



Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



COVID-19 Guidance for Episodic Markets

Based on the Provincial Health Officer's Gathering and Events Order of June 22, 2021

June 24, 2021, v. 19

This guidance is intended for market managers, employees, vendors, volunteers and patrons at episodic markets including farmers' markets and community markets. This guidance is based on known evidence as of June 22, 2021.

Operation of episodic markets continue. In addition to selling food, indoor and outdoor markets may now sell non-food products, services and personal services. 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 markets must comply with relevant Orders, including the Provincial Health Officer's [Order on Gatherings and Events](#) (Episodic Markets, Part J, from June 22, 2021), the [Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order](#), if pertinent, and the order on [COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plans](#).

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

Note that the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) may announce specific Orders from time to time.

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.



Ministry of Health



BC Centre for Disease Control

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



Purpose of the guidance

This guidance provides information on ways to comply with the June 22, 2021 Provincial Health Officer's Order on Gatherings and Events (Episodic Markets, Part J).

The guidance will support you, as a Market Manager or Vendor, when preparing or amending your [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#), which you must post on your website (if applicable) and at your market entrance so that it is readily available for review by anyone who may attend the site, including the public. A copy must be available to Environmental Health Officers and WorkSafe BC Officers, upon request. Market managers should encourage vendors to review the PHO Order on COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plans to see if it applies to them.

As a patron, this guidance will enable you to understand your 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.

Overview of this document

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

- Employee, Vendor and Volunteer Sickness
- Personal Hygiene
- Make Space between People
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Modify the Environment
- Sanitation
- Managing Information
- Team Scheduling & Meetings



Tip sheet – Employee, Vendor and Volunteer Sickness

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



- Ensure that every worker, vendor and volunteer perform daily health checks before entering the market.
- Tell your employees, vendors and volunteers that 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.
- Have operational contingency plans in place for when employees or volunteers must remain home when sick (e.g. modifying systems to operate with fewer employees or volunteers).
- Have employees, vendors and volunteers review and checklist of COVID-19 symptoms and declare they are symptom-free on arrival.
- Sick employees, volunteers or vendors should use the BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool.
- If while at work, an employee, vendor or volunteer or starts experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness consistent with COVID-19, even if symptoms are mild, inform them that they must leave the market 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, vendors or volunteers who have left the market 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, vendor or volunteer has a COVID-19 diagnosis, the local public health department will track and trace market employees, volunteers and vendors 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.
- Provide hand sanitation supplies in spots that are readily available to patrons and post or erect signs reminding patrons to regularly wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Washrooms and dedicated hand washing sinks must have, at all times, liquid soap, paper towels and warm running water or hand sanitizer.
- Market managers, employees, vendors and volunteers should wash their hands with soap and water upon arrival at the market, after using the bathroom, before eating, after returning from a break, and when hands are visibly soiled. If hands are not visibly soiled a hand sanitizer may be used.
- Market managers, employees, vendors and volunteers should avoid the use of hand sanitizer when handling food.
- Market managers, employees, vendors and volunteers should practice good hygiene throughout the day including proper hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Market managers, employees, vendors and volunteers 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.
- Market managers, employees, vendors and volunteers should be educated about COVID-19 so they know how to minimize its spread.
- Consider providing electronic COVID-19 resources to all employees.

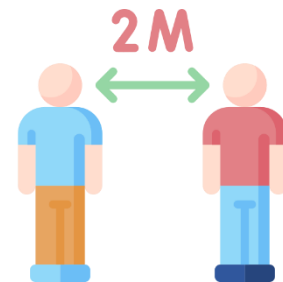
Resources:

- Poster: [BCCDC Handwashing](#)
- Video: [Hand Washing](#)
- Video: [Cough and Sneeze Etiquette](#)
- 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.



- Market manager should consider using an entrance and exit strategy (e.g., a separate entrance and exit) to both control the number of patrons present in the market and reduce congestion in these areas.
- Consider marking seats with tape or signs as ‘no-sit’ seats to help patrons keep a two-metre distance.
- Consider checking table and chair set up during the day to ensure the furniture placement remains consistent with the Order.
- Signs with large print can indicate how many people can sit at a picnic table or provide other information on distancing in line ups for vendor stalls or to enter the market.
- Two-metre increments could be marked on the ground where crowds normally form (e.g., line-up areas inside and outside the market area including the entrance/exit and popular stalls).
- Where appropriate, consider placing tape arrows on the ground or arrow posters on walls, dividers or stakes to indicate flow of traffic and reduce risk of transmission.
- Market managers should space vendors or booths that see higher foot traffic apart to prevent congregation of patrons in multiple line-ups.
- Consider extending operating hours to compensate for reduced total capacity.
- Delivery or pick-up services could be offered as an alternative to in-person shopping.

