

Strategies for Community Partners to Practice Physical Distancing and Reduce the Spread of COVID-19

The purpose of this document is to provide practical measures for community-based organizations to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Many strategies presented can be adapted to meet the needs of different environments.

Protective Measures

- Keep two metres distance from others.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or a tissue.
- Protect yourself and others around you by knowing the facts and taking precautions.

Public Facing Services

Determine how staff and the public enter your facility. Find ways to limit public entrances while allowing clients to maintain a six feet distance from others.

Increase your online, or phone services. Use your website to provide information and reduce general inquiries.

Review and decide what services are essential during this pandemic.

For agencies providing in-person services, consider the following:

Signage and Screening

- Post [physical distancing signs](#) at all entrances and by reception counter or greeting areas.
- Screen clients prior to their entry if possible (e.g. call in advance). Use self-screening posters or screen people at the entrance.
- For clients who are sick, offer them alternative means of service (online or by phone). Do not allow people who are sick to enter and potentially spread the virus to staff and other clients.
- Sample Screen Questions:
 - Are you feeling unwell?
 - Do you have a fever, cough, trouble breathing, runny nose or sore throat?
 - Have you have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days?
 - Have you had contact with anyone who is sick?
 - If YES to any of the questions, please refer them to their health care provider, Telehealth (1-866-797-0000) or visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/#q0>

COVID-19
Novel Coronavirus

Help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Please keep your physical distance

Physical distancing means keeping 2 metres apart from others

Residents are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep residents informed about COVID-19.

Visit toronto.ca/covid19

TORONTO

Signage and Screening

- When clients enter your facility, staff greeters should remind everyone to practice physical distancing. Example: *Welcome. Please remember to stay two metres (six feet) apart, for everyone's safety.*
- If available, use public announcement (PA) systems to broadcast physical distancing reminders to both staff and public.
- Ask staff to speak with public/clients about physical distancing, this will also act as a reminder to the staff providing these instructions

Hand sanitizers

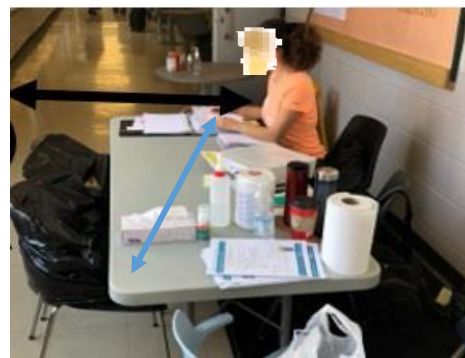
- Hand sanitizer, if available, should be placed near the entrance for use as clients enter and exit the building.
- For table top sanitizer bottles, place it away from staff so clients can maintain six feet distance or insert wall mounted dispensers.
- Post signs so the public knows where sanitizers are located.
- If there are multiple hand sanitizing locations, consider creating a standard colour or icon signage to promote their locations within the facility.



Physical or Process Changes

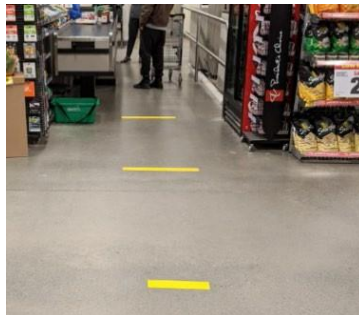
Front entrance or reception

- For reception or intake areas, use furniture such as tables, chairs or a prop with signs reminding clients to keep 6 feet apart.



Public interactions beyond service counters

- If possible, install Plexiglas barriers between staff and clients.
- Place tape or circles on the floor so the people know where to stand as they wait in line or when interacting with staff.



- Wipe down high touch surfaces frequently with a disinfectant.
- When using shared pens, wash or sanitize your hands after use.
- Consider disposable pens for customer use.
- The location where the public should stand can be marked on the floor with tape.
- Remove non-essential items from the counter to reduce disinfecting items.
- When exchanging objects or documents, have them placed on the counter, then step back to maintain two metres distance.

Receiving Deliveries

- Create a designated area, away from customer service area for delivery packages to be dropped-off or picked-up.
- Have proper signage on the table asking couriers to leave or pick up items from table.
- It is recommended that sign-off/receiving documentation be suspended if procedures allow or modified to reduce the high touch surfaces.

