



Protecting Workers at Large Industrial Camps During the COVID-19 Pandemic

April 28, 2020



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INTRODUCTION

This guidance applies to employers, operators, employees, and contractors working in the natural resource sector, and living in employer-provided large industrial camps during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The British Columbia Provincial Health Officer (PHO) released a new [Order for Industrial Camps on April 23, 2020](#). This document assists employers to develop an operational protocol that helps employers implement this order, and other orders, notices, and guidance issued by PHO Office.

Workplaces and businesses that implement advice and guidance provided by public health officials significantly contribute to breaking the chain of transmission of COVID-19 amongst employers, employees, contractors, clients and communities.

The advice here complements the guidance prepared by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC). You are to take practical steps to maintain your operation during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) is the best source for COVID-19 health information.

This guide cannot address all the circumstances that may put an employee, contractor, or client at risk of contracting COVID-19. It provides advice and key resources to help employers prevent the risk and spread of COVID-19 on work sites, as well as into communities. However, employers are encouraged to conduct a workplace risk assessment for COVID-19, as outlined below, that is specific to the business and work camp environment.

SECTION 1: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COVID-19

What is COVID-19 and how is it spread?

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses found mostly in animals. In humans, they can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).
- The disease caused by the new coronavirus has been named COVID-19.
- COVID-19 has been declared a global pandemic.
- COVID-19 is a reportable disease and the local Medical Health Officer must be notified if there is an outbreak or suspicion of an outbreak.
- Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person talks, coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter through these droplets through the eyes, nose or throat if you are in close contact.
- The virus is not known to be airborne (e.g. transmitted through the particles floating in the air) and it is not something that comes in through the skin.
- It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. That's why it is recommended to cough or sneeze into your elbow and wash your hands regularly.
- COVID-19 is a reportable disease and the local Medical Health Officer must be notified if there is an outbreak, or suspicion of an outbreak.

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 cough, sneezing, fever, sore throat and difficulty breathing. Additional symptoms may include muscle aches, fatigue, headache, loss of appetite, chills, runny nose, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, loss of sense of smell or taste.
- 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.

How can employers and employees break the chain of transmission of COVID-19?

- Implement the guidance and orders of the Provincial Health Officer.
- **Practice good hygiene and cleaning including frequent handwashing as outlined below.**
- **Practice Physical Distancing:** at least 2 meters (m) distance between people should be maintained. Camp operations should take practical steps to ensure physical distancing is maintained or enhancing protection through other means where physical distancing is not practical.
- For additional information about COVID-19 refer to the BC Centre for Disease Control at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>.
- For non-medical information about COVID-19 you can also call 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319), 7:30am-8pm, 7 days a week.

Notifying the Health Authority of an outbreak

- You must notify the local Medical Health Officer if there is an outbreak or if there is a suspicion of an outbreak.
- An outbreak is when two or more cases of fever and/or respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal illness) are detected.
- **To reach your local Medical Health Officer, contact:**

Fraser Health Authority
Phone: (604) 870-7903
Email: HPLand@fraserhealth.ca

Interior Health Authority
Phone: (250) 851-7305
Email: workcamps@interiorhealth.ca

Island Health Authority
Phone: (250) 519-3401
Fax: (250) 519-3402
Email: gateway_office@viha.ca

Northern Health - Communicable Disease Hub
Phone (during business hours): 1-855-565-2990
On-call Medical Health Officer after hours
phone: 1-250-565-2000, press 7 and ask for the Medical Health Officer on call

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
Phone: (604) 675-3800 Manager on call
Fax: (604) 736-8651
Email: EHVC@vch.ca

SECTION 2: STEPS FOR EMPLOYERS AND OPERATORS

1. Conduct a COVID-19 Workplace Risk Assessment for your work camp

Workplaces and businesses that implement advice and guidance provided by public health officials can prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19 amongst employees, contractors, and clients. Note that all employers and contractors that operate industrial camps, are now required to develop and implement an **Infection Prevention and Control Protocol** (Protocol) and appoint a Co-ordinator(s) for your operation(s) responsible for oversight for the implementation of the Protocol. It will be important that your Co-ordinator contributes to and understands the Protocol that you are required to create and implement to prevent and control the transmission of COVID-19.

Working through all sections of this document, *Protecting Workers at Large Industrial Camps During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, will help you identify the **risks** in your operation and guide actions to prevent and control the transmission of COVID-19. Addressing the risks through the guidance in this document as well as additional resources on the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), will assist in developing your Protocol for workers and employers.

