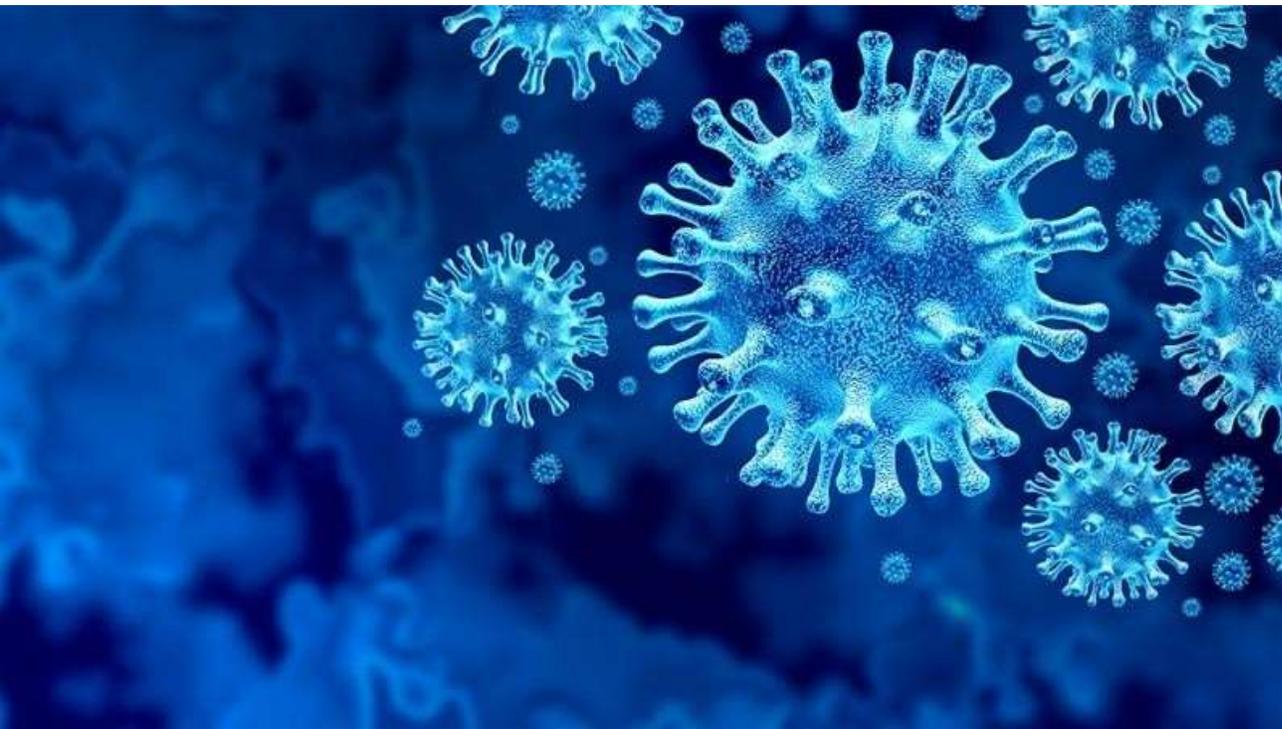




COVID-19 Safety and Prevention Measures

April 2020



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Introduction

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the following special measures will be in place to protect workers, their families, and the community from possible infection and illness. This document has been prepared to help Nova Scotia's Tourism Sector members keep their workplaces as safe and sanitary as possible.

Section 1: Attending Work

If you are feeling ill and have cold or flu-like symptoms such as fever, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches, coughing, or congestion:

- Do not come to work.
- Call your site supervisor and your Human Resources department to let them know that you are exhibiting the symptoms.
- Call your doctor or go to <https://811.novascotia.ca/> to access the online COVID-19 assessment tool and other health advice.
- Do not return to work until you are medically cleared to return.

Section 2: Personal Hygiene

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Do not share personal items or supplies such as phones, pens, notebooks, PPE, etc.
- Refrain from shaking hands with others.
- Wash your hands often - with soap and water - for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

Handwashing:

The following handwashing best practices should be used:

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. To keep time, you can count steamboats to 20.
- Rinse hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry hands using a clean towel or by air-drying them.

