



Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



Guidance for Food and Liquor Serving Premises

Based on the Provincial Health Officer's Order to Food and Liquor Serving Premises, of June 15, 2021

June 24, 2021, v. 13

This guidance is intended for owners, operators and patrons of restaurants, coffee shops, cafes, cafeterias and food primary and liquor primary establishments, including pubs, bars, lounges and nightclubs as well as liquor manufacturing facilities that have tasting rooms and private clubs. This guidance is based on known evidence as of June 15, 2021. Note that under Part A of the Order that nightclubs must not be operated.

For clarity the Provincial Health Officer's Order (the Order) is not directed at hospitals, licensed care facilities, assisted living residences, independent living facilities, correctional facilities, industrial camps, school and workplace cafeterias, cafeterias for residents attending educational institutions or other cafeterias that serve food or liquor to residents rather than to the general public.

Note that the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) may announce specific Orders from time to time related to early closures or other changes to protect public health.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues and while vaccinations are being provided, it is still critical that we reduce the risk of transmission through physical distancing, as well as ensuring that essential hygienic practices and cleaning processes are followed.

All food service establishments must comply with relevant Orders, including the [Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order](#), the Order on COVID-19 [Workplace Safety Plans](#), and, where pertinent, the order on [Gatherings and Events](#). Food service establishments must also comply with other Provincial Orders, including the [Order of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General on Face Coverings \(COVID-19\)](#).

All [BC Food Premises Regulation](#) requirements remain unchanged and in place. Continue to maintain food safety practices: [Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill](#).



Ministry of Health



BC Centre for Disease Control

If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.



Legal disclaimer:

The purpose of this guidance is to provide practical public health advice to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in British Columbia. This guidance does not have legal authority; however, not following the guidance in this document may leave individuals or organizations open to legal action. This guidance does not supersede Orders or direction under the *Public Health Act* or any other provincial or federal legislation. This guidance is subject to changes.



Purpose of the guidance

This guidance provides information on ways to comply with the Order on Food and Liquor Serving Premises, which applies to owners, operators and patrons of restaurants, coffee shops, cafes, cafeterias and food primary and liquor primary establishments, including pubs, bars, lounges and nightclubs (not permitted to operate at this time) as well as liquor manufacturing facilities that have tasting rooms and private clubs.

As an owner or operator, this guidance will support you when preparing or amending your [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#), which you must post on your website (if applicable) and at your workplace so that it is readily available for review by anyone who may attend the site, including the public. A copy must also be available to Environmental Health Officers and WorkSafe BC Officers, upon request.

This guidance will enable patrons to understand their responsibilities under the Order and ways to comply with the premises' COVID-19 Safety Plan.

This guidance is based upon current knowledge, and it should be understood that it is subject to change as new data become available and developments arise.

The Public Health Agency of Canada considers that COVID-19 is spread from infected people to others by coughing, sneezing, singing, shouting or talking (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/main-modes-transmission.html>). These activities can spread respiratory droplets and aerosols containing the virus that can come into contact with the mucous membranes of another person's eyes, nose, or mouth. Poor ventilation can allow aerosols to remain in the air, increasing the risk of transmission. This information may help guide your COVID-19 risk reduction efforts.

Overview of this document

These guidelines are organized into the following series of tip sheets:

- Employee Sickness
- Personal Hygiene
- Make Space between People
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Modify the Environment
- Sanitation
- Managing Information
- Staff Scheduling & Meetings
- Appendix: Acceptable Outdoor Dining Space



Tip sheet – Employee Sickness

Goal: To prevent sick employees from spreading the virus by ensuring employees stay home if they are ill.



- Ensure that every worker performs a daily health check before entering the workplace.
- Tell your employees if they are sick with any symptoms consistent with cold, influenza or COVID-19, even if symptoms are mild, they must remain at home, and contact their family physician/primary care provider or Health Link BC at 8-1-1 for further assistance.
- Thoughtfully plan your sick leave policy to create an environment where employees feel supported in staying home when they are sick and communicate this policy to all staff.
- Have operational contingency plans in place for when employees must remain home when sick (e.g. modifying systems to operate with fewer employees).
- Have employees declare they are symptom-free when signing in for the day.
- Sick employees should use the BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool.
- If while at work, an employee starts experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness consistent with COVID-19, even if symptoms are mild, ask the employee to don a mask, to leave work immediately, go straight home, and contact their family physician/primary care provider or Health Link BC at 8-1-1 for further guidance.
- Ensure that objects and surfaces touched by sick employees who have left the premises are cleaned and disinfected before being used by others.
- Anyone with symptoms can now be assessed and receive a COVID-19 test.
- Testing is not recommended for people who do not have symptoms.
- If an employee has a COVID-19 diagnosis, the local public health department will identify any co-workers who may have been exposed to the sick person.