The Protocol should identify the actions that will be taken to reduce the number of social interactions between workers and employers, as well as nearby communities, physical distancing or enhancing protection through other means where physical distancing is not practical, increased hygiene practices (outlined below), and cleaning and disinfecting high touch point areas. In circumstances where interactions are necessary such as for grocery shopping, it will be important to maintain physical distancing and practice good hygiene. Designate employees to the same small working crew or work pod for as long as practical will also reduce social interactions. Like a family unit, this work pod will ensure close contact only occurs within a select small crew.

Additional Resources:

- Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>.
- WorkSafeBC provides an exposure control plan guide at: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/exposure-control-plans/exposure-control-plan-for-infectious-disease-for-occupational-first-aid-attendants?lang=en>.

2. Employee Education

On the first day of work and on a regular basis after that, all employees must participate in a COVID-19 training and education session provided by the employer. Training and education must also be provided to all contractors, service providers, visitors, or other parties that enter the worksite.

Training should include safety measures and procedures, physical distancing, proper hygiene practices, and monitoring and reporting illness.

Training and education will be available in both English and the language best suited for the employees (e.g., French, Punjabi, Spanish). Training will be offered by video or in-person and may include additional written materials. If training is done in person, ensure that people gather in small groups of 5 to 10, and that physical distancing of 2 metres between members can be maintained.

Additional Resources:

COVID-19 resources translated into various languages are available from:

- HealthLinkBC: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- BCCDC website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/translated-content>

3. Increased Hygiene and Cleaning Practices for Employers, Employees, and Contractors

All Employees and contractors must be trained on increased hygiene practices and cleaning. Limiting potential transmission of COVID 19 requires all employers and employees to practice increased hygiene and increased cleaning. Employees must be educated on measures to prevent infection and transmission. Employers must display these good practices while with employees, including diligent hand washing with plain soap and water or use of hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol.

Employers should support increased hygiene by reminding workers to cough and sneeze into elbows, avoid touching one's face with unwashed hands, and dispose of used tissues immediately, and hand washing frequently with plain soap and water or use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol.

As part of the daily safety briefing, employees will be reminded of measures to prevent infection and transmission including that frequent handwashing and avoidance of face touching prevents infection transmission.

Additional signage requirements:

- Posters and printed reminders must be displayed in conspicuous places.
- Display posters that illustrate to:
 - cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough;
 - dispose of used tissues immediately;
 - wash your hands; and,
 - avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Hand hygiene poster: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/covid-19-handwashing-poster.pdf>

Guidance for Handwashing

Employers must provide a suitable number of handwashing stations (see Appendix A: Hand-washing Stations) for the size of the work site and post signage that identifies their location or provide hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol. Antibacterial soap is not required for COVID-19.

Post signs to instruct employees and other staff and reinforce training on how everyone can protect themselves and others at the camp and common areas. Consider posting signs at entrances and in all types of washrooms (fixed or portable).

- Handwashing stations with soap and water must be made available to employees in the field, as well as immediately outside or inside all buildings that employees are working in or eating food.

- Handwashing stations may be either permanent or portable where there is a lack of pressurized water. Wash stations should be checked, cleaned, and restocked with supplies three times a shift.
- Soap and water hand-washing stations can be supplemented with waterless hand sanitizers with a minimum 60% alcohol where appropriate. For example, where supplies are available, each employee can be provided with hand sanitizer for personal use that is replaced prior to each shift.
- Handwashing periodically throughout the day and especially before and after break times, after using the washroom, or when work stations are changed or tools are switched must be encouraged as much as possible.
- Hand washing instructions and reminders will be posted in both English and the language appropriate for the employees at all handwashing stations.

Guidance for Increased Cleaning

All common areas and surfaces should be cleaned at the start and end of each day and after any potential contamination that may occur throughout the day. Examples of common areas and surfaces include washrooms, shared offices, common tables, desks, light switches, handrails, tent flaps in common areas, and door handles. Regular household cleaners are effective against COVID-19, following the instructions on the label.

Cleaning Common Areas

- Common areas and surfaces should be cleaned at the end of each day.
- Employees must not share items such as eating utensils, towels, glasses.
- [BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Common Areas](#)
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Prevention poster](#)
- [BCCDC Hand hygiene poster](#)

Practice Proper Waste Management

Proper collection and removal of garbage is crucial to reducing the risk of disease transmission. This includes wearing disposable gloves to remove waste from rooms and common areas and using sturdy, leak resistant garbage bags for containing waste.