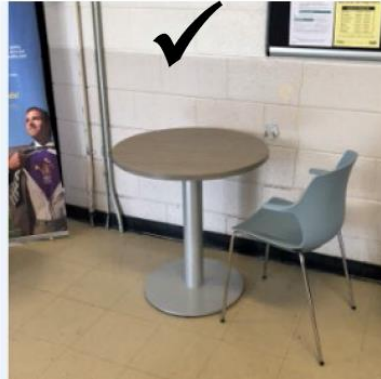
Waiting Areas

- Remove chairs or tape off alternate chairs in waiting areas to maintain two metres distance and to discourage people from congregating.



Rearranging Furniture to Enhance Physical Distancing

- Eliminate seats in reception areas, common areas or lunch rooms to enhance physical distancing.



- Reduce the number of seats and increase spacing to promote two meter/six feet distancing.



Minimize the option of client self-service to reduce the spread between clients.

Minimizing opportunity for community spread between public and staff.



Remove items out of client reach to avoid self-selection. Supplies, food, clothes, etc. should be distributed by staff to reduce number of people touching the items (i.e. shelter environment). Staff must wash their hands or sanitize prior to serving food, supplies, etc. Use of gloves, if it has not touched uncleaned surfaces.

- If there is self-service, clean and disinfect high contact areas frequently (e.g., kettle handle).
- Provide frequent top up of items such as cups, sugar packs, tea bags etc. to limit contact by multiple clients.
- Remove items like fabric cushions and magazines that are difficult to sanitize.
- Eliminate or reduce non-essential items in public and staff areas to reduce the need to disinfect.



Off-Site Staff Deliveries/Visiting Clients

Operating a Vehicle

- Wipe down high touch areas in the vehicle such as steering wheel, controls, door handles, rear view mirror, seat belt buckle, keys, etc.
- Limit to one person per vehicle.
- Provide additional vehicles to reduce the number of workers in one vehicle, if feasible and safe.
- If more than one staff are in a vehicle together, suggest they sit apart (e.g. one in front, one in back and consider keeping the windows open) and wear a mask
- If driver and co-worker are in the same vehicle, the driver and passenger positions should remain the same for the duration of the shift, where possible.
- Ensure that driver and passenger(s) should avoid facing each other while talking.



Delivery/Pick-up


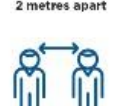
- If possible, call clients to inform and confirm delivery or pick-up.
- Try to use elbow, shoulder, foot or hip to open doors or press buttons.
- Wear gloves if available. Ensure you remove and dispose gloves correctly.
- **With or without use of gloves, you still need to wash your hands frequently.**
- When making a delivery, place package at door/reception and knock/buzz apartment, step back at least two metres from door.
- For clients who have questions, encourage them to call the office or maintain two metres distance. Keep conversation short.
- When picking up items, pre-determine if they can be placed in a secure common area.
- Avoid talking while in close contact. Try to communicate beforehand or by telephone.
- Avoid touching surfaces.
- Where possible, before returning to your vehicle, wash or sanitize your hands or safely remove your gloves.
- After handling any material, follow proper hand hygiene, as this is the first line of defense against infection.



In the workplace – non-public-facing environments

Allow staff to work from home, if possible. When staff are required to be in the workplace, consider the following strategies and recommendations.

- Post [physical distancing](#) and [other safety precautions posters](#) at staff work area and rest area (reception counters, supervisor offices, staff washrooms, elevator, staff lunchrooms or lounge areas).

COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus	Help stop the spread of COVID-19.	COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus	Help prevent the spread of germs and protect yourself from COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.	COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus	Help prevent the spread of germs and protect yourself from COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.	COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus	Help prevent the spread of germs and protect yourself from COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.
Please keep your physical distance	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical distancing means keeping 2 metres apart from others	Wash Your Hands	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.	Cover Your Cough	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands.• If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm.	Physical Distancing on Elevators	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 metres apart• Maintain safe distancing on elevators
<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>	<small>Readers are reminded to use credible, evidence-based sources of information about this new coronavirus. Toronto Public Health's website is updated regularly as new information becomes available to help keep readers informed about COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call 416-398-7600.</small>

Workstations

- Staff should wash their hands as they arrive at work. [Wipe down](#) work surfaces (desk, computer keyboard, mouse, phone, drawers etc.) before and after each shift. Remind staff to maintain the two metres/six feet while working.
- Consideration for the distance of occupied workstations. To estimate the distance of staff use the centre of the seated placement from one worker to the centre of seated placement of the adjacent second worker. This distance must be a minimum of two metres/six feet or have a barrier that is above head height.



