

How COVID-19 is transmitted: overall guidance for protecting yourself and others

The following is a general overview of how COVID-19 is transmitted. It is provided merely for background and to inform strategies aimed at implementing the rules set out in the balance of this document. Full details on these issues should be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Canada and the World Health Organization, or a medical professional.

- The virus is thought to spread through respiratory droplets. Respiratory droplets may be produced through a cough, a sneeze, normal breath or conversation.
- These respiratory droplets may cause viral transmission from person to person when individuals are near one another. Recent guidelines from the U.S. Department of Labor provide further guidance and recommend that individuals should avoid working less than six feet from others for prolonged periods.
- The respiratory droplets may also land on clothing or other objects. It may be possible for an individual to contract COVID-19 by first touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes.

These general principles should be considered when applying the rules outlined below to a particular circumstance.

Your Health and Protecting Others

If you are exhibiting flu-like symptoms such as fever, coughing or congestion:

- **do not** come to work;
- contact your supervisor and your Human Resources department to let them know that you are exhibiting the symptoms; and
- consult with a healthcare professional on next steps before returning to work.

Workplace Rules to Reduce COVID-19 Risks

Business-related travel – Non-essential business travel should cease until further notice. There may be some limited exceptions to this rule for unavoidable and essential company or personnel reasons.

In-office meetings and events:

- e-mail, video or teleconference meetings are the preferred methods of communication;
- in-person meetings and events are to be avoided wherever possible;
- meetings and events of more than six people should not be held in person;
- for all remaining in person gatherings, and in work environments in general, participants should exercise recommended practices for reducing the risk of transmission as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Canada and the World Health Organization.
- all previously scheduled social and non-essential events are canceled or postponed;
- meetings should be held in the area where an individual works, instead of in a large gathering point such as a conference or break room.

Personal Hygiene Practices:

- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash;
- do not share personal items or supplies such as phones, pens, notebooks, PPE, etc.;
- refrain from shaking hands with others;
- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. The following handwashing best practices should be used:
 - wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) turn off the tap and apply soap;
 - lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails;
 - scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice;
 - rinse hands well under clean, running water;
 - dry hands using a clean towel or air drying them.

Additional Jobsite Sanitation Measures:

- hand sanitizer should be available at or near entry points to the project and at various high-traffic locations throughout the project such as doorways, field plan tables, tool cribs, hoists, water containers, etc.;
- hot and cold running water, and hand soap should be available at bathroom facilities, lunchrooms and kitchen areas;
 - if hot and cold running water are not available, hand sanitizer will be made available;
- hand-washing stations must have instructions posted at each location;
- paper towel dispensers and barrier-free garbage cans should be available at every handwashing location.

Jobsite meetings:

- In-person meetings must have no more than 20 people;
- all previously scheduled social and nonessential events are canceled or postponed (i.e., site barbeques);
- workers at sites should avoid working less than six feet from others for prolonged periods unless their role requires prolonged closer proximity. Case specific risks and solutions will be assessed for those individuals required by their roles to work within these close proximities;
- individuals should utilize technologies available to them such as email, text and teleconferencing to minimize direct contact with others;
- project teams should stagger break and lunch schedules to minimize the number of people near one another;
- meetings should be held in the area where an individual works, instead of a large gathering point;
- for all remaining in person gatherings, and in work environments in general, participants should exercise recommended practices for reducing the risk of transmission as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Canada and the World Health Organization.

Personal Protective Equipment:

In addition to current PPE requirements and similar protections:

- glove use is mandatory on all jobsites;
- storage of personal gear such as jackets, vests and rain gear are not permitted on-site unless stored in a location where contact with individuals is not possible (an infected individual may have left respiratory droplets on their clothing, which could expose others if they touch the clothing).

Hand Tools, Powered Mobile Equipment and Other Equipment on Jobsites:

- hand tools such as hammers, snips, pliers, etc. must not be shared person-to-person without a thorough cleaning with a disinfectant containing more than 70% alcohol;
- mobile and desktop phones must not be shared with others;
- two-way radios should be cleaned at the end of each shift, or between users;
- door and ladder handles, hand holds and rails, steering wheels, switches, buttons, knobs and fueling caps on powered mobile equipment should be cleaned at the end of each shift, or between users/operators.

Enhanced Cleaning: All Locations – All offices and jobsites should implement additional cleaning measures as outlined below:

- Daily Cleaning Regime:
 - before commencing work each day or shift, high traffic surfaces (in terms of hand contact) within offices, meeting rooms, orientation rooms, coffee and kitchen areas, work stations, portable and permanent washrooms, and common work spaces should be cleaned;
 - before commencing work, individuals working in an office setting are responsible for cleaning their workstation area. The focus is on reducing the risk of transmission through an individual touching an infected surface. Therefore, priority should be given to the high traffic surfaces (in terms of hand contact).
- Cleaning Regime After Each Use:
 - hard surfaces and buttons your hands may meet on frequently touched items such as refrigerators, microwaves, water cooler handles, taps and faucets, light switches and other high traffic objects should be cleaned after each use;
 - first-aid treatment rooms, reusable treatment equipment and instruments.
- Cleaning Solutions and Supplies:
 - if available, household or commercial disinfectant solutions and wipes containing more than 70% alcohol should be used to clean surfaces. However, some of these products are currently in short supply or are simply unavailable;
 - if these household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not readily available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of one-part bleach and nine parts water. The solution must contact the surface for one minute to disinfect;
 - items that cannot withstand liquid disinfectants such as tablets, smartboards and cellphones may be disinfected with 70% alcohol wipes ensuring the solution contacts the surface for one minute to disinfect;
 - use paper towels or single-use rags.

Laptops – Take your laptop and related power supplies home each night, as the situation may arise where you need to work from home.

Employee personal travel: For Canada, individuals entering the country face recommended self isolation periods. For the United States, individuals entering the country from certain countries face mandatory self isolation periods. The impact of domestic travel is changing rapidly, with provincial/state and local governments beginning to impose or contemplate similar travel advisories. Overall, at this time, the risk to:

- your health and your family's health;
- your coworkers; and
- the communities we work in

created by personal travel is difficult to gauge. For these reasons, we urge employees to postpone or cancel their personal travel plans.