- Create a waste removal schedule
- Ensure there are sturdy, leak resistant garbage bags
- Provide disposable gloves to anyone handling garbage
- Ensure anyone handling waste removes gloves and performs hand hygiene immediately after handling and disposing of waste.
- If a garbage bag is punctured or contaminated, it should be placed into a second bag.

4. Physical Distancing

Employers, camp operators, employees, and contractors will practice physical distancing and other public health recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing of at least 2 meters (m) should be maintained, at all times.

Employers should take practical steps to ensure physical distancing is maintained in the following areas:

- while being transported from home to the workplace or between work locations;

- while working;
- during breaks or while in communal spaces, or at any other time where employees may gather;
- during off-duty hours, employees must continue to practice physical distancing; and
- during all group activities including site meetings shall be held in open spaces or outside. In situations where maintaining physical distance of 2m is difficult, minimize workers' time in that situation and provide a physical barrier and wear masks.

Creating Work Pods or Crews

There will be situations on a day to day basis where physical distancing between workers is not practical for extended periods of time (e.g. travel to site). 'Work pods' can be thought of like a family unit, this work pod will ensure close contact only occurs within a select small group. Designating employees to the same small working group or work pod for as long as practical can help reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading to employees and others in the operation.

5. Transportation for Employees – Hygiene, Physical Distancing, Reducing Social Interactions

Employees must work with the Co-ordinators regarding travel to and from the accommodations or worksite as outlined in the Industrial Camp Order.

In situations where employees are required to travel together in vehicles to the work site, employees will travel in a designated vehicle for their work pod. The size of this work pod must not exceed the total number of seats in the crew vehicle. Please read the section on Guidance for Situations where Maintaining Physical Distance is Difficult to protect workers when they cannot maintain physical distancing.

Proper precautions should be exercised when travelling to and from accommodation and work sites, including frequent handwashing and avoiding touching one's own face, maintaining physical distancing, cleaning and disinfecting high touch points like door handles, and minimizing contact with crowds and public places.

Ensure safety protocols are in place in case employees who typically travel alone have a reporting process so that employers know whether they have made it to and from the site safely.

Cleaning Vehicles

At the start of each working day and throughout the day, drivers clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the vehicles using an alcohol-based cleaner or disinfecting wipes/spray and paper towel; if these are unavailable, use soap and water.

High touch or key contact points include:

- door handles (inside and out);
- window buttons;
- steering wheel and controls;
- wiper and turn signal handle;
- shifter;
- dash controls + buttons;
- ventilation grilles and knobs;
- rear-view mirror;

- armrests;
- grab handles, seat adjusters; and
- seat belt buckles
- radio and communication devices

When more than one worker is traveling, physical distancing practices apply. Shared travel with more than one person should be minimized. Employers may use the following options:

Using Buses & Vans – Physical Distancing

- Load and offload passengers by the rear doors if possible or establish a rule that the driver is last-on, first-off of the bus.
- Allow for enough time for passengers to disembark from vehicles to allow for adequate distancing and prevent crowding.
- Create spacing between riders such as staggering where people sit (e.g. aisle to window, alternating per row).
- Consider installing physical barriers that can minimize spread of droplets.
- Handwashing facilities or sanitizer must be made available before and after the bus ride.

Using Trucks & Cars – Physical Distancing

- Where possible limit a single driver in a conventional truck (i.e., single cab).
- A driver and one passenger may travel together in vehicles with two rows of seating. The passenger should sit in the back seat on the opposite side as the driver.
- The only exception to this is the work pod as described above.
- Hands should be washed thoroughly before and after the truck ride and common surfaces should be wiped down before and at the end of each trip.

6. Guidance for Employees While Working – Physical Distancing and Increased Hygiene

- Where possible, employees should be assigned to individual workstations or an area of the field that provides 2 metres of separation from other individuals.
- Where 2 metres separation is not possible, workers should wear masks, and a physical barrier may be constructed in collaboration with the occupational health and safety committee (where one exists).
- Workers should always ensure that hands are washed with plain soap and water or a hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol before and after work activity.
- In situations where employees are required to work together in close proximity to complete tasks, the employer will utilize ‘work pods’ as described previously. These ‘work pods’ will also include camp and kitchen staff as well as field worker/transport. The number of staff in each work pod should be kept to a minimum and be six or less whenever possible. These ‘work pods’ should stay together for as long as possible during the project.
- The employer must keep a record of which individuals are working in ‘work pods’ and should be maintained in the same quarters in cases where workers are communally housed in rental accommodations such as motels.
- Workers should NOT be reassigned between ‘work pods’. When there is an urgent and unavoidable need to reassign workers to another work pod, the Coordinator should review the risks to determine the impact on the risk of transmission of COVID 19, prior to making the decision.