See Resources section for signage related to handwashing.

Section 3: Safe Workplaces

Keeping work areas safe will require significant measures to provide facilities and amenities that facilitate good personal hygiene and prevent transmission of contagions. Proper washroom facilities must be maintained. There must be adequate supplies of soap, water, toilet paper, and paper towels at all times. Washroom facilities must be properly cleaned and disinfected throughout the workday. Each workplace should provide the following as a minimum:

- Hand sanitizer (*use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol*) should be available at various high-traffic locations throughout the workplace, such as doorways, kitchen entryways, storage areas, water containers, etc.
- Prominent signage should indicate location of sanitizer stations.
- Running water (both hot and cold where possible) and hand soap should be available in bathroom facilities, lunchrooms, and kitchen areas.
- Handwashing stations must have instructions posted at each location; and
- Paper towel dispensers and barrier-free garbage cans should be available at every handwashing location.

Section 4: Meetings at Work

Work should be organized so that, to the maximum extent possible, social and physical distancing can be maintained. Meetings of employees on site, including health and safety meetings, should ensure appropriate social distancing. Similarly, work breaks and lunch periods should be scheduled to avoid close contact. Necessary worksite meetings should observe physical distance recommendations and guidelines as issued by Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health. These include:

- Avoiding prolonged close contact or proximity between people working or gathering in the same space.
- Maintaining at least two metres (six feet) separation between each person.

Additional recommended measures:

- Email, video, or teleconference meetings are the preferred methods of communication.
- Make all reasonable efforts to avoid in-person meetings and events wherever possible.
- Meetings and events of more than five (5) people should not be held in person and, where absolutely necessary, physical separation should be maintained - as recommended by Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- Necessary meetings and discussions – where possible - should be held in smaller groups rather than in larger groups of people together in a single space.
- Meetings should be held in the area where an individual works, instead of in a large gathering point such as a conference or break room.
- Meeting spaces should be cleaned and sanitized after meetings.

Section 5: Worksite Protocols

Work places often require one or more persons to work in close proximity and, as a result, maintaining recommended physical distance may not be possible. To minimize risks, the following practices should be maintained:

- Unless the nature of the work requires, workers should avoid being within two metres (six feet) of others for prolonged periods of time.
- Where working closer than recommended is essential, please follow protocols in Section 6 below.
- In-person meetings should be limited to five (5) or fewer persons unless larger groups can be assembled while maintaining the recommended physical separation of two metres (six feet).
- If needed, conduct multiple meetings with smaller groups to avoid gathering everyone at the same place at the same time.
- Where possible and safe, use technology and electronic communication such as email, text, and teleconferencing to minimize direct contact with others.
- Stagger breaks and lunch times to reduce the number of people gathering at the same time.
- While using lunchroom amenities such as fridges and microwaves or while waiting to use toilets and washrooms, please line up and keep two meters (six feet) of distance from the person in front of you.

Section 6: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

If wearing a non-medical mask makes you feel safer and stops you from touching your nose and mouth, that is good, but still remember not to touch or rub your eyes.

- It is important to understand that non-medical masks have limitations and need to be used safely.
- Non-medical masks or facial coverings should not be placed on:
 - Anyone who has trouble breathing.
 - Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

If you choose to use a non-medical face mask:

- You must wash your hands immediately before putting it on and immediately after taking it off (in addition to practicing good hand hygiene while wearing it).
- It should fit well (non-gaping).
- You should not share it with others.
- Facemasks can become contaminated on the outside, or when touched by your hands. When wearing a mask, take the following precautions to protect yourself:
 - Avoid touching your face mask while using it
 - Change a cloth mask as soon as it gets damp or soiled.
 - Put it directly into the washing machine or a bag that can be emptied into the washing machine and then disposed of.
 - Cloth masks can be laundered with other items using a hot cycle, and then dried thoroughly.
 - Non-medical masks that cannot be washed should be discarded and replaced as soon as they get damp, soiled, or crumpled.
 - Dispose of masks properly in a lined garbage bin.
 - Do not leave discarded masks on counters, on the ground, etc.

