

With an abundance of information on COVID-19 available from various sources, TeksMed is working to curate and provide you with information relevant to your business. Please read the following article outlining the precautions that should be practiced in the workplace. Source material cited below.

Respiratory protection

Respirators are currently only required for certain tasks.

The CDC advises that surgical/procedure masks should be used by sick people to prevent transmission to other people. A mask will help keep a person's droplets in.

They also advise that it may be less effective to wear a mask in the community when a person is not sick themselves. Masks may give a person a false sense of security and are likely to increase the number of times a person will touch their own face (e.g., to adjust the mask).

Workers in the health care sector may have a higher potential risk of coming into contact with infected persons. Health care workers should wear surgical masks, eye protection, gloves, and gowns in order to protect themselves and patients. During health care procedures in which aerosol sprays may be generated (for example, when giving certain inhaled medications), health care workers must wear specialized masks (e.g., N95s).

Social distancing

Social distancing requires us to make changes to our everyday routines and to minimize close contact with others. This means keeping 2 arms' length (approximately 2 metres) distance between ourselves and others. You may need to limit the number of workers on site, to ensure these distances are kept.

Here are some tips for implementing social distancing measures in your workplace:

Evaluate your work tasks and workspace

- Can you reduce or suspend non-essential work, to allow some workers to stay home?
- Can any of your workers perform work tasks remotely (e.g. work from home)?
- Can you alternate and/or add additional shifts to reduce the risk of exposure and improve social distancing?
- Can you position the workers who are performing your essential business tasks further apart and still get the tasks done?
- Can any of your workers perform work tasks in a location that allows them to put more distance between themselves and their co-workers or customers?

Involve your joint health and safety committee

- Get your joint health and safety committee involved in brainstorming social distancing measures that could work in the spaces they work in.
- Have your joint committee consider the interactions they have with others.
- Get your joint committee involved in promoting approved social distancing measures

Change the way space is used and shared at your workplace

- Minimize sharing of office space, including work vehicles. When you do share, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces before you leave the space (like you do at the gym). For vehicles, this includes the steering wheel, gear shift, and radio. For desks this includes the computer keyboard and mouse, desk surface, and phone.
- Schedule rotating coffee and meal breaks to allow for 1-2 metres distance between workers in all break rooms, and do not share food or drinks.
- Cancel in-person meetings and hold meetings by teleconference, video conference, or email instead.
- Use work vehicles as satellite offices, for workers who can download work on their phone or portable computer.

Communicate broadly

- Make the message clear that the friendliest thing your workers can do for their co-workers and customers is keep a distance of 1-2 metres between themselves and the people they work with.
- Encourage workers to use a standard greeting with each other that is positive but reminds others to keep a safe distance.

Protecting mental health

Workers in the workplace may also be affected by the anxiety and uncertainty created by the COVID-19 situation. It's important to remember that mental health is just as important as physical health, and to take measures to support mental well-being. Here are some resources that can assist with maintaining mental health in the workplace during this time.

[Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression](#) (Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions) - Tips and resources on things we can do as individuals and collectively to deal with stress and support one another during these challenging times.

[Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) (World Health Organization) – These mental health considerations were developed by the WHO's Department of Mental Health and Substance Use as messages targeting different groups to support for mental and psychosocial well-being during COVID-19 outbreak.

[Coronavirus: Managing Stress & Anxiety](#) (Canadian Mental Health Association, Kelowna) – Tips and information on how to reduce and manage anxiety in the workplace due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

[Maintaining Calm Energy for Our Children](#) (TeksMed Services Inc.) - Advice on how parents can navigate the current climate with their kids.

[Discussing the Unknown with Your Employees](#) (TeksMed Services Inc.) - Tips for how employers can discuss the unknown with their employees in a time when business is so uncertain.

[Dealing with Panic and Uncertainty](#) (TeksMed Services Inc.) - Useful ways to work with your feelings and why saying "don't panic" isn't the most supportive energy.

[Successfully Adapting to an Environment of Quarantine](#) (TeksMed Services Inc.) - In this free webinar, Dave Phillips, Chief Mental Health Officer for TeksMed, addresses six simple ways you can proactively safeguard your mental wellbeing during these difficult times.



Source: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/health-and-safety/staying-safe-at-work>