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 (PPE) and to ensure that PPE is selected and used appropriately.

- Masks and other PPE should never be relied upon as a sole protective measure to prevent transmission.
- Market managers, employees, vendors, volunteers, and customers 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 immediately after touching the mask.
 - 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), market managers, employees, vendors, volunteers and customers 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.
- If employees, vendors or volunteers wear gloves, they should be reminded that they are not a substitution for effective hand hygiene and they should change their gloves as often as they would wash their hands, and hands must be washed between glove changes.

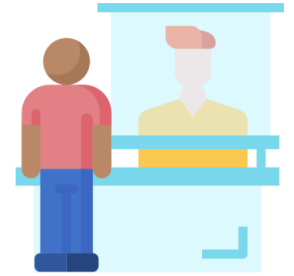
Resources:

- 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.



- For markets that are indoors or outdoors, arrange the placement of vendors' booths two metres apart or install physical barriers between booths which block the transmission of droplets between vendors.
- If the market is indoors, consider increasing 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).
- Evaluate your site for customer flow pinch points and resolve the issues, identify areas that should be excluded from customer access or could benefit from barriers or alternative stall configuration, determine if vendor stall spacing and locations should be modified to meet your market's COVID-19 safety plan.
- Consider encouraging vendors to not allow customers to touch foods unless they are purchasing them.
- Vendors should place food and other articles in paper bags or other suitable single-use containers before handing over to the purchaser.
- Vendors should have hygienic handling practices in place for distributing food samples.
- Staff should avoid touching their eyes, mouth or nose.
- Consider reassessing and updating your COVID-19 Safety Plan as needed.



Tip sheet – Sanitation

Goal: To clean and disinfect common high touch points.

- 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: washroom door handles, light switches, faucets, debit machines etc.
- The daily disinfection schedule should be clearly understood by market managers, employees, vendors and volunteers.
- Team members could be assigned to specific disinfection responsibilities.
- 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 or sanitizers approved for use 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:

- Link: [Health Canada approved disinfectants for COVID-19](#)
- Link: [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:
 - At the entry to the market to tell anyone entering not to enter if they are feeling ill or have any symptoms.
 - In common areas to remind patrons about physical distancing.
 - Above or beside all washroom and other sinks to explain proper hand washing.
- Consider maintaining up-to-date and consistent messaging on websites, social media, emails, press releases, and when speaking with customers so details are aligned, timely and accurate.
- Employees, vendors and volunteers should be encouraged to provide regular feedback on any issues with COVID-19 prevention measures.

TIPS for EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE:

- Communicate information in multiple languages, if possible, 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 two 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](#)



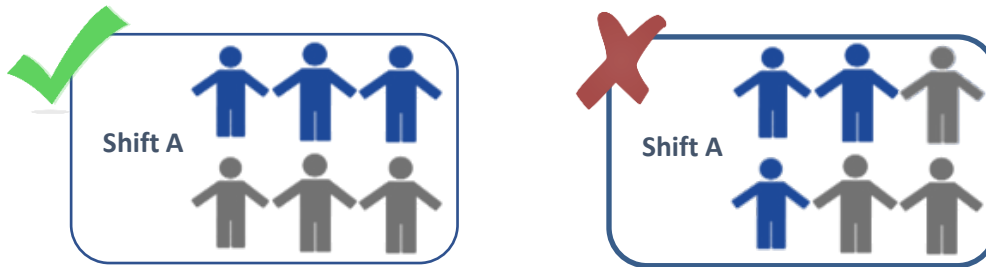
Tip sheet – Team Scheduling & Meetings



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

- Consider implementing 'cohort staffing' – this means forming small groups of team members 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 possible, designate extra areas for breaks; encourage the use of outdoor spaces.
- Employee, vendor and volunteer training should be done in small groups with physical distancing, or online.
- Market managers should consider providing clear messaging to employees, vendors and volunteers reminding them of their obligations under the orders and their responsibilities at the market.