Storage of personal gear such as jackets, vests, and rain gear are not permitted on-site unless stored in a location where contact with individuals is not possible (an infected individual may have left respiratory droplets on their clothing, which could then expose others if they touch the clothing).

Additional face washing and hand sanitizing stations should be located closer to work areas if there is contact between workers such that perspiration or respiratory droplets come into contact with exposed skin.

Section 7: Powered Mobile Equipment and Other Equipment at Workplaces

- Mobile and desktop phones must not be shared with others.
- Two-way radios should be cleaned at the end of each shift, or between users.
- Door, hand holds and railings, switches, buttons, and knobs should be cleaned regularly, between users/operators, and at the end of each shift.

Section 8: Additional Cleaning Protocols

All offices and communal areas should implement additional cleaning measures as outlined below:

- Before commencing work each day or shift, high-traffic surfaces (in terms of hand contact) within offices, meeting rooms, orientation rooms, coffee and kitchen areas, work stations, portable and permanent washrooms, and common work spaces should be cleaned.
- Before commencing work, individuals working in an office setting are responsible for cleaning their workstation area. The focus is on reducing the risk of transmission through an individual touching an infected surface. Therefore, priority should be given to high traffic surfaces (in terms of hand contact).

Cleaning Protocols After Each Use:

- Hard surfaces and buttons your hands might make contact with on frequently touched items such as refrigerators, microwaves, water cooler handles, taps and faucets, light switches, and other high traffic objects should be cleaned after each use.
- First-aid treatment rooms, reusable treatment equipment, and instruments should also be cleaned after each use.

Cleaning for Accommodations:

Do not provide regular housekeeping service to rooms where people have been in isolation. Housekeeping staff must be told not to enter rooms until that period is over. Guests in self-isolation should call the front desk and have supplies delivered.

- Rooms should be stocked with extra supplies to limit housekeeping staff contact with those under self-isolation. Supplies include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Towels
 - Bed linens
 - Cups
 - Coffee, sugar, coffee mate
 - Bar fridge
 - Garbage bags
 - Toilet paper
- Consider leaving fresh linens, toiletries, and cleaning supplies outside the door to help guests who are self-isolating.
- When guests need more linens, ask them to bag soiled linens in garbage bags and leave them outside the door for pick-up.
- COVID cases and contacts should put any items soiled with bodily fluids, such as masks, gloves, and tissues, into a plastic bag, which should be tied off and disposed of in the regular garbage. This will prevent the spread of COVID-19 when municipal solid waste is picked up.
- Use single-use disposable cups in rooms to limit any unnecessary handling of contaminated glassware.

After guest room is vacated by someone who has been self-isolating:

- Staff must wear appropriate personal protective equipment and practice good handwashing procedures.
- Use an approved disinfectant to do a thorough cleaning and disinfection of hard surfaces.
- Launder any removable cloth or plush items.
- Steam cleaning can be used for areas which are likely to be contaminated but cannot be laundered (plush chairs, carpet, etc.).

Handling Laundry:

- Clearly mark laundry bins as “clean” or “dirty”. Ensure dirty laundry only contacts dirty laundry bins, and clean laundry only contacts clean laundry bins.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry and discard after each use. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- Soiled linen from rooms with individuals who are self-isolating should be washed together and not with linens from other guest rooms.
- If possible, do not shake laundry (minimizes possibility of dispersing virus through the air).
- If possible, launder items using the hottest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers; ~~consider~~ using a bag liner that is disposable or a liner that can be laundered.

Cleaning for Food and Beverage Establishments:

- Food handlers must wash hands even if they have no disease symptoms:
 - Before starting work
 - Before handling cooked or ready-to-eat food
 - After handling or preparing raw food
 - After handling waste
 - After cleaning duties
 - After using the toilet
 - After blowing their nose, sneezing, or coughing
 - After eating, drinking, smoking, or handling money
- Food handlers should follow safe food practices such as protecting foods from contamination, minimizing direct handling of food and preventing cross contamination of foods.
- Discard any foods that may have been contaminated (including from coughs or sneezes).
- Clean and sanitize utensils and food-contact surfaces in the kitchen regularly, using food-safe sanitizing products.
- Always cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze and wash your hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Complete frequent environmental cleaning and disinfection of any common high-touch surfaces, including counters, tables, or doorknobs.
- Remove common water coolers or lobby snacks.
- Use a commercial dishwasher to wash dishes and utensils.