Resources:

- [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)



Tip sheet – Personal Hygiene

Goal: To limit the spread of the virus by promoting good personal hygiene including hand washing, hand sanitizing, and cough/sneeze etiquette.



- Replace physical greetings such as handshakes and hugs with non-contact greetings.
- Consider providing alcohol-based hand sanitizer at entrances with posters reminding of the importance of handwashing/sanitizing following contact with common touch surfaces.
- Hand washing facilities or alcohol-based sanitizers must be within easy reach of any self-service food or non-alcoholic drink stations on the premises.
 - Notwithstanding the guidance above, self-service food and non-alcoholic drink stations are not allowed to operate when an event is being held per the PHO's Gatherings and Events Order of June 22, 2021.
- Washrooms and dedicated hand washing sinks should have liquid soap, paper towels and warm running water at all times.
- Consider providing designated uniforms laundered by a service or encourage workers to wear clothes that can be washed frequently.
- Employees should wash their hands with soap and water at the start and end of their shift, after using the bathroom, before eating, after returning from a break, and when hands are visibly soiled.
- Employees should avoid the use of hand sanitizer when handling food.
- Employees should practice good hygiene throughout their shift including proper hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Employees should avoid touching their face without washing hands first and should wash their hands after touching their face.
- There should be no sharing of cigarettes, vaping equipment, utensils, cups, plates and other equipment.
- Employees should be educated about COVID-19 so they know how to minimize its spread.
- Consider providing electronic COVID-19 resources to all employees.

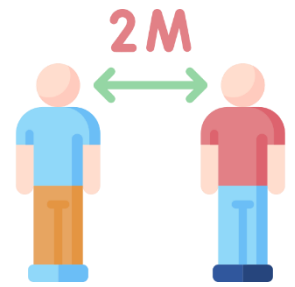
Resources:

- Poster: [BCCDC Handwashing](#)
- Video: [Cough and Sneeze Etiquette](#)
- Video: [Hand Washing](#)
- Link: [BCCDC Vaping, Smoking and COVID-19](#)



Tip sheet – Make Space between People

Goal: To increase space between people and avoid unnecessary contact to eliminate transmission of the virus through respiratory droplets.



- Empty floor space could be increased by removing unnecessary materials, equipment, and displays, especially in outdoor patios, foyers, high traffic areas, and other small spaces.
- Two-metre increments could be marked on floors where crowds normally form (e.g., line up areas inside and outside the restaurant and payment areas).
- Only essential personnel required to run the business should be allowed in the kitchen.
- Consider extending operating hours to compensate for reduced total capacity. This may have implications on your liquor licence. Check with your liquor inspector.
- Consider spreading out seating. Check with local government for outdoor patio requirements.
- Delivery or take-out services could be offered as an alternative to dining in. “Drop at the door service” for delivery could be used to avoid close contact with individuals who may be in isolation or who are symptomatic.
- A policy for receiving deliveries and supplies could be developed to reduce contact between people.

Resources:

- Poster: [Fraser Health Physical Distancing](#)
- Video: [Why do we need to socially distance?](#)



Tip sheet – Personal Protective Equipment

Goal: To understand the purpose and limitations of personal protective equipment and to ensure that PPE is selected and used appropriately.



- Masks and other PPE can reduce transmission but should never be relied upon as a sole protective measure to prevent transmission.
- In situations where the other controls cannot be maintained, service employees and food handlers may choose to wear non-medical masks and face shields (though a face shield should not be a substitute for a non-medical mask).
- Employees should be aware of the following:
 - Masks can become contaminated on the outside when touched by hands so employees should avoid touching or adjusting them often.
 - Masks that become wet, soiled or damaged are less effective and should be replaced immediately.
 - Masks should be put on and taken off correctly, including not touching the front of the mask, and washing hands.
 - Cloth masks should be washed every day using the warmest water setting and stored in a clean dry place to prevent contamination.
 - Never share masks with others.
 - If a non-cloth mask is used (e.g., medical mask), employees should be reminded that these items are for single use only.
 - In addition to following hygienic mask handling procedures (e.g., washing hands after removing a mask), masks should not be cleaned for reuse.
- Gloves for service employees and front-of-house staff are not recommended for routine work.
- If food handlers wear gloves for cleaning, if they have a cut, or for any other reason, the gloves should be taken off correctly (see video below), they must be changed between tasks, and hands must be washed between glove changes.
- Glove use is not a substitute for hand hygiene.