- A current list of all designated ‘work pods’, and their members shall be maintained in the workplace along with a record of any reassignment of members among those ‘work pods’.

Additional Resources:

- WorkSafeBC, COVID-19, What workers should do: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/health-and-safety/what-workers-should-do>.

7. Guidance for Employees During Breaks or while in Communal Spaces –

Consider how to maintain physical distancing, decrease crowding, and reduce social interactions including maintaining small, and consistent groupings of people like ‘work pods’.

- Start/stop times, breaks should be staggered where possible to minimize employees congregating.
- Employers should reduce in-person meetings, other gatherings and hold site meetings in open spaces or outside.
- Worker gatherings of any size be structured so that those present can maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from each other.
- Encourage employees and staff to wash hands: before and after breaks, after going to the washroom, and before preparing or eating food.
- If employees or staff are sick, they should be in self isolation and not preparing or handling food for others.
- Encourage employees not to share food or unwashed plates, cups or utensils. Disposable dishware is NOT required for COVID-19.
- Encourage employees to practise respiratory etiquette:
 - Cough or sneeze into elbow sleeve.
 - Dispose tissues in garbage cans.
 - Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20-30 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content.
 - Avoid touching one’s face.
- Employees must practice [physical distancing as directed by the BC CDC while on breaks](#).

8. Guidance for Situations where Maintaining Physical Distance of 2m is Difficult

There are situations where it is not possible to maintain production while respecting the 2m separation. In preparation for COVID-19, please only buy personal protection equipment (PPE) if it is needed for the normal, reoccurring hazards associated with the job (e.g., certified pesticide applications). The following guidance provides employers methods to achieve physical distancing when it is difficult to do so:

- An impervious barrier (“Physical barrier”) can be installed in collaboration with the joint health and safety committee between workstations (people). The barrier must be something that prevents one person’s cough or sneeze from contacting another person. The barrier must be made of a non-porous material that can be effectively disinfected. Regular household cleaning products with a Drug Identification Number can be used to clean the physical barrier as they are effective against COVID-19. Follow the instructions on the product label.
- Barriers will be site specific and must be installed in such a way as to minimize risk of cross contamination (an example of this are Plexiglass barriers that some retailers have installed to protect cashiers in retail stores).

- If physical barriers cannot be erected on a work site, workers should wear a clean cloth mask or covering across the nose and mouth (e.g. a bandana) to minimize spread of droplets onto common work surfaces especially in instances where there is continuous close quarter work tasks (e.g., two or more people in an indoor or confined space).

Also see - [Face Masks](#) – additional cautionary information from BCCDC

9. Guidance on Handling Tools and Equipment

- Where possible, each employee should utilize only their own tools throughout the duration of their employment to minimize contact spread of COVID-19.
- Where it is not possible to provide personal tools, the shared tools and equipment must be wiped down and cleaned with a disinfecting agent such as disposable wipes or a diluted bleach solution between uses by different employees. Rubber gloves should be worn while handling bleach solutions and the area should be well ventilated.
- Employees must receive training on cleaning tools and must be offered assistance to ensure compliance and understanding of handwashing and hygiene.
- Employees who use specialized PPE and are properly trained in its use (e.g. employees certified and trained to use PPE because of their normal work role) should not share PPE with other employees. Employers must establish a labeling system to help with organization of this specialized equipment.
- Employees who wear leather gloves or other impermeable gloves as hand protection during work may share tools and equipment without disinfecting the tools between each user and must continue to clean and wash hands to break the chain of infection. Leather gloves may have droplets on them and could transmit infection to another worker. Assign and label leather gloves to ensure each pair remains with one employee.
- In situations where employees are required to work together in close proximity to complete tasks, the employer will designate employees into 'work pods'.

10. Guidance on COVID-19 and Worker Accommodation

This guidance also applies to any accommodation that may be housing any employee. Potential accommodation scenarios include tents, motels/hotels, and private accommodation.

Consider how to maintain physical distancing, decrease crowding, and reduce social interactions. Maintaining small and consistent groupings of people will help prevent and control the potential transmission of COVID-19.

Camp Preparations and Camp Hygiene

Physical distancing general guidance - This will require a variety of actions to decrease crowding and social interactions.

