

# COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan

## Introduction

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Employers have an obligation under the [Workers Compensation Act](#) to take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of workers and other parties at their workplace. With respect to COVID-19, employers are required to develop and maintain a coronavirus (COVID-19) Safety Plan that outlines the policies, guidelines, and procedures they have put in place to reduce the risk of virus transmission. In accordance with [the orders of the Provincial Health Officer](#), which must be followed in a provincial state of emergency, and [WorkSafeBC](#), this plan must be posted at the worksite.

Please note: amendments to this document will occur as COVID-19 recovery phases evolve.

## Goal

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The goal of this plan and its associated policies and protocols is to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 at the Foundation's offices at 190-855 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, by ensuring that all employees know the measures being put in place by the Foundation as an employer AND ensuring staff know what actions they each need to take.

## Step 1: Risk Assessment

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The first step of this plan was to conduct a hazard risk assessment for COVID-19 transmission in the workplace. This process involved frontline staff, managers, and the joint health and safety committee. We will continue to assess and monitor the workplace after operations resume to ensure risks continue to be identified and managed.

- The virus that causes COVID-19 is understood to spread in several ways. It can spread in droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face.
- The risk of person-to-person transmission increases the closer you come to other people, the more time you spend near them, and the more people you come near.
- The risk of surface transmission increases when many people contact the same surface and when those contacts happen over short periods of time.

Further information can be found on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](#). (All sources and references are listed together at the end of this document.)

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To understand the risk at the Foundation office, we have considered the following questions, as recommended by WorkSafeBC:

1. where do people congregate, such as break rooms, production lines, or meeting rooms?
2. what job tasks or processes require workers to come into close proximity with one another or members of the public?
3. what tools and equipment do people come into contact with in the course of their work?
4. what surfaces are touched often, such as doorknobs, light switches, equipment, and shared resources?

To identify hazards and develop measures to control exposure, WorkSafeBC suggests employers conduct a walk-through of the workplace to identify specific conditions or tasks that may increase the risk of exposure of employees to COVID-19. We conducted an initial walk-through of the Foundation offices on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and have:

- involved frontline employees, managers, and the joint health and safety committee;
- identified areas where people gather, such as kitchens, copy rooms, and meeting rooms;
- identified tasks and processes where employees are close to one another or members of the public. This can occur at the Foundation, in employee vehicles, or at other work locations (e.g. donor / partner meetings).
- identified the objects and equipment that employees share while working.
- identified surfaces that people touch often, such as doorknobs and light switches.

Further walk-throughs will be conducted on a monthly basis or prior to any change in our protocols (e.g. the number of employees allowed into the office), whichever comes first.

From the walk-through, risks were identified and the [WorksafeBC risk matrix](#), below, was used by the COVID-19 Working Group<sup>1</sup> and Health & Safety Committee to determine the level of risk.

		Impact			
		Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Probability	Rare	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	Unlikely	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Moderate	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
	Likely	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Very likely	Medium	High	High	High

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation’s COVID-19 Working Group was created mid-March 2020 in response to the developing pandemic to ensure adequate planning, action and communication. Membership of the group has been adjusted as the focus of the group has shifted, but has included representatives from People & Organizational Effectiveness, Information Systems, Marketing & Communications, President’s Office and the Health & Safety Committee.

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	Hazard	Risk	Who might be harmed?	Probability	Impact	Level of Risk	Control(s) <sup>2</sup> (mitigation)
1	A gap in knowledge or understanding related to COVID-19 transmission and/or the measures in place to minimize risk of transmission	An employee is inadvertently exposed to, or exposes someone else to the virus	Any employee or someone they come in contact with	Moderate	Major	Medium ●	Administrative
2	High touch and shared items, such as door knobs/handles/edges, photocopiers, coffee machine, fridge, hot water tap, water coolers, dishes, dishwasher, food	Someone touches something touched by someone else carrying the virus	Any person who goes into the office	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Elimination Engineering Administrative
3	Age and/or health condition/s of employee	More severe symptoms if COVID-19 contracted	Seniors, those with weakened immune systems or with a pre-existing medical condition such as heart disease, hypertension, lung disease, diabetes and cancer, and/or who are more likely to be hospitalized (eg, pregnant women).	Unlikely	Extreme	Medium ●	Elimination Administrative
4	Physical proximity to colleagues, donors, partners or visitors	Person-to-person transmission	Any person who goes into the office	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Elimination Engineering Administrative PPE

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to WorksafeBC's [guidance on the hierarchy of controls](#) for more information on these levels, including definitions and examples.

