

Personal services:

Protocols for returning to operation

The following content was posted to WorkSafeBC's website on June 15, 2020. For the most current version, please visit [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com).

These protocols are for employers providing personal services, including barbers, hairdressers, nail salons, and aestheticians. These employers with concession stands should also refer to guidance provided for [food and drink services](#), and may also benefit from reviewing other protocols if includes other work environments such as [office space](#), or [retail services](#). Employers must also ensure they are abiding by any [orders, notices, or guidance issued by the provincial health officer](#), and the appropriate health authority, which are relevant to their workplace.

Developing a COVID-19 safety plan

Employers are required to develop a [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) that outlines the policies, guidelines, and procedures they have put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Employers must involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for their workplace.

The COVID-19 Safety Plan follows the six steps outlined on [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#). You can also refer to the [COVID-19 Safety Plan OHS Guideline](#) for information about developing a safety plan, including the level of detail required and using supporting documentation.

Employers are not required to submit plans to WorkSafeBC for approval, but in accordance with the order of the [provincial health officer](#), this **plan must be posted** at the worksite. During a WorkSafeBC inspection, we will ask employers about the steps they have taken to protect their workers or to see the plan if it has been developed.

One part of developing your COVID-19 Safety Plan is identifying protocols that everyone at the workplace must follow to keep workers safe. We've provided industry-specific protocols below to consider as you develop the plan for your workplace.

These protocols are not a list of requirements; however, they should be considered and implemented to the extent that they address the risks your workplace. You may need to identify and implement additional protocols if the protocols suggested here do not sufficiently address the risk to your workers.

Understanding the risk

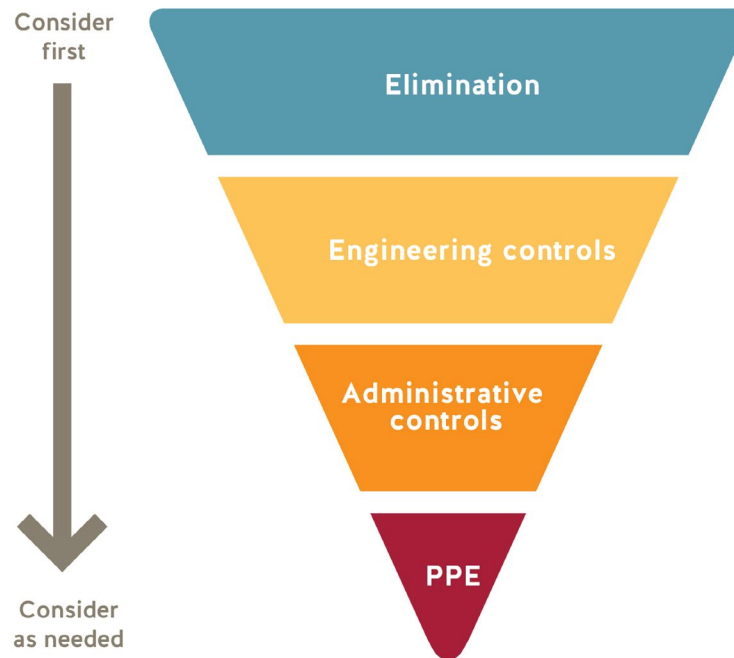
The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, and from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face. Higher risk situations require adequate protocols to address the risk.

- The risk of person-to-person transmission is increased the closer you come to other people, the amount of time you spend near them, and the number of people you come near. Physical distancing measures help mitigate this risk.

- The risk of surface transmission is increased when many people contact same surface, and when those contacts happen in short intervals of time. Effective cleaning and hygiene practices help mitigate this risk.

Selecting protocols for your workplace

Note that different protocols offer different protection. Wherever possible, use the protocols that offer the highest level of protection and add additional protocols as required.



First level protection (elimination): Use policies and procedures to keep people at a safe physical distance from one another. Limit the number of people in your workplace at any one time, and implement protocols to keep workers at least 2 metres from other workers, customers, and members of the public.

Second level protection (engineering controls): If you can't always maintain physical distancing, install **barriers** such as plexiglass to separate people.

Third level protection (administrative controls): Establish rules and guidelines, such as cleaning protocols, telling workers to not share tools, or implementing one-way doors or walkways.

Fourth level protection (PPE): If the first three levels of protection aren't enough to control the risk, consider the use of **non-medical masks**. Be aware of the limitation of non-medical masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets. Ensure workers are **using masks appropriately**.

Protocols for personal services

Effective May 19, 2020, the office of the provincial health officer is cancelling its order to personal services establishments to close. Below are protocols to consider as part of your preparations to reopen. Guidance for additional personal service providers will be added as they are developed.