- Gatherings of any size be structured so that those present can maintain a distance of 2 metres from each other.
- Stagger mealtimes where practical and minimize people using the kitchen at one time, opening additional dining areas, and cancelling group activities.
- Reduce in-person indoor meetings and other gatherings and hold site meetings in open spaces or outside.
- Shared accommodations should be arranged in such a fashion that beds are at least 2m apart and head-to-toe where possible. If beds cannot be at least 2m apart, use temporary barriers between beds, such as curtains, to prevent droplet spread while sleeping, and sleep head-to-toe.

- None of the residents in a shared accommodation can be ill or meet a criterion that requires self-isolation requirements. Any employees that are ill or require self-isolation must be immediately moved into separate facilities, otherwise all employees in the residence would have to be placed in self-isolation.
- The employer shall ensure that reusable eating utensils and dishes (cups, plates, bowls, forks, knives, spoons) are provided for all employees
- All eating utensils and dishes shall be cleaned by designated kitchen or cleaning staff, according to the 4-step process outlined in the BC Guidelines for Industrial Camps Regulation, that includes pre-rinsing, washing, soaking in a bleach solution, and air-drying.

Additional Resources:

[BC Guidelines for Industrial Camps Regulation \(October 1, 2017\)](#)

General Living Space-Cleaning protocols

Cleaning Protocols – Common areas

- Health and safety coordinators shall be established in each camp and crew to oversee implementation of [health and safety requirements](#) related to COVID-19.
- Cleaning protocols will be created and posted throughout all facilities. Use links for posters found at the beginning of this document.
- Ensure daily cleaning and disinfection of all common areas and surfaces.
- Cleaning products will be readily available, monitored daily and restocked daily as required.
- High touch surfaces such as counters, handles, control switches will be cleaned a minimum of twice per day with regular household cleaning products, disposable wipes or a diluted bleach solution. This includes food storage and preparation surfaces, serving areas, drinking stations, waste disposal facilities, tables, chairs, work surfaces, desktops and washroom facilities. Follow the directions on the product label.
- 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.
- Use a disinfectant that has a Drug Identification Number and that it is effective against viruses. Follow the instructions on the product label.
- If commercial or household cleaning products are not readily available, you can prepare a bleach and water solution with 500 parts per million chlorine solution: 1:100 [e.g. mix 10 ml household bleach (5.25%) with 990 ml water] When using the bleach and water solution, the surface must remain wet for at least one minute. For more information, please see the [BCCDC guidance on cleaning](#).
- 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.
- Employees are required to disinfect shared areas (kitchen & bathroom counters, handles and control switches) after each use.
- Post signs to encourage hand hygiene among all staff and guests using the [BCCDC's Signage and Posters](#).
- Put up signage in your facility [promoting physical distancing](#).

Living Spaces

- Shower facilities and toilets must be provided in numbers meeting or exceeding the numbers stated in Schedule 2 of the [BC Industrial Camps Regulation](#) onsite when overnight camping is provided. Additional facilities should be provided to ensure the availability of dedicated facilities for workers in isolation without reducing the minimal number of facilities available to other workers.
- Consider supplying shower facilities onsite when overnight camping is provided.
- Locate camps in locations with adequate drainage.

Food Service

- Camp food service and preparation practices and procedures must follow [BC Guidelines for Industrial Camps Regulation](#)
- Buffet-style serving systems must not be utilized whenever such systems can practically be replaced with other systems such as kitchen staff serving food to workers.
- All small food items and snacks should be individually wrapped whenever possible or made available with systems to prevent common touching of either food items or utensils.
- Only kitchen workers and supervisory staff shall be permitted to enter food preparation or storage areas.
- Signs shall be posted to limit the number of people permitted in the dining area and any other common areas.
- Use a staggered meal schedule to support physical distancing and to limit the number of individuals in the dining area at any given time.
- Meals should be delivered to the outside of rooms of any workers that are in isolation.
- All employees must wash their hands immediately prior to entering any dining or food preparation area.

11. Important Information Regarding First Nations and First Nations Health Centres

- Indigenous populations face heightened health risks due to lower health outcomes compared with non-Indigenous Canadians. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit populations disproportionately face health disparities linked to the social determinants of health (i.e. social, economic, cultural, political inequities). As such, all employees must respect any precautions being taken to avoid carrying this virus into First Nations communities.
- Employers who are travelling to or established near a First Nations community, must connect with regional health authorities to be advised of any current precautions being taken in the region.
- It is recommended that individuals living at large industrial camps do not seek medical care from a local First Nations health center. There are inadequate resources to sustain an influx of external cases.
- If an employee who is symptomatic wishes to return to their home in a First Nation community, the First Nation health center should be notified to determine that sufficient resources are in place to support isolation of the individual on arrival.

