

# Parks:

## Protocols for returning to operation

The following content was posted to WorkSafeBC's website on May 22, 2020. For the most current version, please visit [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com).

These protocols are for those responsible for health and safety in B.C. parks. Those 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. This plan follows the six steps outlined on [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#). Employers must involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for their workplace. You do not need a formal plan in place to begin operation, but are expected to develop it while protecting the safety of your workers.

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.

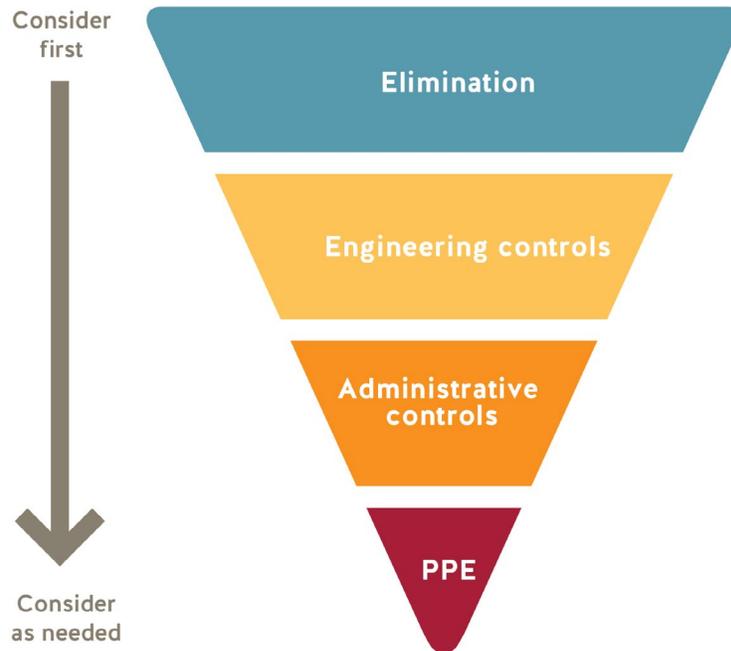
### Understanding the risk

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 parks

### Prepare your workplace

- Review and coordinate roles and responsibilities with all contractors, suppliers, and staff. Employers should develop procedures to ensure contractors are aware of your health and safety program requirements, including relevant COVID-19 related protocols and are following protocols of their own.
- For locations where parks staff are working from multi-ministry or regional offices, coordination is required to ensure plans align across locations.
- Review staffing levels and adjust as needed to ensure enhanced cleaning of high-touch areas and enhanced staff presence to manage park visitors.
- Determine the maximum number of people in each area or space to maintain physical distancing requirements. See the [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) for guidance on establishing occupancy limits.
- In welcoming visitors, send out information through regular marketing channels and social media about limitations, rules, limited facilities, and service to manage expectations during partial openings.
- Provide signage and information regarding rules and process throughout the facility including park, beach, sport court, and general outdoor areas. Consider posting signage in other majority languages or provide pictograms.
- Consider enhanced measure to maintain the physical distancing requirement:
  - » Control entry and exit points for visitors and workers
  - » Manage the flow of people by implementing one-way walkways or marking off designated walking areas
- 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.
- Ensure workers who have been away, or are new to the workplace, are oriented as necessary so that all COVID-19 related procedures are explained and understood.
- Identify situations where personal protective equipment (PPE) will be required. Clarify who will provide PPE and train workers accordingly.
- Identify a process to regularly review and/or update protocols and include workers in your review process.

### Shared workspaces (worker only)

#### General worker protocols

- Establish and [post occupancy limits](#) for office space, lunch rooms, vehicles and other common areas. Ensure physical distancing can be maintained.
- Limit in-person meetings and other gatherings and hold any meetings in larger open spaces.
- 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.
- Post cleaning procedures and worker expectations in all common spaces.
- Before entering any shared space such as vehicle or office, wash hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Clarify procedures to wipe down or disinfect shared office equipment before use.
- Maintain at least a 2 metre distance from other workers. If the physical distancing requirement

cannot be maintained, hold a meeting to address solutions.

- Consider holding meetings in small groups and maintain physical distancing. Hold meetings in open spaces or outside if possible.

### **Vehicles**

- Employers should assess the number of workers being transported or sharing vehicles at any given time and employ measures to ensure at least 2 metres of distance between workers is maintained.
- Whenever possible, workers should travel alone in their vehicles. Employers must implement all the necessary safeguards related to working alone or in isolation to ensure the safety of these workers.
- Measures that may be taken to ensure at least 2 metres of distance include the following:
  - » Have workers sit one to a seat
  - » Stagger riders to allow for maximum distance
  - » Adjust the number of workers per trip and the overall number of trips needed to transport workers to a worksite
  - » If possible, use larger vehicles or multiple vehicles
- Track who drives which vehicles and minimize changes in teams or vehicle assignments. Consider creating consistency in crews of workers using vehicles together and performing shifts or work tasks together.
- If it is not possible to ensure 2 metres of distance between workers in a vehicle through these measures, the employer must consider other control measures, such as PPE where appropriate.
- Employers must also implement a process that allows for physical distancing when loading and unloading buses or other vehicles. Workers waiting for loading and unloading should maintain physical distancing while remaining safely away from traffic.
- Employers should have handwashing facilities or sanitizing stations available to workers as they enter and exit the vehicle.
- Employers must ensure that high contact surfaces within the vehicle are routinely cleaned and disinfected. These include seatbelts, headrests, door handles, steering wheels, and hand holds.
- Incorporate end-of-shift vehicle wipe downs, include a method for tracking end of shift cleaning and provide workers with appropriate supplies, like soap and water, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes.
- Helicopter, ATV, and boat use should be limited to essential use only.