Cleaning Solutions and Supplies:

- If available, household or commercial disinfectant solutions and wipes containing more than 60 per cent alcohol should be used to clean surfaces. However, some of these products are currently in short supply or are simply unavailable. If these household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not readily available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of one-part bleach and nine parts water. The solution must contact the surface for one minute to disinfect (WHMIS workplace label must be affixed to any mixed solution listing all the ingredients).
- Items that cannot withstand liquid disinfectants such as tablets, smart boards, and cell phones may be disinfected with 70 per cent alcohol wipes ensuring the solution contacts the surface for one minute to disinfect.
- Use paper towels or single-use rags.

For a list of hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19) provided by the Government of Canada, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

Section 9: Personal Laptops and Electronics

At the end of each workday, take your laptop, other personal electronics, and related power supplies home. This will prevent others from using them and, if required, be available for you if working from home is implemented.

Section 10: After-Work Protocols

The measures taken at work are designed to keep you safe at work. But safety protocols continue after you finish work. The additional measures detailed below will help keep you and your family safe. After you finish work, make the following steps a daily habit:

- Remove your washable PPE items and place them in a bag. These should be washed as soon as you get home.
- Non-washable PPE equipment such as boots, hardhats, and safety glasses should be sanitized and placed in a bag or away from other items that may be contaminated.
- Any single-use PPE items such as masks must be discarded safely and not reused or left where others may handle them or have to discard them.
- A separate waste container should be made available for hazardous material such as disposable PPE, cleaning wipes, cleaning supplies, etc.
- Once you have removed and packed your PPE, sanitize your hands one last time before leaving work.
- Upon arriving home, leave your safety boots outside the home or in your vehicle.
- Any items you packed for washing along with your clothing worn during the day should go straight into the washing machine.
- Finish your day with a shower before settling in to spend time with other occupants of your home.
- Wear clean clothes each day and repeat the same procedure after work.
- If you drive your personal vehicle to work, take a moment to wipe do.

Section 11: Unsafe Workplaces

Worksites which do not provide these amenities, where required, or do not follow applicable protocols, are deemed unsafe, and workers may exercise their right to refuse work in accordance with Part 43 of the Nova Scotia [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#). (see <http://www.worksafeforlife.ca/Home/About-Us/Occupational-Health-Safety> for additional information).

Resources

Governmental Coronavirus Updates

Government of Canada <https://canada.ca/coronavirus>

Province of Nova Scotia <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

Industry Coronavirus Updates

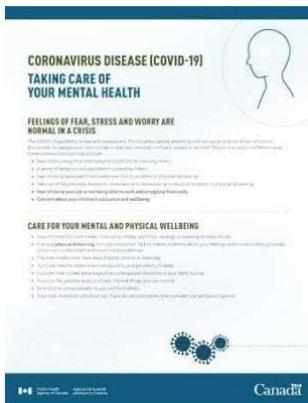
Tourism Association of Nova Scotia <https://tourismstrong.ca/>

Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia <https://www.rans.ca/covid-19>

Hotel Association of Canada <https://www.hac-covid.com/general-information-resources>

Mental Health

Feelings of fear, stress, and worry are normal in a crisis situation. The COVID-19 pandemic is new and unexpected and will generate a range of feelings for individuals. For information on taking care of the mental health of yourself and others, please see the following resources:



Government of Canada Public Health Services

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/taking-care-mental-health.html>



Province of Nova Scotia Mental Health Guidance Website

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/mental-health/>

Mental Health Mobile Crisis Line

If you are experiencing a mental health or addictions crisis, or are concerned about someone who is, the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call: **902-429-8167** or Call toll-free: **1-888-429-8167** or **911**

Handwashing Guidance



<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/reduce-spread-covid-19-wash-your-hands.htm>

Cleaning



<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/cleaning-disinfecting-public-spaces.html>



<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/preventing-covid-19-workplace-employers-employees-essential-service-workers.html>