Staff Working Together

- Remind staff to maintain two metres distance when working with others. COVID-19 is mainly spread via respiratory droplets. Avoid in person conversations. Use a phone, email or other virtual devices for communicating. Post signs in work areas. Place tape on the floor or carpet to mark out designated space for staff.



- Host virtual meetings. No large gatherings for meetings.
- Stagger staff work hours to reduce the number of staff at the workplace.
- Provide multiple working areas to keep staff at a distance and safe.



Alternative to in person meetings

- Investigate employers capacity to use:
 - Telephone discussions or conferences
 - Texting or Jabber
 - Virtual meeting, sharing screens, training/webinars, etc.

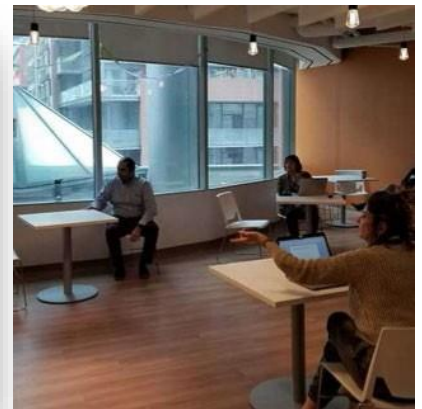
Common Areas (Kitchens, lounge, washrooms, meeting rooms)

- Encourage staff to heat up their food in the kitchen and eat at their workstations
- Remove seats in common areas to maintain 6 feet distancing.
- Post capacity signs at the entrance and rooms to remind staff.
- Common areas include: lounges, kitchen, meeting rooms, photocopy and supply rooms



Oak Meeting Room
Capacity During
Covid19 Pandemic is
4 People.

Please keep chairs
distanced 6 feet apart and
follow room signage. If
possible schedule meetings
by Webex



- Common areas should have soap, hand sanitizer and/or disinfectant wipes. If wipes are not available, general disinfectants can be used.
- Replenish soap in all handwashing stations.
- Custodial staff may increase cleaning and disinfection of high touch areas such a door handles, faucets, light switches, cabinet doors; and common areas (e.g., chairs, tables)
- Sharing of food should be avoided to ensure hands are not touching multiple items.



- Clear floor space in offices, to allow for 6 feet distancing when staff are conversing. Ideally use virtual devices to consult or collaborate or have staff member sit outside the office.



We are in this together

- If there are specific tasks where physical distancing cannot be implemented, staff and management should work together to come up with possible solutions, such as alternative ways to complete the task, halting non-essential tasks, additional tools, changes in procedures, etc.

Appendix A – Cleaning and Disinfecting During COVID-19

Frequent cleaning and disinfection of common areas and high-touch surfaces are critical in reducing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplaces. Cleaning of workplaces may be performed by custodial services and/or staff who work in the area.

General areas may include:

- Washrooms (toilets, urinals, sinks, faucets, stalls, walls, fixtures, handles, doors, push plates and soap dispensers)
- Cafeteria (food preparation surfaces, tables and chairs)
- Servery (faucets, taps, countertops and cupboard handles and surfaces, microwave, refrigerator, coffee pots, kettles)
- Drinking fountains
- Entrances (door handles, knobs, glass and accessible push buttons)
- Interior doors and handles
- Elevators (doors and walls, call and indicator buttons, hand railings, mirrors)
- Stairs (handrails and bannisters)
- Light switches, thermostats
- Copier and printer buttons
- Front desk and lobby surfaces, digital displays and kiosk
- Cabinet and file drawer handles

Personal items may include:

- Desks, computer keyboards and mouse
- Telephone, cellphones
- Chair arms

Cleaning is the removal of visible dirt from surfaces. Clean surface first before using a disinfectant. Disinfectant needs to be applied for a minimum contact time; surfaces should appear visibly wet. Follow the manufacturer's label for instructions on contact time. A list of effective disinfectants is available [online](#).

Where possible, provide disinfectant wipes to staff to use on commonly used surfaces (i.e. desks, work surfaces, fleet vehicles, etc.). Please note that disinfectant wipes have both cleaning and disinfection properties.

If disinfectant wipes are not available, general disinfectants, such as chlorine bleach or hydrogen peroxide in the liquid form, can be diluted and applied with a rag/towel. Avoid spraying the product to prevent splashes to the eyes. Follow the manufacturer's label and/or Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for appropriate PPE (gloves, glasses, etc.).