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	Hazard	Risk	Who might be harmed?	Probability	Impact	Level of Risk	Control(s) <sup>2</sup> (mitigation)
5	Free movement in and out of the office	Someone in the office contracts the virus and we don't know who or what they've come in contact with	Any person who goes into the office	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Elimination Engineering Administrative
6	Travel	An employee or family member contracts the virus in transit or at their destination	Any employee	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Elimination Engineering Administrative
7	Contact with friends or family more likely to be exposed (e.g, health care workers)	An employee contracts the virus as a result of contact	Any employee in contact with friends or family more likely to be exposed	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Administrative PPE
8	Air circulation	An employee is exposed to airborne virus droplets	Any person who goes into the office	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Engineering
9	Flooring	An employee picks up the virus while walking around the VGH campus	Any employee	Unlikely	Major	Medium ●	Administrative

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## Step 2: Protocols to eliminate or reduce risk

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In selecting and implementing protocols to minimize the risk of virus transmission, the Foundation has looked to the following for information, input, and guidance:

- ❑ orders, guidance, and notices issued by the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Provincial Health Officer and relevant to our work;
- ❑ bulletins issued by the Regional Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and relevant to us;
- ❑ industry-specific (i.e. for offices) guidance on protocols from WorkSafeBC;
- ❑ Vancouver Coastal Health's Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC);
- ❑ staff memos issued by Vancouver Acute Community of Care regarding measures at VGH;
- ❑ Foundation employees, managers, and the joint health and safety committee; and
- ❑ relevant professional and industry associations, e.g. Association of Fundraising Professionals.

## First Level of Protection - Elimination

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The safest way to keep employees from contracting or spreading COVID-19 is to eliminate physical contact with people or objects that may be infected. This will largely be accomplished by allowing the majority of employees to continue to work remotely. We recognize that remote working arrangements may not be possible/desirable for all employees in all roles.

- ❑ Employees are supported to work from home whenever that is the most productive location for them and it does not adversely impact the work of colleagues.
- ❑ Where meetings and social events are concerned, consider safety as a priority, taking advantage of available technology and suitable spaces. Employees are encouraged to hold meetings and social events via GoToMeeting and not physically, whenever possible, even when working at the office.
- ❑ In person fundraising and donor events have been cancelled or postponed.
- ❑ Any visitors / donors / partners coming on site must comply with our safety protocols.

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- ❑ A record of all visitors (name and phone number, date and time of visit) is being maintained at reception for contact tracing purposes.
- ❑ Whenever possible, documents to be signed are uploaded and signed electronically using PandaDoc.
- ❑ There is minimal use of the kitchen other than for access and as the exit from the office.
- ❑ There is no sharing of food in the office. All communal items that cannot be easily cleaned, such as newspapers and magazines have been removed.

## **Second Level of Protection – Engineering controls**

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- ❑ Additional hand sanitizing stations have been installed.
- ❑ Disinfectant and paper towels / cloths are provided throughout the office.
- ❑ Chairs have been removed from the kitchen.
- ❑ Office chairs not to be used have been marked as out of use.
- ❑ In consultation with FMO, air filters will be replaced every 6 months, and wherever possible, high-efficiency filters will be installed.
- ❑ A plexiglass barrier was installed at reception prior to reopening to the public.
- ❑ Enhanced cleaning of the office has been requested through VGH Housekeeping.
- ❑ The main door to the Foundation remains out of use by employees until further notice.
- ❑ The inner kitchen door is kept open at all times.
- ❑ Implemented controlled and limited points of ingress and egress – Donor Relations door to enter, kitchen door to exit (except during an emergency evacuation).
- ❑ A request to FMO for advice on touchless card reader doors has been submitted for both upstairs and at the doors of the Donor Relations office and copy room.
- ❑ A security gate was installed at reception to prevent members of the public from walking beyond reception into the office areas.
- ❑ Boardrooms have been set up with a maximum capacity and only with chairs in marked locations to ensure appropriate physical distancing.

