

## Safety Plan Resource Guide

The *Re-Opening Ontario Act, 2020* requires that the following workplaces have a [safety plan](#) if they are in communities in the Protect (yellow), Restrict (orange) or Control (red) zone:

- Restaurants, bars, and food or drink establishments;
- Sports and recreational facilities;
- Meeting and event spaces;
- Malls;
- Personal care services;
- Casinos, bingo halls, and other gaming establishments;
- Cinemas; and
- Performing arts facilities

All businesses that are open during Lockdown (grey zone) are required to have safety plans.

In addition, [Instructions](#) issued by Hamilton's Medical Officer of Health require all retail and workplaces to have a safety plan.

Your safety plan helps you to organize and carry out all the actions necessary to keep your workplace as safe as possible and deal with COVID-19 cases that may occur in your employees or customers.

Your safety plan is required by law under the *Reopening Ontario Act*, and there are potential financial penalties for not having one.

### Elements of safety plans

#### Active Screening

Active screening involves making sure every employee and customer is asked a series of questions about COVID-19 symptoms, travel or exposure to COVID-19 cases. If someone has one or more COVID-19 symptoms or exposure to a COVID-19 case, they should not be allowed to work (if an employee) or come into your business (if a customer, supplier or contractor). A number of workplace outbreaks have been the result of employees with mild symptoms continuing to work, emphasizing the importance of active screening.

## Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Measures

Steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections include wearing masks, physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette – coughing or sneezing into tissues or your sleeve. These steps are important because active screening will not identify:

- individuals with asymptomatic COVID-19 infections, i.e. people who are infectious but who have no symptoms of infection;
- individuals with pre-symptomatic COVID-19 infections, i.e. people who are infectious for two or three days before they develop COVID-19 symptoms.

IPAC measures are vital steps to protect you, your employees and your customers.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

The most likely route of COVID-19 transmission is from person-to-person spread of infected respiratory droplets when people are close together, but contaminated surfaces may also spread the virus. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces with an approved disinfectant is an important infection control measure.

## Developing a safety plan

It is possible that someone in your workplace will contract COVID-19. Hamilton Public Health Services (HPHS) can support you and provide resources to help respond to such a situation.

Resources required to develop a safety plan can be found the [Ministry of Health Website](#). Hamilton Public Health Services has created this additional resource, with sample answers for the six questions in the Provincial safety plan, to help with the development of your plan.

The six questions in the safety plan that correspond to our answers below include:

- How will you ensure all workers know how and are able to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19?
- How will you screen for COVID-19?
- How will you control the risk of transmission in your workplace?
- What will you do if there is a potential case of, or suspected exposure to, COVID-19 at your workplace?
- How will you manage any new risks caused by changes to the way you operate your business?
- How will you make sure your plan is working?

## 1. Keeping employees safe from exposure

Factors to consider for keeping employees and customers safe from exposure	Description
Screening: active screening is now mandatory for all workplaces	<p>Screen all individuals daily prior to entering the workplace using one of the tools below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Health online <a href="#">COVID-19 self-assessment tool</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">City of Hamilton screening tool</a></li> <li>• Ministry of Health <a href="#">Screening Tool for Workplaces</a></li> <li>• Your own tool (note: it must contain all of the questions from the Ministry screening tool for Workplaces and must be kept updated, <a href="#">current edition</a>)</li> </ul>
Employee Education: training on procedures	<p>Education for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">COVID-19 symptoms</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">COVID-19 management</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Public Health Practices/Hierarchy of Controls</a></li> <li>○ Videos for <a href="#">hierarchy of controls</a>, <a href="#">handwashing</a> and <a href="#">wearing a face-covering</a>,</li> </ul> <p>Post:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Face-covering requirements</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Passive screening signs</a></li> </ul> <p>Consider posting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Hand-washing/hand-sanitizing</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Respiratory etiquette</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">How to wear a face covering</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Workplace hygiene</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Workplace PPE requirements</a></li> </ul> <p>Educate employees on what to do if they feel unsafe at work and inform them of available <a href="#">support</a>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ontario's Health and Safety Contact Centre – 1-877-202-0008</li> <li>○ City of Hamilton COVID-19 (905) 974-9848</li> </ul>
Workplace policies	<p>Develop policies to support individuals needing to stay home when unwell or if they are required to <a href="#">self-isolate</a> due to COVID infection or as a <a href="#">close contact</a>.</p> <p>Ensure employees are aware of policies and how to access them.</p>

<p>Know the law: sector-specific requirements, regulations and by-laws</p>	<p><a href="#">Sector-specific guidance</a>          Provincial Regulations- <a href="#">Re-opening Ontario Act 2020</a> &amp; <a href="#">O. Reg. 263/20: Rules for Areas in Stage 2</a>          Hamilton’s <a href="#">face covering By-law</a>          Ontario <a href="#">Occupational Health and Safety Act</a>          Ontario <a href="#">Workplace Safety and Insurance Act</a></p>
<p>Mental health supports</p>	<p>Remind employees about social and <a href="#">mental health support resources</a></p>
<p>Employee communications</p>	<p>Communicate clearly and often with employees, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• important safety measures, public health measures and workplace policies by email, social media, team meetings or t intercom announcements.</li> <li>• In languages spoken by employees.</li> </ul> <p>Post safety plans and other important documents in a common area.</p>

## 2. Screening for COVID-19

Screen all individuals (workers, volunteers, suppliers and contractors) daily prior to entering the workplace. Screening may be done in-person, online or verbally.