Managing the workplace

- Determine and post occupancy limits for common areas. See the [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) for guidance on establishing occupancy limits.
- Rearrange gathering areas such as break areas, lunch rooms, and supply rooms to ensure safe physical distances can be maintained. This may involve removing or moving furniture.
- Arrange workstations of hairstylists, barbers, nail technicians, estheticians, or other staff to ensure adequate physical distancing of 2 metres between stations is maintained.
- Consider creating cohorts of workers who work together and who do not interact with other cohorts. This will assist in reducing transmission throughout the workplace in the event that a staff member becomes ill.
- Examine reception, retail, and other interior areas to determine how workers and clients can move through the area while maintaining physical distance. Consider marking off areas on the floor where people can wait in line with markers or cones. Use arrows to show how people should move past one another in congested areas.
- Remove magazine racks, booklets, brochures, toys, and product sell sheets from client areas, including the reception area and lobby.
- Remove product testers.
- Control access to entry points for workers, clients and deliveries. If the building has multiple access points, consider designating one door for entry and another for exit.
- Provide **barriers**, such as plexiglass, at the reception desk, between service stations or sink areas, or other areas where the physical distancing requirement cannot be maintained. Ensure that **barriers** are included in the cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- Stagger lunch and coffee breaks.
- Try to limit the use of cash and limit the handling of credit cards and loyalty cards wherever possible, by allowing clients to scan or tap their cards and handle the card readers themselves. Encourage tap payment over pin pad use.
- Post COVID-19 protocols using signage for both workers and clients throughout the workplace. Consider posting signage in other majority languages or provide pictograms.
- Consider posting COVID-19 related policies to the company website and to social media. Include the policies in an email confirmation for clients after booking so they know what to expect.
- Ensure you coordinate the health and safety of both workers and independent operators working in your spa or salon, such as stylists, nail artists and individuals providing esthetic services.

Client management

- Establish policies and procedures around clients entering the premise:
 - » Ask clients when booking whether they have symptoms of COVID-19. Ask them to cancel their appointment if they develop symptoms or have a family member who is confirmed or suspected of COVID-19. Remind clients of this policy when they arrive for their appointment.

- » Advise clients to remain outside the premises until their scheduled appointment time.
 - » Clients should arrive alone if possible (i.e., no children, friends or family accompaniment allowed). Include consideration for disabled individuals and those persons who require accompaniment (e.g. a parent or guardian).
 - » For retail-only sales, arrange in advance and schedule a pick-up time to avoid overlapping of service clients waiting in reception, or checking in or out for services.
- Eliminate booking large groups for services unless physical distancing can be maintained.
 - Implement procedures to limit the number of people on-site. Consider prohibiting walk-ins and requiring all appointments be booked in advance. Consider locking the premise when at capacity and place signage on the door with contact information so clients can make an appointment.
 - Avoid shaking hands or other unnecessary physical contact.
 - Have all clients wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer upon entering your place of business.
 - Ask clients to remove and replace their own jacket rather than be assisted by a staff member.
 - Consider suspending the practice of offering tea, coffee, water, or other food and beverage items to clients. If you do continue this practice, use disposable cups or offer bottled beverages instead of shared items.
 - Establish policies around handwashing. This should include having workers wash hands before and after each client, at the beginning and end of shift, after handling money and after touching used towels, gowns, tools and equipment, and delivery items. **Put up signage or posters.**

Providing personal services

- For services where physical distancing cannot be maintained and other control measures such as **barriers** cannot be used, masks should be worn to reduce the risk of transmission. Cloth and surgical masks may not protect the wearer from the virus because they do not form a tight seal with the face, but they can reduce the spread of the wearer's respiratory droplets to others. For that reason, clients should be required to wear masks for these services to protect workers. Workers should also wear masks to protect clients. Refer to WorkSafeBC guidance on **selecting and using masks**.
- Inform clients if masks will be required for their services at the time they book the appointment. Post signage at the workplace of this requirement.
- Provide masks for clients who have not brought their own.
- Use larger treatment rooms wherever possible.
- Restrict or prohibit services identified as "high risk" where appropriate controls cannot be implemented. This may include facials or threading services that require close contact over extended periods and where clients cannot wear masks.
- Allow workers to wear gowns, smocks, or aprons to cover street clothing. Have these items removed and laundered at the end of each workday.
- Establish hand washing practices that include washing hands before and after every client. Avoid touching the face (eyes, nose, and mouth) while providing services to clients.
- Public Health has advised that blow drying hair, including the use of bonnet style and hooded hair dryers, is not believed to be a high risk activity at this time and that these services can continue to take place. For the comfort of all customers, be mindful to direct the air away from other clients as much as possible.

