



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION **PLAN**

City of Mission

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This is a living document that will be reviewed with each City of Mission Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee, and updated on a regular basis, it is subject to change depending on public health instructions, the rate of community transmission, severity of symptoms, and availability of treatment for a communicable disease. This document is supplemental to our existing Safety Management System, Safety Programs, Exposure Control Plans, and safe work procedures.

Please contact the Health & Safety Advisor if you have any questions or concerns.

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1.0 Overview

This Communicable Disease Prevention Plan outlines the activities the City of Mission is taking to protect employees, contractors, and members of the public from communicable diseases which may be circulating in our communities. This plan exists as a simplified version of the City of Mission's overall Pandemic Response Plan and Exposure Control Plan.

For the purpose of this plan, communicable diseases are defined as illnesses caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occur through the direct or indirect transmission of an infectious agent or its products from an infected individual or another vector.

Communicable Diseases are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets when you cough or sneeze.
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
- Touching something with a virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth before washing your hands.

Purpose

The purpose of this guidance document is to provide important information that will promote the health and safety of employees, visitors, patrons, and contractors in order to prevent and reduce the risk of developing and transmitting communicable disease.

This plan is based on the current understanding of existing communicable diseases which may be transmitted in the workplace and where workplace exposures may occur. The communicable diseases of concern, and the focus of this plan, are those that circulate in the community from time to time and as a result may be introduced into a workplace. These include, but are not limited to:

- Coronavirus such as SARS, MERS, and SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19);
- Norovirus; and
- Influenza (seasonal and pandemic such as H1N1)

Note: While there are other communicable diseases to which workers may be exposed, including via animals or insect vectors, as bloodborne pathogens, or through exposures to human waste or wastewater, these are not the focus of this plan. Contact your Health and Safety Advisor for more information on other biological hazards.

This plan is also based on the current understanding of the modes of transmission for the above communicable diseases and that outcomes would be similar to what we have seen to date, including:

- Transmission:
 - Droplet, aerosol, or airborne transmission of the virus through particles (generated through coughs, sneezes, speaking, breathing, etc.)
 - Direct and indirect contact with the virus (transmission through skin-to-skin contact, large droplets, or intermediate objects).
- Health Outcomes/ Illness:
 - Ranging from mild to severe symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, gastro-intestinal or other illness requiring medical care or hospitalization.

Responsibilities

Everyone- employers, supervisors, contractors, and workers- has responsibility for health and safety in the workplace. Stay home if you are sick, get medical guidance and follow public health recommendations and requirements.

The City of Mission Human Resources Division will advise employees when there is a communicable disease threat affecting employees.

City of Mission workplace communicable disease prevention, mitigation, and response activities are guided by this Communicable Disease Prevention Plan, in addition to the Pandemic Response Plan and Exposure Control Plan. In the event of a communicable disease outbreak, the City of Mission will work with the Fraser Health Authority, notify affected employees, take actions to protect the health and safety of employees, visitors, and contractors, and provide additional guidance as necessary.

Note: These responsibilities complement and do not replace the responsibilities in the Safety Management System (SMS) or other City of Mission policies.

Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

The refusal of unsafe work is both a fundamental right and a responsibility held by workers. All employees have the right to refuse unsafe work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. An undue hazard is an “unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate” risk, above and beyond the potential exposure a general member of the public would face through regular, day-to-day activity.

Employees must report any undue hazard immediately to their supervisor for investigation. Each refusal of unsafe work is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If the concern is not resolved between the worker and the supervisor, the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee will be notified of the concern and an investigation will be conducted. If the matter is not resolved, a WorkSafeBC prevention officer will then need to be contacted and investigate.

Public Health Directives

The Provincial Health Officer is the senior public health official for B.C. and is responsible for monitoring the health of the population across the province, providing independent advice to the ministers and public officials on public health issues.

When warranted, the Provincial Health Officer or a medical health officer (“Public Health”) may indicate communicable diseases of concern.