- Ministry of Health online [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#)
- [City of Hamilton screening tool](#)
- Ministry of Health [screening tool for workplaces](#)
- Your own tool (note: it must contain all of the questions from the Ministry screening tool for workplaces, [current edition](#)).

Workplaces must be able to demonstrate that they have implemented a screening system and that it is working as intended. An inspector will need to be able to determine compliance with the law. Workplaces can consider various ways of demonstrating that they are compliant with the screening requirements, including by keeping a daily record of individuals who were screened (if you are keeping contact tracing records, this can be recorded on the same form).

Organizations and businesses required to screen patrons must use or ask questions similar to those found in the City of Hamilton’s [COVID-19 Screening Tool](#). Customers who do not pass screening should be advised that they cannot enter and advised to self-isolate and seek testing. Records of screening do not need to be maintained.

To support safe screening:

- points of entry into the business/organization should be limited.
- the use and layout of space should allow for 2 metres to be maintained during screening.
- a physical barrier or appropriate personal protective equipment should be used if physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- encourage customers to use alcohol-based hand rub/sanitizer before entering the premise.

In addition to active screening a [sign](#) should be posted at the entrance reminding ill employees, clients or customers not to enter the workplace if they have COVID-19 symptoms. For retail establishments with only one employee who are unable to actively screen, the [COVID-19 Screening Tool](#) must be posted on the entrance of the establishment.

**Temperature checks are not required or recommended.**

Your response to this question should contain the following information:

- Where and how is the screening tool accessed and completed?
- If online, where is it sent? Who verifies that it has been completed and that the employee is safe to enter the workplace?
- If it is a paper-based screen, where is it completed? who reviews it and authorizes entrance to the workplace? Where and how are these results stored?
- If active screening is completed with verbal questions, where and who completes this? Where and how is the information stored?

Example #1 of sample response for safety plan screening: All individuals entering the workplace will be screened daily. The workplace will create an online template with the same questions from the Screening Tool for Workplaces. Our Human Resources department is responsible for checking that the questions on our platform continue to match those from the Screening Tool for Workplaces every week. Employees will be required to complete daily screening before attending work. An email will automatically be sent to a supervisor with screening results (and if screening has not been completed) to determine work suitability. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that no member of their team enters the workplace unscreened. Employees also sign an attestation form that they will complete daily self-screening and will follow the results of the screening tool as a condition of their continued employment at our company. Results are stored in a password protected database.

Example #2 of a sample response for safety plan screening: Our door remains locked with a sign that informs employees and customers to text reception or use the buzzer on the left-hand side of the door when they arrive. Employees and customers will be screened verbally prior to entering the workplace by \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name of job title/individual responsible for screening) using the provincial list of COVID-19 symptoms. Our front door also displays a poster reminding individuals not feeling well not to enter. Results will be documented by the person screening on the same paper where contact tracing information is kept. This information

will be stored securely for 30 days in a locked filing cabinet after which time it will be shredded. Individuals who fail the screening will not be allowed into the workplace.

### 3. Controlling the risk of transmission in your workplace

#### **Physical distancing and barriers**

All individuals should have a space of 2 metres (6 feet) between themselves and others.

When it is not possible to ensure that workers are able physically distance from co-workers, customers, and others, consider [using barriers](#) to separate people.

To lower the risk of COVID-19 spread in the workplace:

- Offer telecommuting or work from home options for employees.
- Restrict the number of individuals allowed into the workplace to allow for physical distancing and adequate flow of movement.
- Reduce the number of individuals in elevators and stairwells at a given time.
- Rearrange furniture to ensure that employees/staff are spaced apart.
- Stagger start and end times and schedule different break times to reduce large numbers of people coming together at the same time.
- Promote contactless payment and delivery/pick-up options.
- Develop policies that restrict the amount of time individuals can remain in a particular space (e.g. retail customers are asked to limit the amount of time that they browse to x minutes).

#### **PPE & source control masking**

- Ensure clients, customers and visitors to your workplace are reminded of the [requirement to wear a face covering](#) in enclosed public places.
- [Post face-covering requirements](#) in a visible spot for others to see upon entering the establishment.
- Follow the PPE requirements as per [sector-specific guidance](#) and the *Re-opening Ontario Act, 2020* for your establishment.

