



City of Vancouver

Communicable Disease Plan

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This document lists control measures for operations to implement during pandemic periods. The origins of this document are from the Corporate COVID-19 Safety Plan.

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Overview

As an organization, we are committed to the health and safety of our employees and the public we serve. This Plan represents a range of controls to respond to a pandemic or other communicable diseases. Provincial Health Officer (PHO), the Ministry of Health, Vancouver Coastal Medical Health Officers (MHO), the Province of B.C. and WorkSafeBC generally set out the guidance and controls to reduce the risks for communicable disease in society.

For the near future, from 2021 to 2022, B.C.'s Reopening plan transitions from Step 2 to Step 4. Below, the chart highlights key changes in exposure controls for the transition from Step 2 to Step 3.

COVID-19 Control	BC ReStart Plan - Step 2 June 15 to June 30	BC ReStart Plan - Step 3 Starting July 1
Daily Health Check entering the workplace	yes	No
Capacity Limits in rooms, equipment, vehicles and trailers	Yes	Updated for higher limits
Physical distancing- behaviours, barriers, signage, and directional flow	Yes	Optional
Mask wearing in public spaces	Yes	Recommended – 0-1 vaccination Optional – 2 weeks after 2 nd vaccination
Enhanced environmental cleaning	Yes	Only after COVID-19 incidents
If sick stay home isolate speak with 811	Yes	Yes
Cough and sneeze into the arm	Yes	Yes
Regularly wash or sanitize hands	Yes	Yes

As leaders and supervisors, we are accountable for addressing and responding to communicable diseases like COVID-19, including the psychological safety concerns raised by our employees.

Thank you for your commitment.

**Organizational Health and Safety
City of Vancouver**

Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to:

- Ensure the organization can respond quickly and appropriately to new or seasonal pandemic diseases, especially during the latter period of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Maintain corporate history of pandemic controls;
- Provide guidance for operations and employees to protect themselves; and
- Maintain compliance with WSBC and Public Health expectations of employers.

All operations are required to know and adhere to this Plan and any operational-specific Plans that require control methods not described in this document. Operational specific Plans need to be documented for staff to understand and implement.

Scope

This Communicable Disease Plan applies to all City employees, elected officials, contractors, volunteers and members of the public/visitors. Communicable disease outbreaks at specific sites may require limited implementation of additional controls.

Right to refuse unsafe work

Our employees have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. An undue hazard is an “unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate” risk, above and beyond the potential exposure a general member of the public would face through regular, day-to-day activity. In these circumstances, the worker should follow some specific steps to resolve the issue.

The employee must report any undue hazard to their supervisor for investigation. Each refusal of unsafe work is addressed on a case-by-case basis and will follow the WSBC prescribed procedure.

Seeking advice

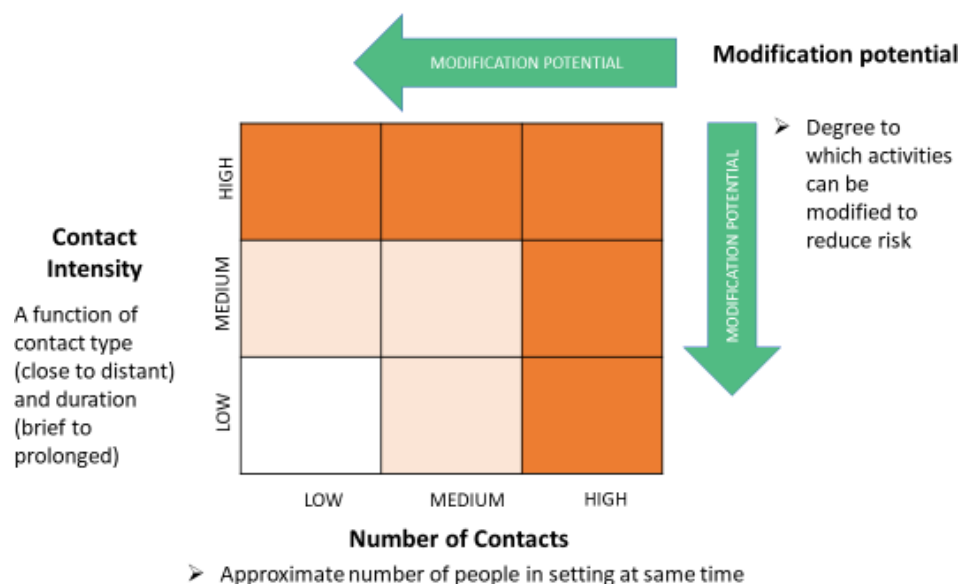
Implementing communicable disease controls may not always be clear. Occupational Safety Specialists and Safety Superintendents at the City are available to answer questions raised by managers and supervisors.