12. Physical Distancing and local Communities

- Facilities and services (including meals, communication systems, laundry) should be organized on site and provided to enable workers to remain in camps on days off whenever possible, and personal purchases can be arranged without workers visiting nearby communities.
- Traveling to a grocery store or other necessary public establishment should be limited to one person per group who will also buy food and essentials for others.

- Post signage and reminders for employees and staff to regularly wash hands, practice coughing etiquette, maintain physical distancing in the community and avoid congregating in community settings.

13. Face Masks – additional cautionary information from BCCDC

The BCCDC states that:

- The use of a homemade mask should only be considered by members of the public who are symptomatic or caring for someone who is symptomatic as an interim measure if commercial masks are not available.
- It may be less effective to wear a mask in the community when a person is not sick themselves.
- Masks may give a person a false sense of security and are likely to increase the number of times a person will touch their own face (e.g., to adjust the mask).
- Any mask, no matter how efficient at filtration or how good the seal, will have minimal effect if it is not used together with other preventive measures, such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing.

If you decide to use and make a mask under these circumstances, here is some information to improve the effectiveness of homemade masks:

- some materials are better than others. Use clean and stretchy 100% cotton t-shirts or pillowcases;
- ensure the mask fits tightly around the nose and mouth; material that allows droplets to pass through will not work;
- the mask should be comfortable, or you won't want to wear it consistently;
- if the mask makes it a lot harder to breathe, then the seal will not be as good, and the mask will be less effective; and
- the mask should be cleaned or changed often.

Also see - [Face Masks](#) – additional cautionary information from BCCDC

SECTION 3: WHAT THE EMPLOYER NEEDS TO PUT IN PLACE TO ASSESS AND MONITOR EMPLOYEE HEALTH

1. Employer and Employee Health Self-assessment

Employees must be instructed on how to complete self assessment tools to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.

- Employees who have indicated symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving to the work site or accommodation site, will not be able to work as per a Provincial Health Officer approved self assessment guideline.
- Employees must complete a [self-assessment tool](#) at the start and end of each shift.
- Employees who determine they may have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 based on the [self assessment tool](#), will remove themselves from the work environment and initiate isolation, immediately report to the Co-ordinator, while ensuring physical distancing of 2m (e.g., reporting by phone).
- Employees should be trained on how to report symptoms and immediately access required assistance. For more information visit BCCDC's website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/employers-businesses>.

Further details can be found on BCCDC website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>.

The B.C. COVID-19 self-assessment tool is available online at: <https://bc.thrive.health/>.

2. Employer responsibility for screening of workers upon arrival and staff health

- Ensure your employee illness policy is up-to-date and communicated to all staff immediately.
- Employers must assess all employees and contractors prior to proceeding to the work site and/or work camp.
- Employers must notify workers to complete a Self-Assessment Tool to determine if further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is needed;
 - contact 8-1-1 or their medical provider if further health advice is required; and 9-1-1 if it is an emergency.
- Any testing for COVID-19 will be done in accordance with the BCCDC's up-to-date guidance on [COVID-19 testing protocols](#).
- Advise employees and contractors to immediately report symptoms of illness (e.g. cough, fever, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal signs) to the Co-ordinator who will provide information on the appropriate next steps (i.e. leave the work site and self isolate, or report to the on site medical clinic).
- Employees will not return to work until they have been reassessed through the self assessment tool and/or their medical provider.

3. Monitoring Employees for Illness

Develop and update a common workplace policy regarding what to do when your employees are ill, with the Coordinator(s) responsible for monitoring staff daily for COVID-19 like symptoms:

- Employees must monitor their symptoms daily for common cold or influenza like illness or symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and must notify the Co-ordinator immediately.
- The use of the self assessment tool will assist the employee in identifying the symptoms of COVID 19.

4. Supporting Employee Self-isolation and Response to Suspected COVID-19 cases

Employees must be informed of personal access to medical support for COVID-19 (i.e. 8-1-1) or their medical provider or a local virtual clinic (if available) by the employer. If an employee becomes ill with COVID-19 like symptoms, self-isolation measures should be put into place as per PHO approved guidelines. Employers must notify local Medical Health Officers if there is an outbreak or suspicion of an outbreak.

