



Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



COVID-19 Guidance to the Hotel Sector

Provincial Coronavirus Response

Updated: April 28, 2020

If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.



Ministry of
Health



BC Centre for Disease Control



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A. Introduction

This document provides interim guidance to operators of hotels, motels, hostels, inns and other forms of travel accommodation for preventing the transmission of COVID-19.

For up-to-date information on COVID-19, please refer to the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>.

Orders, Notices and Guidance from B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer and the Public Health Agency of Canada

To limit the spread of COVID-19, the Provincial Health Officer has issued Orders that impact the hospitality industry. These Orders outline conditions and provide specific direction regarding the services provided at your facility, including (but not limited to) all on-site meeting rooms, restaurants, bars, lounges, cafes, coffee bars, retail liquor locations, spas, salons, pools and fitness centres.

Orders from the Provincial Health Officer:

- Travellers and Employers Order: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-travellers-employers.pdf>
- Mass Gatherings: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/covid-19-pho-class-order-mass-gatherings.pdf>
- Owners and Operators of Nightclubs and Food and Drink Services: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/covid-19-pho-order-nightclubs-food-drink-services.pdf>

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) quarantine order:

- PHAC's compliance and enforcement of the Quarantine Act: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html#a2>

Guidance:

- Food and Beverage Sector: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-guidance-food-beverage-sector.pdf>
- BCCDC's resources on self-isolation and self-monitoring: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>

B. General Information

How is COVID-19 spread?

- COVID-19 is spread through large liquid droplets when a person infected with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes. The virus in these droplets can enter through the eyes, nose or mouth of another person if they are in close contact with the person who coughed or sneezed.
- COVID-19 is not transmitted through particles in the air and is not something that can enter the body through the skin.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and the common cold. These symptoms include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue and loss of appetite.
- People infected with COVID-19 may experience little or no symptoms, with illness ranging from mild to severe.
- Some people are more vulnerable to developing severe illness or complications from COVID-19, including older people and those with chronic health conditions.

Who needs to self-isolate?

Self-isolation means staying in place and avoiding situations where you could come in contact with others. People are required to self-isolate for many reasons. Hotel operators and staff may not know who in the facility is self-isolating or why. For all of these reasons, it is important to follow this guidance at all times, for all guests and staff.

- Individuals may NOT self-isolate in a place where they will be in contact with vulnerable people, such as seniors and individuals with underlying health conditions.
- Isolated individuals may NOT use any common hotel areas or implements, including ice and vending machines.

For more information about self-isolation for COVID-19, please see: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>

- As of March 25, 2020, all persons arriving in Canada from abroad quarantine and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days under the *Quarantine Act*.
- As of April 14, 2020, all international travellers returning to B.C. are required by law to self-isolate for 14 days and complete a self-isolation plan. Travellers who do not have a self-isolation plan, are not able to arrange adequate support, or do not have a location to self-isolate will be directed to provincial accommodation, which may include hotels.

Learn more at the Government of British Columbia's Self-Isolation on Return to B.C. website:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/self-isolation-on-return>

Testing

Testing for COVID-19 is recommended for anyone with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, even mild ones. If an individual has no symptoms, they do not require a test. A health care provider may also decide whether a person requires testing. The BC-COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool can be used to determine if further assessment is needed: <https://bc.thrive.health/>

Learn more here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing>

General Precautions

- Stay at home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- Practice diligent hand hygiene at all times.
 - Wash your hands regularly with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content.
 - Antibacterial soap is NOT required for COVID-19.
- Practice cough etiquette. Cough into your elbow or cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you sneeze. Immediately dispose of all used tissues in an appropriate waste bin and wash your hands right away.
- Maintain a physical distance of two metres from others at all times: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/physical-distancing>
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Do not share food, drinks, utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices, joints or bongs.

Further Precautions

- Post signs in your facility to encourage hand hygiene among all staff and guests: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/signage-posters>
- Post signs in your facility promoting physical distancing: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_PhysicalDistancingPoster.pdf
- Encourage staff to avoid touching personal items of guests, such as luggage.
- Install physical barriers (e.g., plexiglass sneeze guards) in locations such as reception desks.
- Install markers on the floor (2 metres apart) to support physical distancing in locations such as reception desks.
- Wherever possible, provide guests with single-use personal items (e.g., soaps, shampoos, sugar packets, creamers). To reduce waste when guests exit the premises, consider limiting the quantities of items provided to guests at any one time.
- Staff should wear clean clothing that is specific to and only worn while on the job.

