OVERVIEW

During the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, we all need to do our part to keep workers, customers and the public safe and healthy so we can stop the spread and prepare to reopen the province, when we are ready.

Below is a set of resources, tips and best practices to help employers and employees prevent the spread of COVID-19 and work together to reopen the province.

Employers and workers in Ontario have certain duties and rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations. Employers should also review and follow any applicable directives and guidance coming from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Ministry of Health.

Learn more about:
- workers' rights
- employers’ responsibilities
- Duties of Employers and Other Persons

BEST PRACTICES

We know that every workplace is unique which makes it so important that every workplace assesses functions carried out by their workforce to ensure they take action to protect against hazards presented by exposure to COVID-19.

Practicing physical distancing (staying 2 metres away from others), minimizing contact with droplets, keeping hands, surfaces and objects clean, and preventing contact with potentially infected people – are all critically important measures. Other information on how you can protect yourself is available on ontario.ca/coronavirus.

We have provided some recommendations below for your consideration. Please keep in mind that introducing any new protective measures should be done as part of a full review of other workplace hazards – not just COVID-19. Employers should consult with Joint Health and Safety Committees/Health and Safety Representatives on measures to protect workers in the workplace.

Some workplaces may already have some existing controls in place that may help reduce the risk of exposure to workers, so regular ‘check-ins’ on the effectiveness of controls is highly recommended.

RECOGNIZE HAZARDS/ASSESS RISKS

For drivers, we recognize that you will have contact with people, including suppliers, customers, service providers and co-workers, as well as contact with surfaces within your vehicles and at the sites you visit. The nature of the work you do requires contact with co-workers and customers (i.e. within 2 metres). These interactions, as well as the need to touch work surfaces and equipment could increase the likelihood that you or your customers could come in contact with the virus.

People who are sick or have signs of illness (e.g. fever, coughing, sneezing, runny nose, tiredness, shortness of breath) should self-isolate. Consult public health information to learn more about the symptoms of COVID-19 infection*. Recognize and report these hazards and use appropriate controls. Ensure that you or your co-workers stay home if you or they have symptoms.

Take a look at the controls below to see how they may assist you to minimize the risks within your workplace.

CONTROLS

All existing safety, sanitation, and infection control standards established by licensing agencies and public health authorities are still in effect and enforced. Already existing controls may help to reduce the risk of exposure for workers (e.g. following practices required by the Local/Provincial Health Unit).

To protect yourself from some of the risk of exposure to COVID-19, consider the following options:
Keep Informed and Communicate

- Follow all municipal and local public health warnings, directions and recommendations related to COVID-19.
- Consider regular times to check in with public health updates and retrain/revise practices as needed.
- Employers need to train workers on possible COVID-19 transmission points in the workplace, what steps are being taken to protect them, and how they can protect themselves, including frequent hand washing, sanitizing items and surfaces more frequently, and not touching their face.
- Ensure that measures you decide on are well communicated.

Eliminate or Minimize Exposure

Physical Distancing

- Postpone non-essential trips and tasks to minimize contact with others
- Implement all measures to ensure physical distance and separation between people. Keep the recommended physical distance (2 metres) between yourself and others where you can. Limit or eliminate passengers where ever possible. Use ‘sneeze guard’ or your ‘window’ with open/close capability between interactions. If it is necessary to transport passengers, consider installing transparent physical barrier(s) that does not impede field of vision between driver and any passengers.

Hand Hygiene

- Proper handwashing is key. Workers should be trained in the proper hand washing technique and avoid touching their face. Extra handwashing is a good idea for everyone — and when that’s not possible, a hand sanitizer with minimum alcohol content of 60% should be used frequently. Consider sanitizer use after customer or supplier interaction.
- Encourage workers and visitors to wash their hands before entering the workplace, after contact with others, or with surfaces others have touched. Be sure to include handwashing before breaks, at shift changes, after making or receiving deliveries etc. Be sure to keep an adequate supply of soap, paper towels, etc.