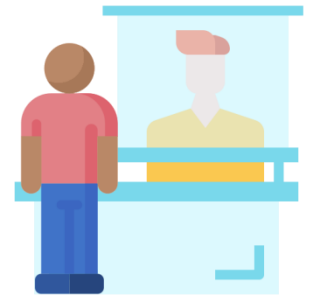
Resources:

- Video: [How to remove disposable gloves](#)
- WorkSafe BC: [Selecting and Using Masks](#)
- WorkSafe BC: [How to Use a Mask](#)
- BCCDC: [Guideline on Types of Masks](#)



Tip sheet – Modify the Environment

Goal: Change the environment to reduce common touch points and make interacting with others safer.



- Where physical distancing cannot be maintained between employees and patrons, barriers of non-porous materials like plexiglass may be used between employee workstations and counter service areas.
- Eliminate communal storage areas for employees' personal belongings and consider providing separate sealable bins or lockers instead.
- If possible, increase the amount of outdoor air being brought in and/or natural ventilation. Open windows but be cautious about not allowing pests to gain entrance (install screens if possible).
- Dining area tables could be kept clear of utensils, menu boards and shared condiment containers. Instead, these items could be provided to patrons on request.
- Consider using single-use condiments and replacing re-usable menus with single-use menus or touchless menu options (e.g., online menus, sandwich board displays, etc.).
- Encourage patrons to order take out food in advance to reduce line ups on site.
- If a table is not immediately available, instead of having patrons wait in the lobby, consider sending them off-site and using electronic notification when their table is ready (e.g., use text messages rather than common touch pagers).
- Consider temporarily suspending any valet parking or coat check services.
- Consider only offering buffets if they are safely dispensed by staff.
- Consider allowing children to keep colouring crayons rather than re-using the crayons.
- Encourage the use of touch-free payment options.
- When cash is the only payment option, staff must avoid touching their eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.
- Consider reassessing and updating your COVID-19 Safety Plan as needed (e.g., as restrictions are lifted and patrons engage in activities such as pool, darts, and/or bowling, this will likely change traffic flow and sanitation plans in your establishment which may in turn affect your COVID-19 Safety Plan).



Tip sheet – Sanitation

Goal: To clean and disinfect common high touch points.



- Consider keeping separate cleaning supplies for front of house and back of house areas.
- Multiple plastic lined waste containers should be available to dispose of used tissues, wipes, gloves, and other cleaning materials.
- In addition to following your regular [sanitation plan](#), consider creating a checklist of high-touch surfaces that must be cleaned and disinfected more frequently throughout the day. Examples include: door handles, light switches, debit machines, counters, coat racks, break room appliances, railings, trollies, faucets, menus, and condiments, etc.
- The daily disinfection schedule could be posted in a high-visibility area.
- Employees could be assigned to specific disinfection responsibilities, with sign-off.
- It is recommended that any person required to clean has received the appropriate training, including use of appropriate PPE.
- Employees responsible for cleaning should be equipped with any required personal protective equipment depending on chemicals used (e.g., gloves, goggles, aprons and masks).

SELECTION and USE of DISINFECTANTS for NON-FOOD CONTACT SURFACES:

- Most disinfectants approved for use in restaurants are sufficient to kill SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19 virus) as long as manufacturer’s instructions are followed; special products are not necessary.
- Disinfectants will have a DIN (drug identification number) and clear set of instructions.
- Make sure the appropriate contact time is met (i.e. surfaces must remain wet with disinfectant for the correct length of time in order to destroy any contamination).
- Surfaces that are dirty should be cleaned with soap and water first before disinfecting.

Resources:

- [Health Canada approved disinfectants for COVID-19](#)
- [BCCDC Guideline for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)



Tip sheet – Managing Information

Goal: To stay informed, follow public health Orders and guidance, keep records, and make sure information you share is clear, accurate and easy to find.



