

COVID-19 Reference Guide

Emergency and Safety Services Division

5-14-2020



ST. JOHN'S

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Statement of purpose

The City of St. John's is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff. We will utilize all measures practicable to minimize worker exposure to COVID-19. Our work procedures will aim to protect not only our workers, but also other individuals who enter our facilities. All supervisors are responsible for ensuring that there is a plan for exposure management, and it is implemented and enforced on site and all employees follow the procedures outlined to prevent or reduce exposure to COVID-19.

Responsibilities

Department Responsibilities:

- Ensure that the appropriate materials - washing facilities - required to implement and maintain the plan are readily available where and when they are required.
- Select, implement, and document the appropriate site-specific control measures.
- Ensure that supervisors and workers are educated and trained on the risk associated with COVID-19, the controls necessary for their protection and the overall requirements of this plan.
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- Conduct a regular review of the guides effectiveness. This includes a review of the available control strategies to ensure that these are selected and used when practical.
- Ensure that a copy of the exposure control plan is available to workers.
- Maintain a daily list of all workers on each site.

Supervisor responsibilities

Our supervisors will:

- Ensure that workers are adequately instructed on the controls for the hazards at the location.
- Ensure that workers use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where required, (i.e. eye protection and respirators).
- Ensure workers are aware of the requirement to always maintain physical distancing (at least 2 meters) while completing their work safely.
- Ensure that where required, workers use proper respirators, are fit tested, and the results are recorded as per the organizations Respiratory Protection Program.
- Direct work in a manner that eliminates or minimizes the risk to workers.

Worker responsibilities:

Our workers will:

- Maintain physical distance requirements
- Know the hazards of workplace.
- Follow established work procedures as directed by the employer or supervisor.
- Use any required PPE as instructed.
- Report any unsafe conditions or acts to the supervisor. Know how and when to report exposure incidents

Health hazards of COVID-19

COVID-19 has been declared a global pandemic and a public health emergency in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is a virus that can cause respiratory illness and can lead to hospitalization and death. The effects of COVID-19 are expected to be much more severe than for seasonal influenza because most people will not have any immunity to the virus and no licensed vaccination currently exists. Seniors and people with underlying health issues (including heart disease, diabetes, lung disease and high blood pressure) are at a higher risk of hospitalization and death, but young and healthy people are also at risk.

Symptoms

Symptoms of COVID-19 are likely to include:

- fever or signs of fever (chills, sweats, muscle aches, light-headedness)
- cough
- sneezing
- sore throat
- runny nose
- difficulty breathing.

Transmission

Exposure to COVID-19 can occur by:

- Breathing in droplets in the air that are generated when people cough or sneeze
- Close contact with other people (e.g. shaking hands or hugging)
- Touching surfaces that have been contaminated with the virus and then touching the face, mouth, or food.

Note that touching a contaminated surface and then touching another surface may cause the virus to transfer from one surface to another

COVID-19 can be transmitted even by people who are not displaying symptoms of the disease. People who may have been exposed with COVID-19 should not come to work until they have completed the mandatory 14-day self-isolation, required by the federal and provincial governments. This includes people who:

- You have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by Public Health;
- You have been advised by Public Health to self isolate in accordance with their contact tracing protocol;
- You have been assessed by Public Health for COVID-19 and/or are waiting to hear the results of a laboratory test for COVID-19;
- You have travelled anywhere outside of Newfoundland and Labrador, for 14 days upon return to the province; or
- You have been advised to self-isolate for any other reason by Public Health or the City of St. John's.

Risk identification (Routes of Transmission)

The primary routes of transmission, anticipated for COVID-19, which need to be controlled, include direct contact and respiratory droplets.

Breathing in droplets in the air

The World Health Organization advises that COVID-19 can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. People can catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. Physical distancing (maintaining 2 meters of distance from other people) will help reduce the risk of this occurring.

Close contact

Close contact refers to physical contact with another person, for example shaking hands or hugging. When people cough or sneeze droplets may deposit on their skin or clothing, especially if they cough or sneeze into their hands. People who are carriers of COVID-19 may transfer the virus from their hands or clothing to others during close contact.

Surface contact

Respiratory droplets expelled when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or exhales, can also land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Surface contact involves a worker touching a contaminated object such as a table, doorknob, telephone, or computer keyboard or tool, and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth. Surface contact is important to consider because COVID-19 can persist for several days on surfaces.