Disinfection and Sanitizing

- Increase the cleaning frequency of your work area — on everything from seats to commonly touched surfaces like steering wheels, gear shifts, radio controls and keys. Be sure to follow safe practices when using a cleaning agent and use an appropriate cleaner for the job.

Other Control Measures

- Where appropriate, safely work/meet in outdoor spaces.
- Where appropriate, safely ventilate spaces by opening doors, etc.

In addition to the above recommendations, your workplace should consider protective equipment as part of a complete hazard assessment. Equipment is only effective if people understand its limitations and wear it correctly. Workers need to be trained in the fit, use, storage, cleaning, maintenance and limitations of the protective equipment that they wear. Workers must use protective equipment as required by their employer.

If physical distance and separation cannot be maintained, workers should have protective equipment consisting of surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield).

EVALUATION

COVID19 has presented all of us with challenges we have never seen before. It’s important to consider that any of the adjustments we are making today, may need further adjustment tomorrow.

It is recommended that you take a look at your preventative measures on an ongoing basis, and adjust them if they are not working well enough or causing other issues with your work. For example, if you decided to use goggles, but they are impeding your vision, or are making other tasks unnecessarily difficult, you may want to try a face shield instead. Or, if you decided you needed a certain kind of disinfectant that is no longer available, identifying alternative disinfecting products or solutions or switching to good soap and water practices may be reasonable substitutes.

Bottom line? Plan to make regular check-ins and adjustments part of your COVID-19 infection prevention plans.
*For anyone who thinks they may have been exposed to or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, please start by visiting the Ministry of Health website and taking a self-assessment. Please do not visit an assessment center unless you have been referred by a health care professional. Do not call 911 unless it is an emergency.

**RESOURCES**

Stay updated with daily government updates:

- Government of Ontario
- Government of Canada
- Public Health Ontario

**Ontario government and agency-issued resources about COVID-19**

The **Ontario Ministry of Health** is providing consistent updates on the provincial government’s response to the outbreak, including:

- status of cases in Ontario
- current affected areas
- symptoms and treatments
- how to protect yourself and self-isolate
- updated Ontario news on the virus

**Public Health Ontario** is providing up-to-date resources on COVID-19, including:

- links to evolving public health guidelines, position statements and situational updates
- synopsis of articles updating the latest findings related to the virus
- recommendations for use of personal protective equipment
- information on infection prevention and control
- testing information
- other public resources

The Ontario government is supporting employers by setting up a portal to assist them in finding supplies and equipment through the [Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](https://www.wsps.ca).

**OTHER COVID-19 RESOURCES**

**Health Canada** outlines the actions being taken by the Government of Canada to limit spread of the virus, as well as what is happening in provinces and communities across the country. It also maintains a live update of the number of cases by province.

The **World Health Organization** is updating the latest guidance and information related to the global outbreak and spread beyond Canadian borders. It also provides the most up-to-date information on:

- current research and development around the virus
- a COVID-19 situation “dashboard”
- emergency preparedness measures
- live media updates on the spread of the virus

**Infrastructure Health and Safety Association** offers additional [Transportation Resources](https://www.wsps.ca).

This resource does not replace the **Occupational Health and Safety Act** (OHSA) and its regulations, and should not be used as or considered legal advice. Health and safety inspectors apply the law based on the facts in the workplace.

For more information visit [www.wsps.ca/COVID19](https://www.wsps.ca/COVID19)

NOTE: This document is intended for informational purposes only to provide an overview of the potential hazards posed in the workplace due to COVID-19. It is not intended as medical advice, to provide a comprehensive risk assessment for all workplaces, or to replace any legislated workplace safety obligations. Due to the ongoing evolution of the situation in Ontario and around the world, this document may be used as a guide for Employers in addition to guidance delivered by public health authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Ontario Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Any use which is made of this document by any Employer, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of the Employer. WSPS and its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, representatives, suppliers and service providers accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions in content or for damages of any kind or nature suffered by any Employer or any third party as a result of use of or reliance on this communication.