Detailed instructions for self-isolation can be found on the BCCDC website: [Self-Isolation](#)

Who needs to self-isolate?

If an employee or contractor displays symptoms of COVID-19, they are required to begin self-isolation immediately, and consult with the self-assessment tool or a medical provider. If testing for COVID-19 is indicated then an employee or contractor should remain isolated until the results of that test are known and advice is provided by the medical provider accordingly. If a test is not indicated the self-isolation should continue until symptoms improve and any fever has resolved.

If an employee has common cold or influenza like illness or symptoms compatible with COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) and are hospitalized, or the employee is identified by public health as a person who is part of a cluster or outbreak, arrangements will be made for a COVID-19 test:

- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset AND ensure their symptoms, including fever, have completely resolved.
- If an employee tests negative for COVID-19, they must self-isolate until their common cold or influenza like symptoms have completely resolved.

People who are [contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case](#), meaning they have been, or could have been, exposed to the virus, but do not have symptoms, should immediately self-isolate, continue to monitor their symptoms and contact public health.

Additional Information:

- Please keep up-to-date on B.C.'s requirements for [who must self-isolate](#).
- As of March 25, 2020, all persons arriving in Canada must self-isolate (quarantine) and monitor for symptoms for 14 days under the Quarantine Act.
- All international travellers returning to British Columbia are required by law to self-isolate for **14 days upon their arrival** and complete a [self-isolation plan](#).

Self-Isolation Requirements

Employers have a responsibility to provide safe isolation, monitoring and care for the employees that become ill, as well as to protect the staff on site from transmission.

For those employees that are living in accommodations at the industrial camp, isolation practices MUST include:

- a room with a separate room separate entrance;
- a separate shower/toilet will be designated and cleaned immediately following use;
- workers receiving daily wages and meal support;
- meals will be provided or delivered to the individual in isolation; and
- must be checked a minimum of twice daily to ascertain if medical assistance is required.

Self isolation at home may be an option for those employees who live close to the work camp, and are within close driving distance to their home to be able to safely travel home without stopping.

Detailed instructions for self-isolation can be found on the BCCDC website: [Self-Isolation](#).

Waste Management for Ill Workers

- Designate one person, or small team to handle waste from all self-isolation rooms.
- All waste can go into regular garbage bags; line the container with a plastic bag.
- Take care not to touch the inside of the container, and wash hands well after emptying the waste.

5. Monitoring close contacts of COVID-19 cases

For employees that have come into close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19 on the advice of local public health officer, advise them to call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 or their medical provider to determine any necessary next steps.

Employers must ensure that the following employees do not come to work and begin self isolation. In some cases specific orders may need to be followed. Those orders will be identified through a case-by-case system.

- Workers who are ill, whether or not the illness has been confirmed as COVID-19.
- Workers with COVID-19-like symptoms must begin self-isolation and be reassessed for when they can return to work.
- Workers who share a residence with a person who has been exposed to COVID-19.

For employees that have come in contact with someone with COVID-19, see detailed instructions for: [Self-Isolation for people without symptoms](#).

Employee Exit protocol

Contractors shall develop appropriate exit plans for workers leaving the worksite.

Additional Resources:

BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC): <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>.

- <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>.
- HealthLink BC COVID-19: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>.
- Office of the Provincial Health Officer: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>.
- BC Government COVID-19 Support website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>.
- WorkSafeBC, Preventing exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace: A guide for employers: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/about-us/guides/preventing-exposure-to-covid-19-in-the-workplace?lang=en>.
- Health Canada COVID-19 Fact Sheet: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19-be-prepared.html>.
- Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>.

Employers must continue to check for new information and refer to the following links to public health resources in the event that any embedded link is broken and does not work:

- BC Centre for Disease Control: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>.
- Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/coronavirus-special-measures.html>.

SECTION 4: PRECAUTIONS FOR ON-SITE MEDICAL CLINICS

You can minimize transmission risks from COVID-19 in the medical office through common, effective infection prevention and control measures, similar to how you might deal with a more familiar condition like influenza. Medical clinics can access information about COVID-19, including information on recommended clinic infection control precautions, testing guidelines, and advice on clinical care of people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care>.

It will be important that any targeted communicable disease interventions are non-stigmatizing and respect confidentiality. This includes maintaining privacy for those seeking healthcare or who may be part of self-isolation, contact tracing or outbreak investigation.