Risk assessment (Identifying risk of spread)

Prior to commencing work, regular assessments must be conducted to identify hazards to which workers may be exposed and the necessary control measures. The City will complete risk assessments, include the risks relating to the spread and/or transmission of COVID-19. The results of these risk assessments will be communicated to all workers.

Please see Risk Assessment for COVID-19 spread in Appendix C

Risk control

The City will use the following combination of controls including elimination of high risk activities, administrative controls (i.e., physical distancing, hand washing, surface cleaning and cough/sneeze etiquette) and PPE (glasses, masks, respirators etc.) to manage the risk of contracting COVID-19 on site.

Health Monitoring

Prior to daily site access, all workers, contractors, suppliers or visitors will be required to confirm that they do not currently meet any of the self-isolation criteria established by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Please see Appendix B for Self Screening Questionnaire

If workers show symptoms of COVID-19

If they develop symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, they should leave the workplace. Workers who suspect they may have COVID-19 should use the NL Self Assessment Tool: <https://www.811healthline.ca/covid-19-self-assessment/> or call 811 for assistance. Always inform your immediate supervisor who will consult with the HR Advisor on next steps.

If workers are positive for COVID-19

If workers are ill with COVID-19, they must advise their supervisor that they are ill and stay at home. Please refer to Confirmed COVID-19 in the workplace in Appendix A.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing requires that all individuals maintain at least 2 meters between them and another individual. This reduces the potential of coming into contact with the respiratory droplets of another individual, generated by coughing, sneezing.

- Management and supervision review site activities, as a part of the hazard assessment process to ensure that:
 - Physical distancing requirements can be maintained.
 - Where proper physical distancing cannot be maintained, due to specific tasks, workers shall be provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Visitors will be restricted to work place

Hand Washing

Hand washing is one of the best ways to minimize the risk of infection. Proper hand washing helps prevent the transfer of infectious material from the hands to other parts of the body—particularly the eyes, nose, and mouth—or to other surfaces that are touched.

Wash your hands immediately:

- Before leaving a work area
- After handling materials that may be contaminated
- Before eating, drinking, smoking, visiting the washroom
- As frequently as possible

Please see Hand Washing procedure in Appendix D. This may be printed and posted next to hand washing stations.

Cough/Sneeze Etiquette

Our workers are expected to follow cough/sneeze etiquette, which is a combination of measures that minimizes the transmission of diseases via droplet or airborne routes. Cough/sneeze etiquette includes the following components:

- Educate workers in control measures, including hand washing.
- Post signs at entry points to instruct everyone about control measures.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a sleeve or tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Use tissues to contain secretions and dispose of them in a waste container immediately.
- Turn your head away from others when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands regularly.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, enhanced cleaning and disinfection has been initiated to reduce the risk of exposure. Coronavirus can survive on different surfaces but can be killed by most cleaners and disinfectants.

- Cleaning and disinfection will be done as often as possible and at a minimum at the beginning of shift, before eating, between crew changes, end of shift.
- All frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected, at minimum, twice daily. This includes but is not limited to:
 - lunchroom tabletops
 - computer/keyboard/mouse
 - door-knobs
 - light switches
 - handles
 - bathrooms
 - steering wheels
 - stair railings
- Avoid sharing items such as tools and pens and disinfect any items before sharing.
- Avoid sharing equipment.
- If you must share equipment, clean and disinfect points of contact on the equipment before and after use.
- 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).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Engineering and administrative control measures are the most preferred methods to be implemented in the workplace (i.e. physical distancing, barriers, reducing the number of individuals on site, etc. For certain tasks/activities, workers will be required to use PPE to help mitigate their exposure to COVID-19 (i.e. tasks where physical distancing cannot be maintained, in high risk work settings etc.) Where required, the City will ensure that:

- A hazard assessment is completed and PPE, appropriate to the hazard and level of risk, is selected.
- All PPE meets the requirements of the Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.
- Workers are trained in the proper use and care of the personal protective equipment.
- Workers are properly fitted for the PPE (i.e. fit testing for tight fitting respirators).
- Supervisors are enforcing PPE requirements on site.

As a minimum requirement, where physical distance requirements cannot be maintained, the following PPE, must be utilized:

Respiratory Protection:

- a. Type #1 Non-medical/homemade mask – used when employees are unable to maintain social distancing, protects others from your droplets. All employees within 2m must wear a mask.
 1. Example of application: 2 employees fixing water main break in trench
 2. No fit test required
 - b. Type #2 Medical grade Surgical mask – used to protect wearer from other’s droplets and vis versa.
 1. Example of application: Building inspector entering worksite where 2m distancing cannot be observed, entering premise with individual doing 14-day isolation and is asymptomatic
 2. No fit test required
 - c. Half/Full face respirator (with P-100 Cartridge) - used to protect wearer from other’s droplets and vis versa in a moderate to high risk scenario
 1. Example of application: employee having to enter premise for a life safety issue and social distancing cannot be maintained, risk assessment has been deemed to be moderate to high
 2. **Fit testing is required in advance for this model respirator.**
Expected Delivery late summer 2020
- ii. A full face shield or appropriate CSA approved safety glasses or goggles.

