously. As we begin to adjust to our "new normal" during the COVID-19 pandemic, child intervention practice will begin shifting towards meeting with children, youth and families in a physical distancing world. There are many steps and precautions staff must take to help prevent the spread while continuing to provide services to Alberta's children, youth and families. To help keep yourself and clients safe, review the following information and resources before making in-person visits.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions related to staff safety, please talk to your supervisor or manager, and/or email the COVID-19 inbox: CS-CI-COVID-19@gov.ab.ca

For employees who work in a CI Provincial Treatment facility (YYC and YACs), please also go to this link: [COVID-19 Facilities Practice Guidance](#).

Workplace – Offices and Work Sites

As you know, Child Intervention offices remain closed to the general public. **DO NOT** go to work when you have symptoms, and self-isolate for the timeframe set out by Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services (AHS).

- Promote and practice good personal hygiene (wash hands often, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes, and have hand sanitizer available).
- Use enhanced workplace cleaning practices.
- Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean (telephones, computer equipment, etc.).
- Enforce physical distancing.
 - Keep a minimum of 2 meters (6 feet) from others
 - Work spaces are separated
 - No shaking hands
 - Limit the number of people meeting/gathering in one space/room
- Work from homes strategies continue to be in place. Work with your supervisor and manager to discuss the unique needs of your worksite and community.
- Although employees enjoy sharing food and treats, please refrain from bringing in food to share with others and remove treat or candy dishes. If you bring items to the workplace in containers that are recyclable, take them home with you rather than disposing of them in the office recycling bins.
- Although the public is not permitted in our worksites at this time, under special circumstances, children and families may be welcomed into designated areas of our worksites. When doing so, they should remain in one room large enough to ensure a two meter (6 foot) distance between participants. If you are unsure, speak with your supervisor or manager about which space is designated for this purpose.
 - Before having a meeting, complete AHS screening questions.
- Review the Formal Hazard Assessment for your site with your supervisor/manager for additional information.

Conducting In-Person Visits

Review the most current [**COVID-19 CI Practice Guidance**](#) for information on when it is appropriate to conduct community, office, or in-person visits with clients.

Please consider:

- Under no circumstances should you go on visits or be at work when you are feeling sick, have symptoms or have been advised by AHS to [**self-isolate**](#).
- Prior to a visit or in-person meeting, conduct a screening (phone, email or in person) using the screening questions outlined in the Practice Guidance. You may also be asked similar screening questions by the individual you are meeting with.
- **DO NOT** enter a home or have an in-person interaction where someone has symptoms of COVID-19. If there is imminent harm or danger to a child or an apprehension is required, consult your supervisor on appropriate next steps.
- Physical distancing must be followed during interactions.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer, after any meeting or in-person interaction.
- Please see [**PPE Infographic**](#) regarding what personal protective equipment should be worn and in which situations when conducting an in-person visit.
- For all Child Intervention Practitioners (CIPs) who will be conducting community, office, or in-person visits with clients, complete and sign the [**CI Field Level Hazard Assessment**](#) with your supervisor.
- For all CIPs arranging to visit a group or congregate care facility, you will be required to have your temperature taken with a contactless thermometer as per the Facilities Practice Guidance.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

There have been many question regarding the use of PPE in our daily work with children, youth and families. Alberta Health and AHS have clear guidelines on using PPE, as outlined below.

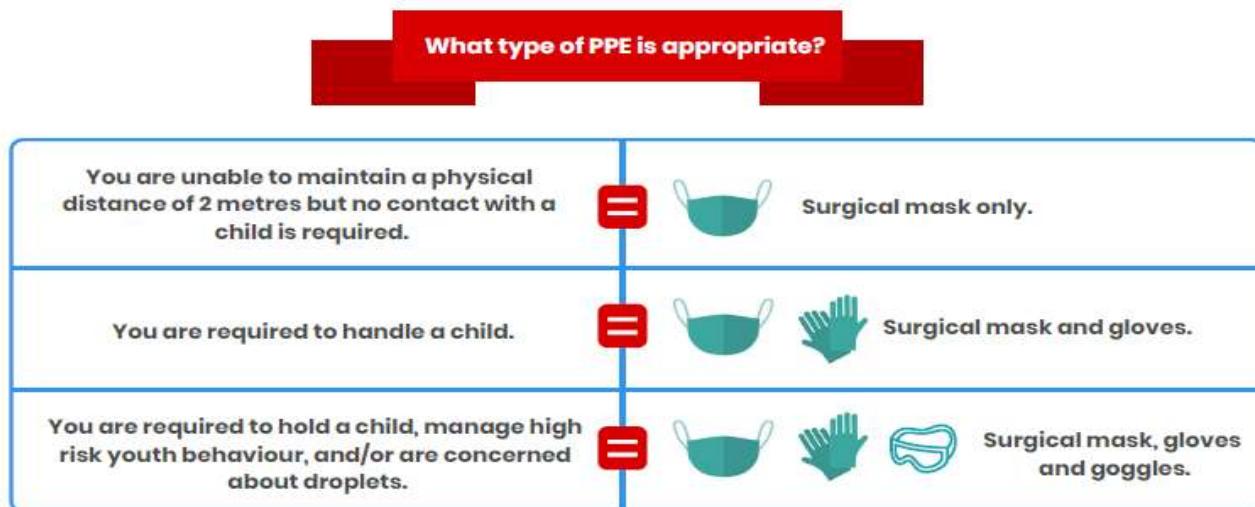
CIPs (not including those working at YYC or YACs), have been identified as medium-low risk professionals as defined below:

- These are individuals who have multiple interactions with clients in vulnerable population environments and cannot maintain/sustain a two meter physical distance.
 - CIPs have been identified at the same risk level as shelter workers and childcare providers.
- The PPE guidelines for this medium-low risk group are:
 - Basic PPE (hand-washing, using hand sanitizer and wipes), plus the use of procedure/surgical masks and gloves when required (see chart next page- *what type of PPE is appropriate*).
 - Eye protection (goggles) will also be available to CI staff.

CIPs who are required to interact with children, youth and families should have a PPE kit containing the following items when they are out of the office:

- Surgical/procedural mask
- Disposable gloves

- Eye protection
- Hand sanitizer
- Garbage bag for disposal of items



PPE should be donned (put on) in the following order:

1. Mask
2. Eye protection (goggles), if necessary
3. Gloves

PPE should be doffed (removed) in the following order:

1. Gloves – followed by hand-washing or hand sanitizer
2. Eye protection (goggles)
3. Mask

Wearing Masks

Wearing a mask can be very important in certain situations. Alberta Health and AHS advise if you are sick, wearing a mask helps prevent passing the illness on to other people.

It is important that when putting on and taking off a mask, you are following proper precautions. According to the [World Health Organization](#), the following outlines how to properly wear and dispose of a mask:

- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds).
- Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds).
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin or garbage bag; and clean hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds).

For more information on the do's and don'ts of wearing a mask – please see the following [**Wearing Masks Infographic**](#) or visit the [**AHS website on PPE**](#).

Wearing Gloves

Disposable gloves are an important piece of PPE and when donned (put on) properly, they help protect workers from exposure. When doffed (taken off) correctly, workers help prevent contamination to themselves and their environments. Below are tips on how to don and doff gloves in ways that help ensure worker safety:

- The outside of gloves are contaminated! Do not touch your face while wearing gloves. Limit other surfaces that you touch, including your cell phone.
- If your hands get contaminated during glove removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



Wearing Eye Protection

Wearing eye protection (goggles) are an important aspect of PPE when you are unable to maintain physical distancing (2 meters or 6 feet), are required to carry a child, or are working with high risk youth or others who have tested positive or are symptomatic for COVID-19.

To properly don (put on) eye protection (goggles):

- Using the arm bands place over face and eyes and adjust to fit.

To properly doff (remove) eye protection (goggles):

- Arms of goggles and headband of face shields are considered to be 'clean' and may be touched with the hands.
- The front of goggles are considered to be contaminated.
- Remove eye protection by handling ear loops, sides or back only.
- Reusable goggles should be cleaned by the individual after each use using soap and water or wipes.

Considerations when Transporting Children and Youth

When a child or youth needs to be transported, consider the following:

- Consult the [PPE Infographic](#) on what PPE is recommended for transporting a child/youth.
- If the child/youth is symptomatic or has tested positive for COVID-19, if age and development allow, have the child/youth wear a mask.
- Whenever possible, have the child/youth sit as far from you as the vehicle allows (i.e. rather than having a youth sit in the passenger seat beside you, have them sit in the rear passenger seat).
- Follow the [GOA guidelines](#) for cleaning personal and fleet vehicles after use.
- Ensure any car seats and high-touch areas have been cleaned using soap and water or an alcohol based disinfectant after use.

Resources:

[COVID-19 Reporting Form](#)

[Alberta Health Screening Questionnaire](#)

[COVID-19 Facilities Practice Guidance](#)

[Child Intervention PPE Infographic](#)

[Field Level Hazard Assessment \(CI General\)](#) – Resources linked in this document include:

- [Vehicle Use and Safety Guidelines](#)
- [Physical Distancing Guidelines](#)
- [AHS Hand Hygiene](#)
- [AHS Covering Your Cough](#)
- [Respiratory Viruses in the Workplace](#)
- [AHS Self-Assessment](#)
- [GoA Routine Practices for Bio-hazardous Materials - Safe Work Procedure](#)
- [AHS - Donning PPE Poster](#)
- [Elevator etiquette](#)
- [Alberta Health PPE Guidelines](#)
- [Employee Family Assistance Program \(EFAP\)](#)
- [AUPE Crisis Support Services](#)
- [Children's Services Peer Support](#)
- [MyAPS Coping Resources](#)
- [COVID-19 GoA Prevent the Spread Posters](#)

[Formal Hazard Assessment](#) – Additional resources linked in this document include:

- [Physical Distancing Requirements for Teams](#)
- [Mass Gathering Requirements](#)