The responsibilities of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) are outlined in the [Public Health Act](#) and include the following:

- provide independent advice to the ministers and public officials on public health issues;
- monitor the health of the population of B.C. and advise on public health issues and on the need for legislation, policies and practices;
- recommend actions to improve the health and wellness of the population of BC;
- deliver reports that are in the public interest on the health of the population and on government’s progress in achieving population health targets;
- establish standards of practice for and conduct performance reviews of Medical Health Officers; and

- work with the BC Centre for Disease Control and Prevention and BC’s Medical Health Officers across the province to fulfil their legislated mandates on disease control and health protection.

During periods of elevated risk where Public Health officials issue guidance, notices, or orders related to our region, industry, or specific workplace/location, the City of Mission will implement appropriate measures in accordance with the guidance of Public Health. These measures are in addition to the general measures for communicable disease prevention which remain in place at all times (e.g. hand hygiene, stay home when sick).

This plan will be revised as/when the science and our understanding of the risk factors changes or as directed by Public Health.

WorkSafeBC Directives (Workers Compensation Act/OHS Regulation Requirements)

WorkSafeBC is a provincial agency dedicated to promoting safe and healthy workplaces across B.C. They partner with workers and employers to prevent work-related injury, disease, and disability. Their services include education, prevention, compensation, and support for injured workers, and no-fault insurance to protect employers and workers.

WorkSafeBC helps businesses meet their obligations under the *Workers Compensation Act* and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. All employers in British Columbia have an obligation under the *Act* to ensure the health and safety of workers and other parties at their workplace.

Employers should consider how best to communicate to workers about potential exposures in the workplace. A system should be introduced so workers (including Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee representatives and worker representatives) are able to inform management of concerns related to being exposed in the workplace. Open communication is key to finding out about specific tasks that concern workers as well as gaining input on appropriate control measures to keep workers safe.

Workers should know and understand their workplace health and safety responsibilities, and those of others. Workers have three key rights:

- the right to know about hazards in the workplace,
- the right to participate in health and safety activities in the workplace, and
- the right to refuse unsafe work.

2.0 Recognize Hazards/Assess Risks

The City of Mission’s Exposure Control Plan establishes the process for risk assessment and control of communicable diseases and other biological hazards which may be present in the City of Mission workplaces. Health & Safety will continue to monitor for and review communicable disease-related information issued by Public Health and will identify for the City of Mission any changes in information or new hazards which may impact the risk to employees.

Within the City of Mission, there are many routine situations where employees will have contact with customers, co-workers, and the physical environment itself (surfaces, doors, equipment, etc.). During times of outbreaks, these encounters could give rise to contact with communicable diseases, if not controlled adequately. Such controls will include adhering to current public health orders, if applicable, public health advice, as well as implementing best practices to keep employees and customers safe.

Risk Identification

The risks of certain communicable diseases, including Coronavirus, may increase from time to time, or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level, or within a certain workplace.

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a communicable disease and understanding the modes of transmission is the first step in reducing the incidence of communicable disease.

Signs and symptoms will vary depending on the disease, but common characteristics associated at the onset of most communicable diseases typically include fever and other flu-like symptoms: achiness, upset stomach, fatigue, and headaches.

Note: When travelling abroad, some communicable diseases are endemic to certain regions of the world. Please follow Canada Public Health Guidelines when travelling abroad.

Name	Vaccine Available?	Description of Symptoms
Coronavirus (COVID-19)	Yes	Symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties Transmission: Person-to-person via droplets, coughing, sneezing or talking; sharing items; touching contaminated objects.
Influenza	Yes	Symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle/body aches, headaches, fatigue, sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Transmission: person-to-person via droplets, coughing, sneezing, or talking, sharing items, touching contaminated objects.

The Hierarchy of Controls (in order of effectiveness)

After identifying the risk levels with guidance from the Fraser Health Authority, the principles used to reduce the risk are called the Hierarchy of Controls. When selecting a safeguard or a combination of safeguards, always start at the top of the hierarchy outlined below to control the hazards. Choose a less effective safeguard only when more effective solutions are impracticable and continuously monitor to ensure they are providing the best level of protection of workers.