Please see Appendix E- How to wear a mask.

Worker Awareness

Workers will receive information on the following:

- The risk of exposure to COVID-19, and the signs and symptoms of the disease
- Safe work procedures to be followed, including hand washing, physical distancing and cough/sneeze etiquette
- Location of washing facilities, including dispensing stations for alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Safe selection, use and care of respiratory protection and fit testing (for those positions where respiratory protection has been identified as required)
- How to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19.

Review

- Emergency, Safety Services Division will update this document and implement control measures as new information becomes available from the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. At minimum, divisional plans will be reviewed in consultation with our Emergency and Safety Services Division.

Appendix A - Confirmed COVID-19 in the Workplace

The following guideline will be used when a manager/supervisor is notified by an employee that they have tested positive for Covid-19.

Upon notification manager/supervisor will:

Ask the following questions:

- Has Public Health initiated contact tracing and what information do they need (i.e. contact information for City staff)?
- When were they tested and are, they in quarantine under the advice of Public Health?
- When was the last time and date the employee was in the workplace?
- What workspace did they occupy (vehicle/office) and did they attend other facilities or workspaces?
- Were you in close contact (less than 2 meters) with any other employees within the last 48 hours? If so, who?

Notification Steps:

- Supervisor/Manager to notify.
 - Dept HR Advisor
 - Their direct line manager who will notify DCM
- HR Advisor to notify Director of Human Resources who will initiate a risk assessment with.
 - OHS Nurse
 - Manager, Emergency Safety Services
 - Department DCM
 - Manager, City Buildings
- HR Advisor or direct line manager to remind the Supervisor to maintain confidentiality and not contact other employees unless otherwise directed by the Director, Human Resources.

Immediate Actions Required:

- Isolation of workspace/vehicle
 - Wrap vehicle in caution tape and lock/tag out vehicle
 - If in a facility, isolate any area visited by the affected person within the last 48 hours by locking doors and posting quarantine signs. If location is small (ie community center) close entire facility.
- Consideration may have to be given to unaffected staff to report to another work location or take city vehicle home.

Cleaning Procedures:

- City Buildings will engage a contractor to perform a deep clean of workspace. This could take 48-72 hours
- Contract will follow protocols suggested by provincial department of health.
 - <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-NL.pdf>

The best personal preventative measure against the spread of the coronavirus is washing your hands frequently for 20 seconds or more. Do not touch your face and maintain a safe personal distance from others, a minimum of two arms-lengths, or 2 meters.

Cover your mouth with the inside of your elbow to sneeze or cough and notify your supervisor if you are experiencing any flu-like symptoms.

Follow cleaning and sanitization protocols as directed by your Supervisor or Manager.

Appendix B - COVID-19 Self-Screening Questionnaire

All City of St. John's employees MUST maintain Social Distancing while entering the workplace

Employees are required to conduct this self-screening before showing up to their workplace or their assigned shift.

Q1. Are you currently suffering from any of the following signs and symptoms?

- Fever (or signs of a fever, including chills, sweats, muscle aches, lightheadedness)
- Cough
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Painful swallowing
- Runny nose
- Difficulty Breathing
- Flu Like Symptoms
- Loss of appetite / diarrhea
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Small red or purple spots on hands or feet

Symptoms of COVID 19 may be very mild or more serious.

Q2. Have you travelled either within Canada or outside of Canada within the last 14 days?

Q3. Have you been in contact with a presumptive or positive COVID case within the last 14 days?

Q4. Have you been directed to self-isolate by a public health official?

Q5. Are you currently living with someone who has been required to self-isolate?

Q6. Are you currently experiencing any flu-like symptoms?

If you answer “**Yes**” to any of the above questions, then please contact your supervisor prior to coming to the workplace.