- Staff should change into a separate set of street clothes before leaving work.
- Work clothing should be placed in a bag and laundered after each shift.

Supporting Guests in Self-Isolation

- Advise guests in self-isolation not to use any common hotel areas, equipment or appliances, including ice and vending machines. Close ice and vending machines if required.
- Support self-isolated guests to have food delivered to them.
 - If on-site food service is not offered, provide information on local grocery stores and restaurants offering delivery.
 - If food service and food delivery options are not available, asymptomatic guests in self-isolation can leave to obtain groceries^a.
- Support self-isolated guests to procure prescriptions and medications.
 - Provide information on local pharmacies offering delivery.
 - If pharmacy delivery is not available, asymptomatic guests in self-isolation can leave to obtain prescriptions and medications^a.
- Asymptomatic self-isolated guests can leave the hotel to attend critical appointments^a.
- Please note: Self-isolating guests who are also essential workers are subject to different guidance.
 - Learn more about Guidance for Essential Workers Returning to B.C. here:
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/gdx/orders-april-10/covid19_travel_guidelines_for_essential_workers_april_10_final.pdf

C. Environmental Cleaning

Regular cleaning of all common areas, guest rooms and work rooms is essential to protect the health and safety of guests and staff from COVID-19.

General Cleaning Measures

- Train staff on routine cleaning and sanitizing procedures for high touch surfaces, as well as appropriate laundry and linen handling procedures.
- Ensure daily cleaning and disinfection of all common areas and surfaces.
- Ensure high touch surfaces are cleaned twice daily. This includes doorknobs and handles, telephones, elevator panels and buttons, light switches, tables, chairs and work surfaces in staff rooms, desktops, washrooms, point of sale devices and menus.
- Clean visibly dirty surfaces before disinfecting, unless stated otherwise on the product instructions. Cleaning refers to the removal of visible dirt, grime and impurities. Cleaning does not kill germs but helps remove them from the surface.

^a Provincial Health Officer of British Columbia. "Travellers and Employers Order". Section A (4).
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-travellers-employers.pdf>

- Use clean cloths, paper towels or wipes to clean and disinfect surfaces.
 - Put cleaning and disinfectant solutions into clean buckets for use.
 - To avoid contaminating your cleaning solution, do NOT re-dip dirty cloths back into the cleaning solution. Use clean cloths each time. This may require using a larger number of cloths than normal.
 - Immediately discard paper towels and disposable wipes after use.
- Avoid the use of spray bottles or pressurized sprayers that might aerosolize contaminants.
- Use a disinfectant that has a Drug Identification Number (DIN). Follow the instructions on the product label for dilution, contact time and safe use.
- If commercial or household cleaning products are not readily available, you can prepare a bleach and water solution with 20 ml of unscented household bleach per 980 ml of water. When using the bleach and water solution, allow surface to air dry naturally. Make a fresh bleach solution each day. For more information, please see: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf
- Floors and walls should be kept visibly clean and free of spills, dust and debris.
- Empty and clean garbage cans in public areas regularly.
- Items that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected should be removed (e.g., toys, sculptures).

Housekeeping During a Guest's Stay

- Housekeeping staff must practice diligent hand hygiene at all times during their shift.
- Do NOT provide housekeeping service within guest rooms during their stay.
- Ensure that an adequate supply of clean towels, toilet paper, plain hand soap and shampoo is available prior to guests entering their room.
- Leave fresh linens, toiletries and cleaning supplies outside the door of guest rooms. Provide these items at a frequency that maintains good hygiene.
- Provide a linen or plastic bag for the guest to place their dirty linens in, and a plastic bag for their other waste.
 - Advise guests to tie laundry and waste bags shut and leave them outside their door for collection.
 - To minimize the amount of time dirty linen and waste is sitting in hallways, advise guests on a time at which items should be put out for collection.