Elimination or substitution: Has the employer fully considered eliminating or postponing work tasks that may create a risk of exposure? Are there opportunities to work from home or can work processes be changed to eliminate or reduce contact with others?

Engineering controls: Are engineering controls, such as physical barriers, practicable?

Administrative controls: Has the employer fully considered how work practices can be altered to minimize exposure, such as physical distancing or enhanced cleaning protocols?

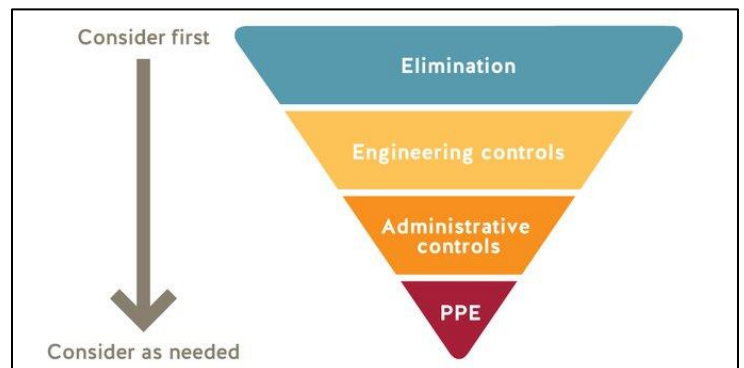


Figure 1 WorkSafeBC Hierarchy of Controls

Personal protective equipment (PPE): This last form of protection should only be considered after careful consideration of the previous control measures. The use of gloves and face masks may be considered where none of the above controls are possible/effective. If gloves and masks are used, proper usage guidelines should be followed.

3.0 Measures to Reduce the Risk

Stay Home When You're Sick

What Employees Should Know

All employees must stay home if they are experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms or other gastrointestinal (vomit or diarrhea) symptoms, and follow public health recommendations. Employees are not to return to the workplace for at least 24 hours after their fever (temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher) or liquid/droplet symptoms are gone. Temperatures should be measured without the use of fever-reducing medicines (medicines that contain ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Employees are encouraged to contact their medical health provider for further guidance and direction, or call 8-1-1.

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) has a 'Communicable Disease Control Manual' which can be used as reference about specific situations and support consistency. HealthlinkBC is another resource available to employees.

- <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/communicable-disease-control-manual>

And

HealthlinkBC

- <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/healthlinkbc-files/category/disease-prevention>

If You Become Sick At Work

Workers who have symptoms upon arrival to work or become ill during the day should promptly separate themselves from other workers, don a non-medical mask, inform their supervisor(s), and if safe to do so, go home. Workers should seek medical attention and only return to the workplace once they have recovered.

What Employers Should Know

An important way to reduce the spread of communicable diseases is to keep sick people away from those who are not sick. The City of Mission will review and communicate the sick leave policies and practices to employees every year before flu season and anytime when there is a risk of a communicable disease.

Note: Refer to Policy HUM.13(A)- *Sick Leave During an Epidemic or Pandemic* for more information.

Hygiene/Cleaning

Depending on the communicable disease, it's possible for people to become infected if they touch contaminated surfaces and then touch their nose, mouth, or eyes. The most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to **wash your hands**. Washing your hands often and practicing good hand hygiene will reduce the chances of getting or spreading germs. Washing your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds is most effective. This is because soap actively destroys the surface of

some viruses and a soapy lather really reduces the number of germs left on your skin. If water is unavailable, use a waterless hand cleaner that has at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand rubs can be used to disinfect your hands when soap and water are not available.

Other things to consider:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough instead of your hands.
- Do not share food, drinks, utensils, etc.
- Avoid unnecessary contact.
- Consider physical distancing.
- Wear a mask.

Facility, Vehicle and Equipment Hygiene

When to clean and when to disinfect

Cleaning with products containing soap or detergent reduces germs on surfaces by removing contaminants and decreases risk of infection from surfaces.