Hazard analysis and understanding risk

WSBC guidance for Communicable Disease Plans requires that employers remain informed of developing communicable disease issues. The City of Vancouver and Vancouver Coastal Health work collaboratively together for many public health challenges. This includes: following public health guidance and direction to implement controls to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Through ongoing dialogue and partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health Authority – Public Health teams, the City is well-positioned to remain aware of emerging communicable diseases. The City will rely on VCH to assess and inform the City of disease hazards and risks to our citizens and staff alike.

Risk matrix

In collaboration with Public Health, the risk of transmission in City of Vancouver facilities is subject to two primary variables that we need to modify to reduce transmission risk: contact intensity (how close you are to someone and for how long) and the number of contacts (how many people are in the same setting at the same time).



Assessment and understanding risk factors that impact disease transmission assist with implementing controls. The risk matrix above may guide decisions to implement certain controls. Public Health direction to specific control measures required will be addressed by the City.

Stress, anxiety and mental health awareness

Psychological safety risks are always present practice self-care. Emotional stress, anxiety or concern is natural under periods of community disease events. The unseen risk of a microbial pathogen commonly creates greater anxiety levels than a clearly visible hazard like a fire or a plume of smoke. Anyone who feels they are experiencing negative mental health implications should seek assistance as soon as possible.

Monitoring risk and communication effectiveness

The City's Health and Safety Committees are active partners in employee health and safety. They are encouraged to review and recommend improvements to communicable disease controls. They will be informed of emerging communicable disease events from public health alerts.

Hierarchy of controls for communicable diseases

Public Health may direct the City of Vancouver to implement specific controls to eliminate or limit the number of infections from communicable diseases. Communicable diseases controls are categorized into a hierarchy of effectiveness. The hierarchy below is not an exhaustive list. However, these controls effectively control periodic communicable disease events and were used during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. **Elimination:** Remove the hazard, the communicable disease, from the workplace.
 - a. Stay home when sick
 - b. Physical distancing
 - c. Cleaning and/or disinfecting high touch surfaces
 - d. Cleaning and/or disinfecting contaminated surfaces
2. **Engineering controls:** Contain the hazard or reduce the risk with an engineered control.
 - a. Barriers
 - b. Well maintained ventilation systems
 - c. Addition of HEPA air scrubbers
 - d. Placement or installation of hand sanitation stations
3. **Administrative controls:** Reduce the risk through organizational processes or behaviour change of employees and/or clients.
 - a. Work from home
 - b. Promote vaccinations for communicable diseases

- c. Promote safe cough and sneezing methods
 - d. Wash or sanitize hands frequently
 - e. Formal or informal daily health checks before entering the workplace
 - f. Capacity limits for rooms, structures or equipment
 - g. Cleaning or sanitizing shared tools, equipment and workstations, after use
 - h. Communication and signage of expected actions of employees and clients
 - i. Promote awareness and availability of mental health supports
4. **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** Reduce risk by equipment worn by an employee.
- a. Respirators
 - b. Droplet protection eye or face shields or sealed goggles
 - c. Gloves
 - d. Gowns
 - e. Disposable non-medical mask
 - f. Three-ply reusable cloth mask

At this time, July 2021, the Public Health Officer and WSBC require maintaining the following controls shown below.

Stay home when sick

Management must ensure that employees do not come to work if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. This includes employees who fall into the below categories:

- Anyone with COVID-19-like symptoms such as a sore throat, fever, sneezing, or coughing.
- Anyone with these symptoms should self-isolate at home and call their physician or 8-1-1 for care guidance. If an employee tests negative for COVID-19 and has not been advised by Public Health to self-isolate, they can return to work once their symptoms are gone (besides a lingering cough).
- Employees who are required to self-isolate on Public Health orders or direction.