Contact details of your HR support for specific Departments:

Bonnie Perry – Community Services, PERS (non-engineering), OPS, City Manager's office – 7096852210

Tammy Sheppard – Fire, Finance and Admin, PERS(Engineering), Bay Bulls Big Pond.- 7096934818

Karen Dinn – Public Works and any other 569 employees – 7097282494,

Charity Lawrence – Public Works - 7097433474

Appendix C – Risk Assessment for COVID-19 spread

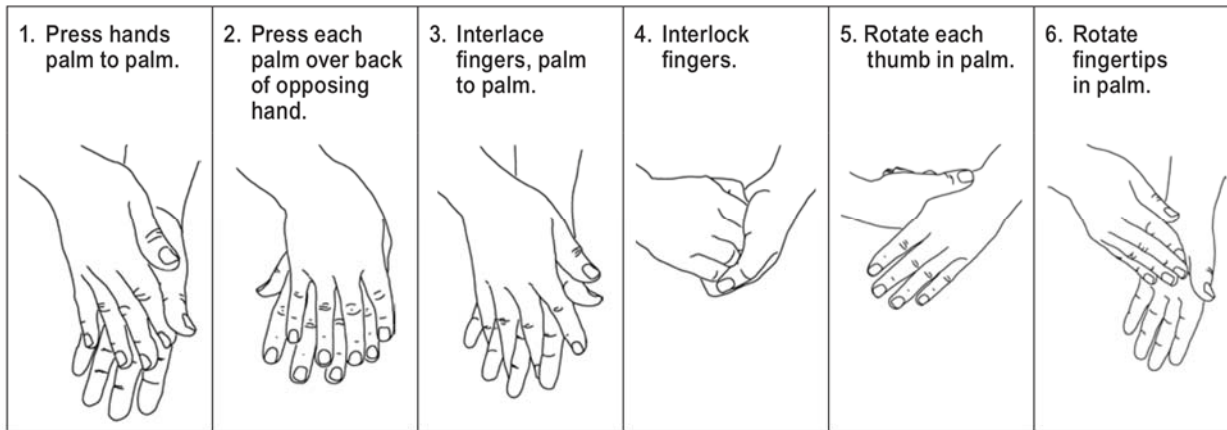
The following factors will be considered, and appropriate control measures implemented in accordance with the level of risk:

Risk Factors:

- The location in which work is being carried out. Some worksites may see workers exposed to the general public where other sites would have limited numbers of workers and limited contact with other individuals.
 - High risk areas
 - Service/maintenance workers who visit multiple worksites per day
- Site Access (i.e.)
 - Workers
 - Contractors
 - Suppliers
 - Vendors
 - Visitors
- Common Work Areas (i.e.)
 - Lunchrooms
 - Site trailer/office
 - Work vehicles
 - Restrooms/Washrooms
- Task requiring work in proximity
 - Confined space work
 - Work in aerial lifts
 - Sharing work vehicles
 - Performing first aid
- Group Activities
 - Orientations
 - Training
 - Toolbox Talks
 - Meetings
- Shared Materials/Equipment (i.e.)
 - Tools
 - Heavy Equipment
 - Radios

Once reviewed , please consult with the safety advisors on next steps.

Appendix D - Hand washing procedure



Use soap and warm running water and wash hands for at least 20 seconds. If warm water is unavailable, use a waterless hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use the cleanser. Alcohol-based hand sanitizing dispensers are located throughout our facilities.

Appendix E – How to wear a Mask

Always follow product instructions on use and storage of the mask, and procedures for how to put on and remove a mask. If instructions for putting on and removing the mask are not available, then follow the steps below.



How To Wear a Non-Medical/Medical Grade Mask

Here are some step-by-step instructions for wearing a Non-Medical/Medical Grade mask correctly :

- 1.Clean your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer, before touching the mask
- 2.Hold the mask with the stiff bendable strip on top, and the coloured side facing outwards.
- 3.Hold the mask by the ear loops and place a loop around each ear.
- 4.Mould or pinch the nose strip to conform to the shape of your nose.
- 5.Pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin.

How To Remove A Non-Medical/Medical Grade Mask

After use, the mask will be dirty / contaminated and must be removed and disposed of properly.

So please follow these instructions, to avoid infecting yourself while removing your mask :

- 1.Clean your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer, before touching the mask.
- 2.AVOID touching the front of the mask, because it is contaminated. Only touch the ear loops.
- 3.Hold and unhook both ear loops and gently lift the mask away from your face.
- 4.Holding the mask only by the ear loops dispose of the mask in the trash.
- 5.Clean your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer again, before touching anything else.

For a demonstration of how to apply & remove a mask please follow this link <https://youtu.be/uzwfHlyF-rl>

NOTE:

Disposable face masks should be used once and then thrown in the trash. You should also remove and replace masks when they become moist