- Consider using signage as follows:
 - On front doors to tell anyone not to enter if they are feeling ill or have any symptoms.
 - In common and outdoor patios to remind patrons about physical distancing.
 - Above or beside all bathroom and kitchen sinks to explain proper hand washing.
- Employees or a manager should keep daily records of the people who worked together and retain these records for at least 30 days.
- Consider maintaining up-to-date and consistent messaging on websites, social media, emails, press releases, and when speaking with patrons so details are aligned, timely and accurate.
- Employees should be encouraged to provide regular feedback on any issues with COVID-19 prevention measures. Consider providing a means for employees to do this anonymously.

TIPS for EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE:

- Communicate information in multiple languages and use diagrams or pictures.
- The font size on signage should be large enough for everyone to read from a distance (i.e., if a person were standing 2 metres away from the sign).
- In wet areas or outside, posters could be placed in plastic sleeves to protect them from water damage.
- Consider placing important signage in conspicuous areas and away from other posted information so it is clearly visible (i.e., avoid posting signs next to product advertisements, coupon boards, etc.).

Resources:

- Link: [Translated training materials and signage](#)
- Poster: [BCCDC Do Not Enter if Sick](#)



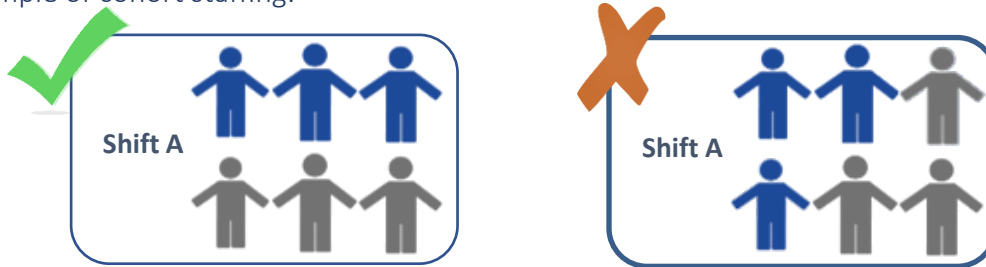
Tip sheet – Staff Scheduling & Meetings

Goal: To adjust schedules, rotations and shift activities to limit contact between team members.



- Employees who can work from home should do so.
- Consider implementing ‘cohort staffing’ – this means forming small groups of employees who will consistently work together without crossover.

Example of cohort staffing:



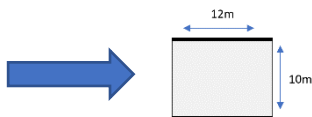
- Consider staggering breaks for individuals or cohorts and maintain a predictable break schedule.
- If prep shifts are scheduled, consider staggering start times so there is no overlap with service shifts to minimize the number of employees on site at one time.
- If possible, designate extra rooms or areas for breaks; encourage the use of outdoor spaces.
- Consider using large rooms, outdoor spaces, or virtual options for employee meetings.
- Staff training should be done in small groups with social distancing, or online.
- Employee-only areas could be clearly demarcated so non-employees know not to enter these spaces (e.g., post signs to show that customers may not enter the restaurant for pick up or that they may not move past the order desk or use the washrooms).
- If your company owns multiple restaurant outlets, consider identifying employees who work at multiple outlets and find ways to have employees work at as few sites as possible and eliminate or reduce travel between sites.



Appendix – Acceptable Outdoor Dining Space

Walls and Air Flow

- For patios without a roof, consider having far more than 25% of the patio side surface area completely open to outside air.
- For patios with a roof, consider having far more than 50% of the patio side surface area completely open to outside air.
- Sides that are open on opposite facing ends help enhance the continuous smooth flow-through of air into and out of the patio. Top view of a roofless patio, showing good option for airflow. The 12m sides are closed patio walls.



- Avoid corners, which can reduce continuous flow-through of air into and out of the patio.
- Consider moving line-ups, waiting areas, pay stations etc. away from areas that where air flows into or out of the patio. This can help to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission from people in those potential congregation areas to people on the patio and vice versa.
- A side that has a partial wall (e.g., pony wall) should be no higher than 1.2m above the floor or ground to avoid impeding the air flow of seated patrons.

Cooling and Heating

- When using cooling machines in warmer weather, consider using fans at the top of a patio that draw air up and out of the patio area.
- When using space heaters in colder weather, consider using radiant heaters. Avoid the use of convection heaters, especially crossflow, which move and mix air around.