If employees report having flu-like symptoms before or while at work:

- Ask them to stay home or send them home to isolate and advise them to call 8-1-1 for direction.
- Clean and disinfect their workstation and any areas or tools they were using as part of their job.

The City has various benefits to allow employees to take sick time with some form of income replacement.

Signage and internal communication campaigns will support the stay home when sick control measures.

Facility cleaning

REFM and Park Board maintain systems to regularly clean facilities. Maintenance of these systems is expected and ready to expand cleaning requirements when public health directs additional cleaning requirements. Existing flu season cleaning protocols will continue to be activated during seasonal communicable disease periods.

During step 3 of BC's Restart Plan, a minimum of once per day cleaning including disinfection of common area high touch point surfaces should be maintained.

Building ventilation maintenance

REFM maintains a sophisticated preventative maintenance program for HVAC systems. The necessary control measure exists as a regular operational task.

Barriers for droplet control

Barriers installed for the COVID-19 pandemic should remain in place if they are not affecting service delivery until further notice. Operations will make assessments to keep barriers as permanent fixtures against future communicable disease events, prevent other hazards or remove the barriers.

Hand washing and sanitizing stations

Operations, both administrative and field, are required to maintain access to hand washing or hand sanitizer. Use and distribution established during the COVID-19 pandemic need to continue until further notice. Hand sanitizer is available from Grand and Toy for delivery or from City stores by pick-up.

REFM will maintain hand-sanitizing stations at City Hall entrance points and City Council.

Signage and other communications will support hand washing or sanitization behaviours of clients and staff.

Occupancy limit controls

Indoor or outdoor gatherings and events for work purposes that are attended only by City staff or members of Council will not have capacity limits under COVID-19 related public health orders but may be limited under the Fire Code.

Any indoor or outdoor seated in-person gatherings and events for work purposes where City staff and members of the public attend in-person (including Council meetings and public hearings) that are organized or hosted by the City of Vancouver will be subject to occupancy limits set out in the Fire Code and any applicable COVID-19 related public health orders including the Gathering and Events Order. As of July 1, 2021, the limit in the Gathering and Events Order in respect of such seated in-person gatherings and events is as follows:

- (a) In-side events are restricted to 50 people or up to 50% of a venue's seated operating capacity as per fire safety regulations (excluding event staff), whichever is greater. If a venue's seated capacity limit as per fire safety regulations is not known, then the limit will be 50 people or such lower number that is reasonable to the staff occupants of the venue, and
- (b) Out-side events are restricted to 5,000 people or up to 50% of a venue's seated operating capacity as per fire safety regulations (excluding event staff), whichever is greater.

The City's leadership team have imposed a rule that any management meeting held in person must also have the capacity to include any employees to attend virtually if they already have had the opportunity to work remotely. This rule ends when the B.C. Restart Plan Step 4 comes into effect.

Communication to staff and clients

Vaccinations

The City of Vancouver supports public health's promotion of vaccinations against communicable diseases. Support includes corporate messaging to employees, allowing clinics on City property, and possibly allowing time to get vaccinated during working hours.

Cough and sneeze safety

The City of Vancouver will post signage and use other communications to educate or remind employees and clients to cough and sneeze safely into their arms or elbow.

Hand washing and sanitizing

The City of Vancouver will post signage and use other communications to educate or remind employees and clients to wash or sanitize their hands regularly during communicable disease events.

Psychological safety and mental health promotion

The stress and anxiety of communicable disease events on employees and clients can be significant. The City of Vancouver will post signage and use other communications to educate or remind employees and clients to be kind and respectful to each other and direct employees to City resources to support their mental health.

Wearing masks

The City of Vancouver will post signage and use other communications to recommend using a mask in public spaces by Public Health direction. No employee will ask about the vaccination status of any person for any reason.

The City of Vancouver allows employees to wear masks in the workplace as a personal risk reduction measure against communicable disease hazards.

COVID – 19 Safety Plan/ Communicable Disease Plan	
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Related Publications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorkSafeBC • BC Centre for Disease Control • Provincial Government of BC