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## Third Level of Protection – Administrative controls

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Administrative controls would include any measure where we ask employees to modify their behaviour. This could be training, posters, guidance, instructions in meetings. We have identified the following actions.

- ❑ All employees are expected to adhere to the guidance on maintaining a physical distance of 2 m (6 ft) wherever and whenever possible. The nature of the office is such that this is often impossible to achieve when entering and exiting or using the kitchen. For this reason all employees working in the office are required to carry a mask they can put on if physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- ❑ The number of employees permitted to work on the ground floor of the Foundation office is restricted to a maximum of 25. On the second floor, the number is restricted to a maximum of 15, giving a total maximum capacity of 40 employees (50% of our staff).<sup>3</sup>
- ❑ Employees are requested to disclose if they are in a high risk group or are living with / caring for someone in such a group. High risk employees are encouraged to work remotely until further notice.
- ❑ Signage has been posted and guidance issued indicating that employees, contractors, or visitors exhibiting COVID-like symptoms are not permitted to enter the office.
- ❑ Any employee considering coming into the office or who has been in the office in the last 14 days, and who has been in direct contact with someone confirmed to have or suspected of having COVID-19, is required to inform their manager and HR immediately, and place themselves in quarantine for a period of 14 days.
- ❑ Any employee who displays symptoms or becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms whilst in the office will be sent home or to seek medical attention immediately. Negative testing will be required before a return to the office.
- ❑ Instruction has been issued to employees on how to communicate and plan a trip or return to the office.
- ❑ Instruction/maps have been issued and posted in the office to indicate those individual offices not to be touched/used in a specified week.
- ❑ Signs/posters have been posted to assist employees in identifying what can and cannot be used/touched throughout the office.

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<sup>3</sup> Public Health has developed guidance for the retail food and grocery store sector that requires at least 5 square metres of unencumbered floor space per person (workers and customers). This allows for variation depending on the size of the facility, and may be a sensible approach for determining maximum capacity for employers from other sectors that do not have specific guidance on capacity from Public Health. *WorksafeBC*

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- ❑ The number of employees who may work in each office in order to maintain physical distancing of 2 m (6 ft.) has been identified and posted on the door of each office, and on the overall office plan.
- ❑ The number of designated employees using a single desk continues to be limited to one (1) wherever possible and to a maximum of two (2).
- ❑ Measures have been put in place to facilitate contact tracing in the event of an employee coming into or suspected of coming into direct contact with the virus. Employees are required to adhere to office maps showing where they can sit and on which days they can be in the office, and to use the office sign-in sheets to indicate their time in an office.
- ❑ Employees are limited to the use of one designated printer/copier.
- ❑ A shared Smartsheet enables employees to indicate if and where they hope to be working during the following week. Requests for the following week should be submitted by end of day on Wednesday.
- ❑ Employees must be particularly mindful of touch points and the need to hand wash when accessing and using washrooms on site.
- ❑ A cleaning protocol has been implemented for all common areas and surfaces, including equipment, tools, common tables, desks, light switches, and door handles.
- ❑ Employees are asked to disinfect any communal object or surface before and after use, and to tidy and disinfect their desk area at the beginning and end of their day in the office. Laptops must be powered down before cleaning the keyboard.
- ❑ Employees are provided with hand sanitizer, disinfectant and paper towels or cloths.
- ❑ Rules and guidelines have been established for movement around the office, and use of the stairs and shared areas. Posters have been put up as a reminder.
- ❑ Safety guidance has been provided for employees who need to conduct an in-person meeting, along with guidance for participants. Where possible, meetings will be conducted online or by phone.
- ❑ Employees are expected not to eat in the kitchen, to use their own cutlery and dishes and to store them by their desk. If they do use shared items, they are to wash them before and after use.
- ❑ Employees may use the water coolers and/or hot water, ensuring that hands are washed or sanitized before and after touching. Any paper towel additionally used to touch taps should be disposed of immediately.