Housekeeping After a Guest's Stay

- All guest rooms must be fully cleaned and disinfected after every use.
- Ensure staff do NOT enter guest rooms until authorized.
- To allow for adequate air exchange within rooms, staff should wait three (3) hours after a guest has left the room before entering for housekeeping^b.
- Cleaners must practice diligent hand hygiene before entering and after leaving each guest room.
 - If gloves are used, ensure a new pair is used for each guest room.
 - Proper hand hygiene must be performed after removing gloves.
- Staff should use the standard Personal Protective Equipment (e.g., eye protection, mask) required for the regular hazards encountered through their normal course of work (e.g., handling chemicals).
- Review all work procedures to minimize all opportunities for staff contact with splashes and spraying.
- Use clean cloths, paper towels or wipes to clean and disinfect surfaces.
 - Put cleaning and disinfectant solutions into clean buckets for use.
 - To avoid contaminating your cleaning solution, do NOT re-dip dirty cloths back into the cleaning solution. Use clean cloths each time. This may require using a larger number of cloths than normal.
 - Immediately discard paper towels and disposable wipes after use.
- Avoid the use of spray bottles or pressurized sprayers that might aerosolize contaminants.
- Use a disinfectant that has a Drug Identification Number (DIN). Follow the instructions on the product label for dilution, contact time and safe use.
- If commercial or household cleaning products are not readily available, you can prepare a bleach and water solution with 20 ml of unscented household bleach per 980 ml of water. When using the bleach and water solution, allow surface to air dry naturally. Make a fresh bleach solution each day. For more information, please see: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf
- Complete a thorough cleaning of all hard surfaces. Special attention should be given to frequently touched items such as toilets, sinks, faucets, doorknobs, light switches, telephones, remote controls, bar fridges and garbage cans.
- Remove all cloth items (e.g., sheets and towels). Take all dirty linens and towels directly to the laundry.
- Steam clean fabric items that cannot be laundered (e.g., plush chairs and drapes).
- Empty all garbage containers.
- Discard all items left in the room by guests.
- Discard all single-use items and remnants, even if they seem unused or untouched. This includes, but is not limited to, toilet paper, soap, shampoo, toothpaste and sugar packets.

^b Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. "Environmental Infection Control Guidelines". Part IV. Appendix B. Air. (2003). <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/appendix/air.html#tableb1>

- Remove ALL reusable glassware and dishes from the room, including all dishes that appear untouched or unused. Take all items directly to the kitchen area for dishwashing.
- For carpets:
 - Vacuums: Only use vacuum cleaners equipped with exhaust filters , preferably HEPA filters, for carpeted areas. Built-in vacuums are ideal. If your vacuum does not have an exhaust filter, do NOT vacuum the room^c.
 - Steam Cleaners: Carpets can be cleaned using a steam cleaner which reaches a minimum temperature of 71°C, unless the floor coverings are not heat tolerant.

Waste Management

- Wherever possible, waste should be handled by a designated person or small, designated team.
- Staff should wear disposable gloves to remove waste from guest rooms and common areas.
- Ensure staff remove gloves and perform hand hygiene immediately after handling and disposing of waste.
- A single, sturdy, leak-resistant garbage bag is sufficient for containing waste.
- If a garbage bag is punctured or contaminated, it should be placed into a second bag.
- All bags should be securely closed and immediately placed in the main disposal bin for the facility.

Laundry

- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry and discard after each use. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- If reusable gloves are worn, gloves should be dedicated for handling dirty laundry and should not be used for other purposes. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- Do NOT shake dirty laundry. This minimizes the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air¹.
- Place dirty laundry directly into a linen bag without sorting. Do not overfill bags.
- Clearly mark laundry bins as 'clean' or 'dirty'. Ensure dirty laundry only contacts dirty laundry bins, and clean laundry only contacts clean laundry bins.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to manufacturer's guidance. Consider using a liner that can be laundered.
- Clean and sanitize the front loading area of washing machines frequently.
- Wash and dry items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest possible water settings. Dry all items thoroughly.

^c Government of British Columbia. "British Columbia's Pandemic Influenza Response Plan (2012)". Appendix J. September 2012. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/bc-pandemic-influenza-private-physican-office-infection-control-guidelines-2012.pdf>

D. Food and Beverage Services

Hygienic and safe food and beverage services are maintained by following routine guidance in the *Food Safety Act* and the Food Premises Regulation.

If your establishment includes a restaurant and/or liquor services, you are required to follow the Orders of the Provincial Public Health Officer relevant to your establishment:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-guidance-food-beverage-sector.pdf>.

Up-to-date information for food businesses can be found on the BCCDC webpage here:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/employers-businesses/food-businesses>

Food Handlers

- Food handlers must regularly wash hands, even if they have no disease symptoms. This includes (but is not limited to) before starting, before preparing or handling food, after handling waste, after using the toilet, after blowing their nose, sneezing and coughing, after eating, drinking or smoking, and after handling money or credit cards.
- Food handlers must avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

General Food Service Precautions

- Follow safe food practices, such as protecting foods from contamination, minimizing direct handling of food and preventing cross-contamination of foods.
- Discard any foods that may have been contaminated from coughs or sneezes.
- Clean and sanitize utensils and surfaces in the kitchen regularly using standard sanitizing solutions (e.g., QUATs or chlorine). Follow the instructions on the product label.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces and high-touch areas.
- Wash/sanitize used dishes using regular procedures (e.g., sanitizing dishwasher)
- Do not offer buffets and other self-service options.
- Do not provide common water coolers or lobby snacks for guests.
- Encourage guest and staff hand hygiene before all meals. Make plain soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer available to support this activity, where possible.
- Regularly clean and disinfect equipment used for handling payments.

