Employer Resource

Tips on Re-activating COVID-19 Controls in the Workplace

go2HR has compiled some tips for tourism and hospitality businesses, based on familiar COVID-19 risk reduction principles, to help reduce the risk of workplace transmission and to act as a refresher for everyone in the workplace. Many of these practical tips will form the basis of your updated COVID-19 safety plan.

These "best practice" layers of protection should be adapted to suit your individual business and situation, to help you continue operating safely with enough staff in place and to limit the impact of a potential outbreak on your workplace and guests.

Physical Distancing

- Reduce the number of people in different areas of the workplace to help promote physical distancing. For some workplaces, this could mean reintroducing an occupancy limit for workers and guests, including in confined areas like break rooms, meeting rooms, changing rooms, washrooms and elevators. To determine a reliable occupancy limit for your business, aim to provide at least five square metres of unencumbered floor space per person (whether workers or patrons).
- In the case of restaurants, cafes and bars, guests must be reminded not to move between tables. There must be a distance of **two metres** between the backs of seats of patrons seated at different tables, even if they belong to the same party. Therefore, it's important to set up your seating to accommodate this.
- Other measures to support physical distancing include working remotely, holding virtual meetings instead of in-person meetings and changing work schedules to reduce the number of workers at any one time.
- Manage the traffic flow in the workplace through the use of directional arrows, unidirectional hallways and designated exits and entrances.
- Consider creating pods or teams of workers who work together exclusively to minimize the risk of broad transmission in the workplace.

DOWNLOAD: Occupancy Limit Poster

DOWNLOAD: Physical distancing

Barriers

- Barriers can be made of any material that blocks the transmission of air. For many work tasks, including guest-facing activities, barriers need to be transparent. These barriers can be made of plexiglass, acrylic, polycarbonate or similar materials. Opaque barriers may also work for some environments, such as back-of-house office cubicles.
- Barriers must be positioned so that they block the transmission of droplets produced by breathing, talking, coughing or sneezing between the "breathing zone" of people on each side. A person's breathing zone extends 30 cm (12 inches) in every direction from the person's nose.
- Barriers should be positioned to accommodate the heights of the tallest and shortest people who will likely be near it. Barriers should also be wide enough to account for the normal movement of people of different heights.
- If a barrier needs an opening to pass documents, money or other materials through it, the opening should be positioned so that it is out of the breathing zone of people on either side of it. (These barriers should also be cleaned more regularly, as they are commonly touched surfaces).
- Barriers should not be designed or installed in such a way that they impede ventilation in the room.
- Free-standing barriers must be stable so that they won't fall and injure anyone.
- Hanging barriers mustn't be able to swing, as this can result in air being wafted from one side of the barrier to the other.
- Barriers must not hinder a person's escape in case of emergency.
- Barriers must be included in your daily cleaning schedule and cleaned regularly to prevent the accumulation and transmission of contaminants. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for both the barrier and the cleaning product used, to ensure they do not damage or degrade the barrier.

DOWNLOAD: Designing effective barriers

DOWNLOAD: Prevent the spread of communicable disease: ventilation and air circulation

Hand washing and personal hygiene

- Everyone in the workplace should practise healthy hand hygiene, including regular hand washing, for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water aren't available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be used instead.
- Coughs and sneezes should be covered and hands should be washed afterwards to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Avoid touching your face mask and face and always wash your hands after doing so.

DOWNLOAD: Prevent the spread of communicable disease: Handwashing

DOWNLOAD: Prevent the spread of communicable disease: cover coughs and sneezes

Managing sickness

- Review your policies for managing sickness. Ensure staff displaying COVID-19 symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19 do not come to work, follow public health guidance and isolate for the prescribed period. This is different depending on whether the worker is vaccinated or unvaccinated:
  - For **fully vaccinated** individuals, the isolation period is five days from the initial onset of symptoms, or whenever symptoms cease, whichever is longer.
  - For u**nvaccinated** individuals, the isolation period is ten days from the onset of symptoms, or whenever symptoms cease, whichever is longer.
  - If individuals continue to be unwell after the five or ten days, they should continue to self-isolate until the symptoms have gone.
  - Staying at home if you are sick is the most effective way of preventing a workplace outbreak.

DOWNLOAD: Protect yourself and others from influenza

DOWNLOAD: Stay home if you are sick

DOWNLOAD: How to self-isolate after a test

Cleaning and disinfection

- Maintain enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices, using cleaning solutions that you have approved for use in your workplace. Depending on how many people are in the space and how it's used, you may need to clean some spaces more frequently.
- There are a number of products you can use for disinfection, including consumer products that don't require a safety data sheet. However, it's still important to follow whatever safety information is available for the product. Use all products with caution, as directed on the label, to avoid introducing other hazards into your workplace.
- Ensure that workers tasked with cleaning and disinfecting duties have appropriate training and materials to do the job safely.

DOWNLOAD: Cleaning public spaces

Masks

- Face coverings are required in all public indoor settings in B.C. for all people born in 2016 or earlier, regardless of vaccination status. (A face covering includes a medical or non-medical mask or a tightly woven mask, such as a cotton mask).
- When layered with other recommended public health measures, a well-constructed, well-fitting and properly worn mask can help prevent you and others from being exposed to COVID-19. No matter which type of mask you are using, proper fit is a key factor in its effectiveness. This means that the mask must cover the nose, mouth and chin and there shouldn't be any gaps.
- To make mask use as effective as possible, it's essential to make sure they are being used, stored and cleaned properly.

DOWNLOAD: Masks are mandatory in this workplace

DOWNLOAD: How to use a mask

DOWNLOAD: How to make your mask fit properly

DOWNLOAD: Face masks: How are they different?

*If you have questions about these COVID-19 control measures, please contact us via phone: 604-633-9787 or email: **safety@go2hr.ca**.*

*For more information about COVID-19 and safety plans, visit go2HR's new COVID-19 Safety Plan **webpage**. Our health and safety experts are available to assist, and we look forward to supporting you and your team.*