#### **Hygiene practices in the workplace**

- Display posters promoting [hand-washing](#) and [respiratory etiquette](#) strategically in the workplace.
- Where soap and water are not available, supply hand sanitizer and remind customers and staff to wash hands frequently.
- Regularly [clean and disinfect](#) high-touch surfaces such as point of sale transaction equipment, elevator buttons, keyboards, mouse, phones, desks, computers, door knobs, light switches, seating areas, lunch tables, kitchens, and washrooms.
- Use cleaners and disinfectants that are effective against COVID-19. Use brands with a Drug Identification Number (DIN) that are [approved by Health Canada](#).

## Ventilation

- Enclosed and crowded spaces increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Ensure that air-handling (HVAC) systems are maintained according to the manufacturer’s instructions and meet [industry guidelines and standards](#).
- The Ontario Ministry recommends considering:
  - Portable air cleaners
  - Opening windows and doors where possible
  - Ventilation and air exchange after regular business hours
  - Use of outdoor space when possible for meetings, breaks, and client interactions such as curbside pick-up.

## 4. Management of a potential case or exposure in the workplace

<b>Management of a potential case or exposure of COVID-19 in the workplace</b>
Direct the individual feeling unwell to stay home (if at home) or to go home (if at work), <a href="#">self-isolate</a> and book COVID-19 <a href="#">testing</a>
If your workplace has a designated isolation area, ask the individual to wait there if necessary, e.g. if the person needs to wait to be picked up. Ideally the isolation area should have a door and provide a safe space for someone to wait without exposing others.
Clean and <a href="#">disinfect</a> areas where individuals with COVID-19 symptoms was located and any surfaces they may have contacted as soon as possible. Follow public health advice for cleaning and disinfection measures to reduce the risk of spread in the setting.
Call Hamilton Public Health Services (905) 974-9848 option 4 for further guidance/advice as required.
<b>IF CONFIRMED COVID-19 positive case</b>
Call Hamilton Public Health Services at (905) 974-9848 for direction and support. Public Health will help determine if your employee was careful and consistent in using a mask while at work, during breaks and meals, and if they were able to practice physical distancing and hand hygiene regularly. Employees in <a href="#">close contact</a> (less than 2 metres away from another individual, especially for a prolonged period of time) with the case, have had potential exposure and will need to self-isolate.
Keep a list with names and contact information for each person in your workplace who had or may have had contact with the individual who tested positive. This list should be made available if requested by Public Health. You must keep this information for at least 30 days. Store it privately and securely (e.g. in a locked cabinet or password protected database) before destroying it in a safe manner, e.g. shredding.

Communicate clearly and often with your other employees while keeping the personal health information of the employee with COVID-19 confidential. In a small workplace, others may know who this employee is, however, as an employer you must do everything you can to safeguard the personal health information of your employees. A sample communication can be found on [online](#) (under “Common questions about COVID-19 exposure and outbreaks”).

Report to the [Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development](#) within 4 calendar days and [Workplace Safety and Insurance Board](#) (WSIB) within 3 calendar days if you were advised that one of your employees has tested positive due to an exposure at the workplace.

- For more information please contact the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development: Employment Standards Information Centre: Toll-free: 1-800-531-5551
- For more information please contact the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Telephone: 416-344-1000 or Toll-free: 1-800-387-0750

Employees can return to work after 10 days since the start of their symptoms or, if they didn’t have symptoms, since the date of their test, as long as they no longer have fever and symptoms are improving or resolved. Other workers who were close contacts (regardless if they test COVID-positive or COVID-negative) may only return to work after the 14 day [self-isolation](#) period. **Do not require a repeat test or physician note as a condition of return.**

### 5. Managing new business risks that may arise from COVID-19

Each workplace will need to determine their unique risks and challenges that may arise as a result of COVID-19. Examples of some common risks are below:

Examples of common risks	Examples of risk mitigation strategies
<p>Increased employee absences as a result of infection, the need to self-isolate or to care for others in their family who have COVID-19.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of flexible workplace policies to support employee absences.</li> <li>• Cross-training of staff in other jobs/departments based on a predicted absentee rate.</li> <li>• Reducing the burden of requiring sick notes as these are difficult for employees to get and create added stress.</li> <li>• Ability for staff to transition to remote work if needed.</li> </ul>
<p>Employee stress and job transitions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Mental well-being resources</a> promoted frequently and available in an easily accessible location (e.g. website).</li> <li>• Job transitions supported by management, skill-training program, and weekly check-in meetings</li> </ul>



Financial strain due to the pandemic and ability to supply necessary PPE and personnel needed for increased safety requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of available <a href="#">financial support for businesses</a></li> <li>• Be aware of how to source <a href="#">PPE for businesses</a></li> </ul>
Working remotely: ergonomics and internet connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit employees to use <a href="#">office equipment</a> such as chairs and computer monitors at home.</li> <li>• Have IT department ensure secure internet access for employees working remotely.</li> </ul>

### 6. Ensuring your plan is working

Reviewing the safety plan to ensure that it is working to keep your business safe and open is important. The example below outlines what to review to determine efficacy.

Review of	Frequency of Review	By Whom
Safety plan		
Operations (day-to-day management of establishment)		
Communications to employees & patrons		
Contact tracing process/ record of patrons including data storage and destruction		