1. On-site Management of Company Policy Requirements

A significant burden to the local health care system can arise simply from company policies that require sick notes and back to work notes. Employers are asked to excuse staff for sick leave without requiring a doctor's note, if their employees are ill or required to self-isolate. This helps not only to reduce pressures on the health care system, but also minimizes the risk of spreading infection within the community.

2. On-site Medical Clinics

You can minimize transmission risks from COVID-19 in the medical office through common, effective infection prevention and control measures, similar to how you might deal with a more familiar condition like influenza. Medical clinics can access information about COVID-19, including information on recommended clinic infection control precautions, testing guidelines, and advice on clinical care of people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/clinical-care>

3. Considerations and Recommendations for Medical Clinics

Reception Area

- Display posters at patient/client entrances with instructions for anyone with respiratory symptoms to identify themselves immediately to staff
 - [COVID-19 Poster for Medical Clinics](#)
- Upon arrival at the clinic, workers who exhibit respiratory symptoms should be given a surgical/procedural mask or tissues to cover their mouth and nose and be directed to a hand-washing or hand-sanitizer station.
 - [COVID-19 Hand Hygiene Poster](#)
 - [How to Wear a Face Mask](#)
- If possible, place patients exhibiting respiratory symptoms in a private room and close door. Put up contact and droplet precautions signs as necessary.
- Have alcohol-based hand rubs (60-90% alcohol) and/or hand-washing stations available as appropriate at the clinic entrance, the reception counter, around the waiting area, as well as near exam room doors.
- Increase frequency of cleaning of high-touch areas (at least twice daily).

Waiting Room

- Remove or cover cloth seating.

- Space waiting room chairs apart. Place some in a hallway if needed to separate patients.
- If patients being seen for COVID-19 are not wearing a mask and cannot be spaced apart in the waiting room, place them in an exam room as soon as possible.
- Air circulation should be increased if feasible.
- Increase frequency of cleaning of high-touch areas.

Exam Rooms

- Designate the closest possible exam room(s) for patients being seen for COVID-19 in order to allow rapid isolation.
- Empty these exam rooms of all but the bare minimum equipment (e.g. exam table, BP cuff).
- Wipe down all surfaces and equipment between patients who present with respiratory symptoms with an appropriate disinfectant.
- Complete cleaning and disinfection of all exam rooms.
- Air circulation should be increased if feasible.

Triage and Timing of Visits

- Patients calling about COVID-19 should be advised to present to the clinic at a set time, preferably a time when others are not in the waiting area.
- Where possible, workers who are self-isolating due to risk of COVID-19 should be asked to call ahead to tell the clinic they are coming in.

Health care workers should wear a gown, gloves, procedural/surgical mask and eye protection when providing care to patients suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. Additional precautions including N95 respirators with eye protection should be used during aerosol-generating procedures. For more information, visit the BCCDC [webpage on personal protective equipment](#).

4. Outbreak Management Plan

Early detection of influenza-like-illness or gastrointestinal symptoms and laboratory testing of symptomatic employees will facilitate the immediate implementation of effective control measures. In addition, the early detection and immediate implementation of control measures are two of the most important factors in limiting the size and length of an outbreak.

In the event of a suspected outbreak of influenza-like-illness, immediately report and discuss the suspected outbreak with the Medical Health Officer (or delegate) at your local health authority.

A plan must be developed to support early detection and immediate implementation of the control measures. The plan must have the following written components:

- Monitoring system to rapidly identify ill employees
- Early notification by the Co-ordinator to the local health authority and medical health officer of a potential outbreak
- Early isolation and management of symptomatic and confirmed COVID 19 cases
- Roles and responsibilities of those involved in an outbreak management
- Procedures on how medical staff will manage ill employees
- Develop and implement enhanced infection prevention control measures for managing ill employees on site

- Develop testing procedures including early collection of viral samples and confirm location of local testing site.
 - Review the latest [BCCDC Testing Guidance](#) for specimen collection including recommended number of samples.
- Adequate medical equipment and supplies and use
- Procedures that reduces transmission of medical staff e.g. grouping ill employees
- Staff training regularly updated to align with current direction from BCCDC
- Communication strategy that includes signage, messaging to employees, coordination with medical staff and with health authority
- Debrief process and update of procedures where required

Additional Resources:

Up-to-date guidance on diagnostic testing for COVID-19 can be found here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/lab-testing>

More information on environmental cleaning and disinfectants for physician's offices can be found here: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID-19_MOH_BCCDC_EnvironmentalCleaning.pdf

Appendix A