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- ❑ When milk/cream is available, employees are required to wash or sanitize their hands before and after touching. Additionally, a paper towel may be used to touch anything that may be touched by another (and disposed of immediately).
- ❑ Guidance has been issued regarding when workers must wash their hands, including on arrival at work, before and after breaks, and before and after handling cash or other shared resources and equipment.
- ❑ All employees have been and will continue to be informed of COVID-19 measures, policies and procedures, including up-to-date education and training on risk factors and protective behaviours (for example, transmission points, equipment cleaning processes, cough etiquette and handwashing, use of masks).
- ❑ Employees using the boardrooms are responsible for cleaning and sanitizing all surfaces and touch points before and after each meeting.
- ❑ Employees are encouraged to minimize their time spent on the VGH campus outside the Foundation office, particularly high traffic points such as elevators, cafeterias, and the main entrance to the Jim Pattison Pavilion.
- ❑ Non-essential transportation or business travel should be limited and on an exceptional basis only.
- ❑ The use of shared vehicles is to be avoided. If required, appropriate disinfection procedures must be followed before and after travel for vehicle surfaces such as the steering wheel, gear shift, and door handles. There should be a maximum of 2 people in a car, with the passenger sitting in the back on the non-driver side.
- ❑ Employees are required to inform their manager and HR of any planned travel that will take them outside the province. Employees are currently required to quarantine for a period of 14 days upon return from travel, according to the guidelines from the Provincial Health Officer.
- ❑ Where employees are meeting offsite with donors, partners or service providers, they are expected to not attend if feeling unwell, wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after, maintain a 2-metre distance, wear and require other attendees to wear a face mask if a 2-metre distance is not possible, minimize touch points, not share food or drink, and record details of who attended the meeting.
- ❑ Walk-throughs of the office will be conducted monthly or prior to any change in protocols (e.g. the number of employees allowed into the office), whichever comes first. These will identify any further risk or where protocols need to be adjusted.

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## Last Level of Protection – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is a last resort, to be used only when the first three levels of protection cannot be used.

- ❑ We have reviewed the information on selecting and using masks and instructions on how to use a mask. We understand the limitations of masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets.
- ❑ Employees are expected to wear a non-medical face mask if they are in a situation where they cannot avoid coming within 2 metres of someone else. We have provided [guidance to employees](#) on the proper use of masks; [further guidance](#) is available on the BC Centre for Disease Control website.
- ❑ All employees working in the office are expected to carry a mask they can put on if physical distancing cannot be maintained as they enter, exit or access shared resources.
- ❑ Hand sanitizer is provided throughout the office. Masks are available and provided upon request

## Step 3: Supporting Policies

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Additional or revised policies will be developed to support this plan, as follows.

- ❑ Revised policy and procedures on sickness, which covers what to do when employees can and cannot be in the office, when they may work remotely, and when to call in sick. Employees who appear to have symptoms should remain home and either work from home or take a sick day off. Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, donors, and visitors and sent home. If the employee is able to be tested, the employee should not be allowed to return to the workplace until the employee tests negative for COVID-19 and has completed any self-isolation period mandated by public health authorities. If the employee is unable to be tested, the employee should not return to the workplace until the employee has completed any mandated self-isolation period and has been free of symptoms for the recommended period of time.
- ❑ Those prohibited from the workplace:

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- ⊗ Anyone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days. Symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
- ⊗ Anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate.
- ⊗ Anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada or who has had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- ⊗ Donors, VCH partners or other non-essential visitors, whenever possible.
- ❑ Revised first aid protocol, which covers instruction for those requiring first aid, and guidance for first aiders.
- ❑ Revised remote working policy that covers required remote working due to a pandemic, childcare, core hours, flexible working arrangements, dress code for online meetings etc.
- ❑ Revised working alone policy.
- ❑ Self-disclosure policy whereby employees can disclose that they are at higher risk (without disclosing personal details or sensitive medical information).
- ❑ Revised guidance on employee right to refuse unsafe work.