When confirmed or suspected communicable disease cases are low, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove germs that may be on surfaces and help maintain a healthy facility.

Disinfecting kills any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection.

The City of Mission will evaluate and conduct risk assessments based on the information below to determine whether an increase in cleaning or disinfecting in high traffic areas or high touch points is necessary:

- Provincial and/or Federal Reportable Disease Data Dashboard;
- BC COVID Dashboard in your community;
- Vaccination rates in your community;
- Infrequent use of other prevention measures, such as hand hygiene; or
- The space is occupied by people at increased risk for severe illness.

If there has been a sick person in your facility within the last 24 hours, you should clean AND disinfect the space.

Determine What Needs to Be Cleaned

Consider the type of surface and how often the surface is touched. Generally, the more people who touch a surface, the higher the risk. Prioritize cleaning high-touch surfaces at least once a day. If the space is a high traffic area, or if certain conditions (listed above) apply, you may choose to clean more frequently or disinfect in addition to cleaning.

Consider the Resources and Equipment Needed

Keep in mind the availability of cleaning products and the personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for the cleaners and disinfectants used (as recommended on the product label, product information sheets or Safety Data Sheet).

Clean High-Touch Surfaces

During periods of communicable disease events where the City of Mission has been notified of the increased risk to patrons and employees, in addition to daily monitoring, employees may need to clean high-touch surfaces at least twice a day or as often as determined is necessary. A risk assessment will be conducted to determine the frequency, work tasks, equipment, etc. Examples of high-touch surfaces include: pens, counters, shopping carts, tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, stair rails, elevator buttons, desks, keyboards, phones, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

Protect Yourself and Other Cleaners

- Ensure cleaning employees are trained on proper use of cleaning (and disinfecting, if applicable) products.
- Read the instructions on the product label, product information or Safety Data Sheet to determine what safety precautions are necessary while using the product. This could include PPE (such as gloves, glasses, or goggles), additional ventilation, first aid procedures, or other precautions.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after cleaning. Be sure to wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.
 - If hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.
 - If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, and wash with soap and water as soon as you can.
- Special considerations should be made for people with asthma. Some cleaning and disinfection products can trigger asthma.

Disinfect Safely When Needed

- If your disinfectant product label does not specify that it can be used for both cleaning and disinfection, clean visibly dirty surfaces with soap or detergent before disinfection.
- Use a disinfectant product that is effective against the communicable disease.
- Always follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. The label will include safety information and application instructions. Keep disinfectants out of the reach of children. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet with a disinfectant for a certain period (see “contact time” on the product label).
 - Check the product label to see what PPE (such as gloves, glasses, or goggles) is required based on potential hazards.
 - Ensure adequate ventilation (for example, open windows).
 - Use only the amount recommended on the label.
 - If diluting with water is indicated for use, use water at room temperature (unless stated otherwise on the label).
 - Label diluted cleaning or disinfectant solutions.
 - Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and pets.
 - Do not mix products or chemicals.
 - Do not eat, drink, breathe, or inject cleaning and disinfection products into your body or apply directly to your skin. They can cause serious harm.
 - Do not wipe or bathe people or pets with any surface cleaning and disinfection products.

Use of Masks

A non-medical mask is a protective barrier worn on the face, which must cover the nose, mouth and chin to be effective, and is used by the person wearing the mask to contain large droplets generated during

coughing, sneezing, or talking. Non-medical masks help minimize the spread of potentially infectious material from the infected wearer to other people. The use of non-medical masks are not considered full protection.

Masks must be worn correctly. Improper use may create a greater risk of infection or possible transmission. Always follow product instructions on the use and storage of a mask, and procedures for how to put on and remove the mask can located on the City of Mission 'Pipeline' Intranet.

Fit-tested N95 masks prevent infectious material from entering an employee's breathing zone. N95 masks and other respirators must be fit-tested annually or when physical changes occur. A risk assessment must be conducted to determine when employees should be wearing an N95 during a work activity or within a particular facility/environment.