Tools and equipment

- Establish hygiene practices that address the needs of the workplace that includes the requirement to **wash or sanitize hands** after coming into contact with public items.
- Minimize the sharing of tools, equipment and product (e.g. shears, irons, nail clippers, gowns, etc.). Provide each worker their own set of tools if possible.
- Use single-use items, such as single use make-up applicators if possible, and discard these after use. **Guidance for single-use disposable items** is provided in Guidelines for Personal Service Establishments by the Ministry of Health.

Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting

- Add additional time between all appointments to allow for proper cleaning and disinfecting, and incorporate this into your cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
- Clean and disinfect workplace frequently throughout day, between clients, and at end of day. Follow the **cleaning and disinfecting guidance** provided by WorkSafeBC.
- Reduce the amount of retail products on shelves for easier cleaning.
- Clean and disinfect all tools and equipment between each client.

Body art studios and (semi-) permanent makeup application

- Arrange workstations of tattoo artists, body piercers, laser tattoo removal technicians, or other staff to ensure adequate physical distance of 2 metres between stations is maintained.
- Provide release and consent forms online.
- For services where physical distancing cannot be maintained and other control measures such as barriers cannot be used, masks should be worn to reduce the risk of transmission. Cloth and surgical masks may not protect the wearer from the virus because they do not form a tight seal with the face, but they can reduce the spread of the wearer's respiratory droplets to others. For that reason, clients should be required to wear masks for these services to protect workers. Workers should also wear masks to protect clients. Refer to WorkSafeBC guidance on **selecting and using masks**. Ensure workers know how to **properly use masks**.
- Inform clients if masks will be required for their services at the time they book the appointment. Post signage at the workplace of this requirement.
- Provide masks for clients who have not brought their own.
- Use larger treatment rooms wherever possible.
- Establish and communicate **hand washing policies**. These should include washing hands before and after every client after each client consultation/service, at the beginning and end of shift, after handling money and after touching used body jewelry, and tools and equipment. Put up signage or posters and ensure handwashing or sanitizing stations and supplies are available.
- Sanitize chairs or beds after each use. Ask clients to wash or sanitize their hands before services are provided.
- Allow workers to wear gowns, smocks, or aprons to cover street clothing. Have these items removed and laundered at the end of each workday.
- Provide virtual options for workers and clients such as email and video conferencing for consultations, trouble-shooting, and after care services.
- Avoid touching the face (eyes, nose, and mouth) while providing services to clients.
- Minimize the sharing of tools, equipment, and product (e.g. tattoo machine, ink, and body piercing

equipment etc.). Ensure that all single use items (tattoo needles, ink-caps) are disposed of in a sealed container (e.g. lidded canister). Use disposable covers such as clip cord covers for tools and equipment where possible.

- Limit clients handling body jewellery. Jewellery should remain individually packaged until purchased or inserted by a service provider.
- Reduce the amount of retail products such as body jewellery on shelves for easier cleaning.

Additional resources

The following associations may have additional information, guidance, or resources that may assist you in the development of your plan.

- [Beauty Council of Western Canada](#)
- [BC Barbers Coalition](#)
- [BC Barbers' Association](#)

For more information

The information on this page is based on current recommendations and may change. For the latest guidance, please see the health information from the [British Columbia Centre for Disease Control](#) and the latest news from the [government of British Columbia](#).

If you have a question or concern

Workers and employers with questions or concerns about workplace exposure to COVID-19 can call WorkSafeBC's Prevention Information Line at 604.276.3100 in the Lower Mainland (toll-free within B.C. at 1.888.621.SAFE). You'll be able to speak to a prevention officer to get answers to your questions, and if required, a prevention officer will be assigned to assess the health and safety risk at your workplace.

Translated resources

Our key COVID-19 related resources are also available in [Chinese \(simplified\)](#), [Chinese \(traditional\)](#), [French](#), [Punjabi](#), [Spanish](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

Resources

COVID-19 Safety Plan

Employers are required to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan that outlines the policies, guidelines, and procedures they have put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This tool will guide...

COVID-19 health and safety: Selecting and using masks

Employers and workers may choose to use masks as part of safe work practices for COVID-19. This information sheet outlines the limitations of masks as a protective measure, and describes how to select...

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19: How to use a mask

This poster illustrates the steps to follow to put on and take off a mask safely. Additional...

COVID-19 health and safety: Designing effective barriers

To help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, employers must implement measures to reduce the risk of person-to-person transmission. This resource will help you decide when to use barriers...

[See more resources](#)