## Step 4: Communication & Training

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Our communication of this plan consists of the following

- ❑ A PowerPoint presentation and accompanying slide notes – presented at the All Staff townhall meeting on 21 May, and shared on [Workplace](#) for future reference.
- ❑ A copy of this plan: emailed to All Staff, posted on Foundation Wide, on our website, and physically posted on both ground and second floors of the office.
- ❑ Office maps and instructions emailed out to All Staff on Thursday of each week for the following week and posted physically in the office.
- ❑ Posters and office sign-up sheets posted throughout the office, echoing and reinforcing aspects of the plan.

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- ❑ A member of the COVID-19 Working Group, on behalf of the Leadership Team, will be on site each day to provide guidance and respond to immediate concerns and/or questions.
- ❑ The COVID-19 Working Group will meet regularly to review and plan.
- ❑ Employees returning to the office for the first time will be provided with an orientation session to familiarize them with office protocols.
- ❑ Guidance and a checklist will be provided to ensure returning employees are informed of all relevant measures.
- ❑ An updated [FAQ document](#) will be posted on Workplace, highlighting any additional or changing protocols.

## Step 5: Monitoring

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- ❑ Members of the Leadership Team will be on site each day to model requested behaviour and respond to immediate concerns, in addition to a member of the COVID-19 Working Group.
- ❑ Questions and comments arising from the weekly townhall meetings will be monitored by the Leadership Team and COVID-19 Working Group.
- ❑ The COVID-19 Working Group will meet regularly to review and plan.
- ❑ Periodic walk-throughs of the office will be conducted using a [checklist](#)
- ❑ Periodic pulse checks will be conducted to gauge employee wellness, perceptions of safety and the level of confidence in the Foundation's measures and communication.

## Step 6: Assess and address risks from resuming operations

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Additional risks may arise as a result of the relaxation of restrictions and return to office working. Actions to mitigate such risks include:

- ❑ Monitoring by the COVID-19 Working Group
- ❑ Updating of this Plan and further communication/s to employees as required
- ❑ Creating a revised onboarding and training plan for new and returning staff.

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- ❑ Adapting training plans for employees taking on new roles or responsibilities.

## Supporting Resources

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BC Provincial Government Restart Plan - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>

Workers Compensation Act -

<http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/content/complete/statreg/901199259/1241438022/965723187/?xsl=/templates/browse.xsl>

BC Centre for Disease Control (the best source for COVID-19 health information) – <http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>

WorkSafeBC COVID-19 information and resources - <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates>

Provincial Health Officer Orders, Notices & Guidance - <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 legislation re Workplace COVID-19 Safety Plans, [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/class\\_order\\_employers\\_covid-19\\_safety\\_plans\\_covid-19\\_may\\_14\\_final.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/class_order_employers_covid-19_safety_plans_covid-19_may_14_final.pdf)

Vancouver Coastal Health's COVID-19 information - <https://my.vch.ca/covid19>

Vancouver Coastal Health's Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) - <http://ipac.vch.ca/>

IPAC's guidance for Administrative Staff on the hospital campus - <http://ipac.vch.ca/Documents/COVID-19/Dress%20Codes%20and%20PPE/Dress%20Code%20Administrative.pdf>

Foundation resources and communications relating to COVID-19 -

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sp8aqxwzmv7pghy/AACLJD5DA4EsVaclxYmFHf0Qa?dl=0>

WorksafeBC – Controlling Risks - <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/managing-risk/controlling-risks>