Masks are to be worn at a minimum according to recommendation/guidelines from:

- Provincial Health Officer;
- WorkSafeBC;
- Human Resources- Occupational Health & Safety

Members of the public will also be required to follow 'Workplace Mask' protocols. They may also be refused entry or service if they do not comply. Masks will be offered if a patron shows up without one.

Ventilation

For all activities that take place indoors, basic principles of good indoor air quality include supplying outdoor air to replenish indoor air, thereby removing and diluting contaminants that naturally accumulate in indoor settings, especially in well-sealed buildings.

Strategies to optimize ventilation system functionality

- Maintain ventilation systems. WorkSafeBC requires employers to ensure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort for workers (Part 4 of the OHS Regulation).
- Ensure preventative maintenance is conducted (for example, regular filter changes and inspection of critical components).
- Make sure the system is properly balanced, which means verifying that the system meets its design conditions for air flow, temperature, pressure drop, noise and vibration.
- During periods of communicable disease events limiting occupancy in facilities or vehicles should be considered. The City of Mission will assess and may encourage employees to work from home is another example.

Employee Vaccinations

The City of Mission will support Public Health messaging for vaccinations against pandemic or communicable disease and may collaborate with Public Health to offer vaccination clinics in public facilities.

The City of Mission recognizes the public health benefits of vaccination programs to reduce illness, disability and death from community acquired diseases. Programs may be created to encourage employee participation in public health vaccination programs.

Reasons to get Vaccinated.

- 1. Vaccine-preventable diseases have not gone away**

The viruses and bacteria that cause illness and death still exist and can be passed on to those who are not protected by vaccines.
- 2. Vaccines will help keep you healthy**

Vaccines can prevent short term illnesses and prevent long term chronic disability or increased risk of cancer depending on disease.
- 3. Vaccines are as important to your overall health as diet and exercise**

Like eating healthy foods, exercising, and getting regular check-ups, vaccines play a vital role in keeping you healthy. Vaccines are one of the most convenient and safest preventive care measures available.
- 4. Vaccination can mean the difference between life and death**

Vaccine-preventable infections can be deadly. Example: Every year in the US, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 50,000 adults died from vaccine-preventable diseases.
- 5. Vaccines are safe**

Potential side effects associated with vaccines are uncommon and much less severe than the diseases they prevent.
- 6. Vaccines will not cause the diseases they are designed to prevent**

Vaccines contain either killed or weakened viruses, making it impossible to get the disease from the vaccine.
- 7. Young and healthy people can get very sick, too**

Infants and older adults are at increased risk for serious infections and complications, but vaccine-preventable diseases can strike anyone. If you are young and healthy, getting vaccinated can help you stay that way.
- 8. Vaccine-preventable diseases are expensive**

Diseases not only have a direct impact on individuals and their families, but also carry a high price tag for society as a whole.
- 9. When you get sick, your children, grandchildren, and parents may be at risk, too**

Adults are the most common source of pertussis (whooping cough) infection in infants which can be deadly for babies. When you get vaccinated, you are protecting yourself and your family as well as those in your community who may not be able to be vaccinated.
- 10. Your family and co-workers need you**

Millions of adults get sick from vaccine-preventable diseases, causing them to miss work and leaving them unable to care for those who depend on them, including their children and/or aging parents.

Employee Mental Health Support

A communicable disease event may cause increased levels of stress or anxiety for employees. This is because some communicable diseases are new or evolved so the scientific facts about the hazards and risks of the disease may be unknown or uncertain. This uncertainty increases stress, which may affect work production and/or focus.

To support the health and wellbeing of employees, the City of Mission offers a number of programs and services that promote the maintenance of personal and work-life balance.

- Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP)
 - The GroupHEALTH program is a voluntary, confidential, short-term counselling, advisory and information service for employees and their dependent family members.
 - 100% confidential and available 24/7.
 - Call LifeWorks toll-free, 24/7 at 1-866-331-6851

- Whole Health Committee
 - Offers support and education regarding physical and psychological health and wellbeing in the workplace.
 - <https://pipeline.mission.ca/health-safety/whole-health-committee/>