### **Staff accommodation**

- Complete a risk assessment and consider new strategies for shared staff accommodation, including housing people in groups of less than six and defining teams of workers who live and work together in exclusive groups. This will help reduce the risk of transmission to larger groups.
- The BC Centre for Disease Control has issued [Protecting workers at large industrial camps during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) that provides useful information for managing shared worker accommodations.
- Provide single room occupancy or ensure spacing of beds is adequate.
- Manage location of personal gear and care items to minimize exposure.

- In remote scenarios, established guidelines to limit staff interactions with communities whenever possible.
- Clarify and follow cleaning and disinfecting schedules.
- Establish rules for socializing locations to ensure physical distancing is maintained. Events must have fewer than 50 people to align with the public health officer's prohibition on mass gatherings. Hold these events outdoors whenever possible.

### **Public interface (worker and public)**

- Ensure any staff that are expected to manage groups of visitors are trained in protocols.
- Ensure staff have the support and strategies for dealing with visitors who may be unwilling or are unable to understand the approach to managing visitor volumes. This should include reviewing your violence risk assessment, policies and procedures, and training and reporting requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations for minimizing the risk of violence to workers.
- Provide signage and determine how crowd limits and spacing will be controlled, and who will be responsible. See the [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) for guidance on establishing occupancy limits.
- Provide markers or indicators to ensure spacing:
  - Limit parking
  - Space out or limit bike valet or bike racks
  - Space out or limit the number of picnic tables, and put signage on table for the maximum number of people per table
- When working amongst members of the public, set up [barriers](#) or tape to delineate the worksite and to discourage the public from entering the area.

### **Park entry/reception**

- Do not allow public access into offices.
- Provide physical [barriers](#), such as glass, if the physical distancing requirement cannot be maintained.
- Try to limit the use of cash and limit the handling of credit cards and loyalty cards whenever possible, by allowing customers to scan or tap their cards and handle the card readers themselves. Encourage tap payment over pin pad use. Establish hygiene practices that address the needs of your workplace, and includes the requirement to wash or sanitize hands after handling cash.
- Provide hand sanitizer to the public and workers.
- Wipe down shared machinery between users (such as payment or ticketing machines).

### **Concession stands**

- Refer to guidance provided to [Restaurants, cafes, and pubs](#).
- Ensure there is sufficient staff to manage the volume of customers and associated line ups and food pick-up areas.

### **Interpretive centres, amphitheatres, nature houses**

- Only provide these services when physical distancing measures can be maintained and provide enhanced cleaning.

## Sports

- Employers should have COVID-19 related protocols for coaches who are workers. These protocols should include interacting with park staff and members of the public, and how to handle suspected cases of COVID-19.
- This should include clear guidance on the use of park spaces and equipment, including cleaning, disinfecting and storage of publically available sporting equipment and facilities.
- Lifeguard and other aquatic staff protocols will be available at a later date.

## Facility cleaning

- Work activities such as cleaning washrooms, change rooms, garbage, and recycling removal (waste management) must have protocols in place to limit risk of COVID-19 transmission. This includes training in and supervising of formal cleaning and disinfecting procedures.
- Identify, provide, and show location of cleaning products and when and how they will be used. Review and update WHMIS training and procedures.
- Provide hand sanitizing stations at all entryways for everyone to use.
- Provide physical distancing signage at washroom and change room entryways.
- Convert washrooms to individual use if possible, or limit number of people inside at any time.
- Provide and follow enhanced cleaning schedule and disinfection protocols for washrooms.

## Visitor management

- Develop emergency plans for crowd control and staff support in events such as:
  - » Medical emergencies, including providing first aid to the public (consider vulnerable visitors)
  - » Sudden over-crowding
- Coordinate emergency plans with local emergency responders and put special consideration to the remote nature of many of these worksites
- Ensure your staffing type and levels are adequate to manage aggressive or disgruntled customers. Develop compliance and enforcement procedures, including reviewing and updating working alone procedures as required.

## Additional resources

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

- [BC Parks](#)
- [BC Municipal Safety Association](#)
- [BC Recreation and Parks 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.

## Resources

### COVID-19: A guide to reducing the risk

This resource is for employers, outlining the steps to follow to make sure you are minimizing the risk of COVID-19 so your business can operate safely.

### 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...

### Help prevent the spread of COVID-19: Cover coughs and sneezes

This poster reminds workers and visitors to cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze, and to wash their hands afterward.

[See more resources](#)