Delivering and Picking Up Food Trays

- Do NOT provide food service within guest or staff rooms during their stay. For in-house food service and food delivery from off-site, deliver and pick up food trays outside of guest rooms, while the room doors are kept shut.
- Gloves are not required when delivering or picking up food trays.

- Proper hand hygiene *must* be practiced before delivering and after picking up food trays.
- Do NOT transport food on carts that have used dishes on them.
- Regularly clean and disinfect carts used for transporting food and picking up dirty dishes.

Dishwashing

- Dishwashing practices must adhere to BC's Food Premises Regulation:
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/11_210_99
- Dishwashing temperatures must be monitored in a log, per your Food Safety Plan.
- Used dishware should be washed immediately.
- Disposable dishes are not required to stop COVID-19. Regular food trays, dishes and utensils can be used for guests.
- Manually scrape off food from plates prior to beginning dishwashing. Minimize the use of sprayers to remove food and residue.
- Regularly clean and disinfect carts used for transporting food and picking up dirty dishes.
- Clean and sanitize all dish buckets (dirty and clean) after each shift.
- Maintain separation between clean and dirty dishes in the dish washing area.

E. Spas and Salons, Pools, Fitness Centres and Playgrounds

- Personal service establishments including health spas, massage parlours and salons were ordered closed by the Provincial Health Officer on March 21, 2020.
- Close all on-site pools, whirlpools, wading pools, hot tubs, water spray parks, saunas, fitness centres, playgrounds and play areas.

F. Staff Health

The guidance in this document supports staff safety while performing their duties, should a person with COVID-19 stay in the facility.

The following information can further support your staff regarding COVID-19:

- Advise staff to monitor their symptoms daily, report respiratory illness and not to return to work for at least 10 days following the onset of fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue and loss of appetite. Advise staff to use the COVID-19 self-assessment tool at [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine if further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is needed.
 - Staff can contact 8-1-1 if further health advice is required and 9-1-1 if it is an emergency.
 - Staff can learn more about how to manage their illness here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/if-you-are-sick>
- Ensure your employee illness policy is up-to-date and communicated to all staff immediately.

- If an employee reports they are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 and have been at the workplace, clean and disinfect all areas where that person has worked.
- If staff live in facility-provided housing, develop a plan with designated isolation areas for ill individuals.
- If staff need to be isolated, they should be provided a separate room and bathroom wherever possible and they should follow all self-isolation guidance: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>.
- All staff must practice physical distancing to reduce the risk of getting sick. Avoid close contact (within 2 meters) when possible with other staff and guests. This includes employee breaks.

G. Communication, Signage and Posters

Provide information to guests and staff on the following topics relating to COVID-19:

- Symptoms of COVID-19: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>
- B.C.'s COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool can help determine the need for further assessment: <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- Non-medical information about COVID-19 is available 7:30am-8:00pm, 7 days a week at the following toll-free number: 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).
- Contact HealthLinkBC and 8-1-1 for health advice on COVID-19 (translation services are available).

Signage and posters can be useful as a guide for guests and staff.

- Information and posters for **handwashing** is located on the BCCDC website here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/hand-washing>
- Information and posters for **respiratory/cough etiquette** is located on the BCCDC website here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID19-Prevention.pdf>
- Place signage on front doors telling staff NOT to enter the premises if they are feeling ill. Direct these individuals the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool: <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- Information and posters for **self-isolation and self-monitoring**: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>

References

1. Alberta Health Services. "COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Hotels, Hostels, and Inns". <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-environmental-guidance-for-hotels-kbk.pdf>
2. Vancouver Island Health Authority. "Norovirus and the Hospitality Industry: a guide for hotel operators". www.viha.ca/mho/disease/
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Appendix B. Air – Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities" (2003). <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/appendix/air.html#tableb1>
4. BC Ministry of Health. "Joint statement on Province of B.C.'s COVID-19 response, latest updates". March 21, 2020. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0101-000538>