

COVID-19 proof your business

Due to rapidly increasing COVID-19 cases in Fraser Health, we are asking the business community to revisit their COVID-19 safety plans and step up measures where needed for the protection of ourselves, our loved ones and our communities.

Having a healthy business during COVID-19 means having strong safety protocols in place. It means doing everything you can to take care of your employees and yourself, while being a community leader and role model.

Healthy staff and healthy customers means healthy businesses. Over the past few months we've seen many businesses temporarily having to shut their doors to manage cases and outbreaks. As we enter respiratory illness and flu season, the risk to businesses is increasing. But there are measures you can take now to protect your business from being the next to have to shut its doors due to COVID-19.

Show your business cares by having all employees wear masks at work

On October 26, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that it is now the expectation that people will wear a non-medical mask in public spaces. This includes workplaces and businesses. Employers, employees and citizens alike have a mutual responsibility to protect ourselves and others and show we care by wearing a mask.

In worksites where physical distancing is difficult, masks should be required. If employees are in high traffic areas while at work, a mask can help protect them and those around them. A mask is not a replacement for other measures such as staying home when ill and handwashing – it is simply another important layer of protection to be encouraged.

Ensure employees have instruction on how to properly wear masks and other applicable personal protective equipment

Don't let employees come to work sick

Having employees miss even a day of work can have a major impact on your business. However, the cost of having one employee stay home when they are sick is much lower than having your entire workforce end up sick with COVID-19, or stuck in self-isolation and having to temporarily close your business as a result.

All employees should be required to stay home when they are sick. You can support them to do this by:

- Offering sick days
- Not requiring a doctor's note
- Implementing a daily screening or self-screening process for illnesses
- Keep a record to ensure it is performed consistently

Screening for symptoms should be done daily prior to every shift. If employees develop symptoms part way through their shift, they should be supported to leave the workplace immediately.

Common areas and physical distancing

Physical distancing doesn't just apply at an employee's regular workstation. Make sure there is physical distancing in every place an employee goes during their day, and during every task they perform.

Physical distancing must also apply to all common locations, e.g lunch rooms, break rooms, bathrooms, punch stations, equipment rooms, locker rooms and any other common areas where employees normally gather. These are areas where we are now seeing COVID-19 transmission. You can help reduce risk by:

- Setting maximum capacities for all common spaces to ensure there is enough space for physical distancing
- Limiting simultaneous use of common spaces by different teams of employees
- Installing plexiglass barriers and providing personal protective equipment if physical distancing cannot be maintained at all times.
- Providing employees with their own work vehicles, if applicable.
- Ensuring handwashing stations and cleaning supplies are readily available

Gatherings

On October 26, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer announced a new order limiting private gatherings to your household, plus your safe six. Furthermore, due to the majority of cases being in the Fraser Health, people living in this region are being asked not to attend or host parties or gatherings of any kind.

For workplaces, this means there should be no social gatherings, parties or staff lunches. As a business owner, you can also be a role model for your employees and community by following the orders in your personal life and encouraging your employees to do the same.

Keep good records

Having detailed logs of where staff worked each day and maintaining a current employee list with contact information and identifying information (e.g. date of birth) will support Public Health to do contact tracing if a case occurs at your workplace. This can limit the number of staff needing to isolate if a case occurs.

At large worksites, divide staff into cohorts

In large worksites, minimize staff rotation/movement between different parts of the worksite or between different teams and avoid staff from different parts of the worksite taking breaks together. This reduces the number of employees exposed if a case is introduced.

Think about transportation

Where possible, support employees to work from home as much as possible. If you know that your employees carpool or take employer-run transportation to work, take this into account when planning staff assignments. For employer-run transportation, symptom screen before employees board and ensure everyone wears a mask and can maintain physical distance while inside the vehicle.

In addition to the above, ensure COVID-19 safety instructions and signage are in the primary languages of the workforce.

Good COVID-19 sense makes good business sense

Now is the time for all of us to work together to slow the transmission of COVID-19. Thank you for doing everything you can to keep yourself, your employees, your business and community healthy.

Resources for employers:

- [BCCDC – Information for employers](#)
- [WorkSafeBC - Information for employers](#)
- [Fraser Health - Information and resources to COVID-19 proof your business](#)

Posters and signage for your business:

- [Notice – Do not enter if feeling unwell](#)
- [General area – stay safe from COVID-19](#)
- [General area physical distance](#)
- [Wear a mask](#)
- [Bathroom etiquette](#)
- [Meeting room etiquette](#)
- [Kitchen/break room etiquette](#)
- [Workspace etiquette – keep your space clean](#)
- [Keep your hands clean – sanitize](#)
- [Visitors must be pre-screened](#)
- [Floor decal – stand here](#)

Resources for employees

- [Work Safe BC - Health and Safety Prevention Info line](#)
- [Work Safe BC - Refusing unsafe work](#)