

City of Prince George Corporate COVID-19 Safety Plan

COVID-19 Safe Operations



**CITY OF
PRINCE GEORGE**

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to outline the processes for managing safe operations at the City of Prince George during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This Safety Plan will evolve in response to the pandemic and the City's approach to minimizing risk. Employers have been mandated by WorkSafeBC and the Provincial Health Officer to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan.

2. SCOPE

This program applies to all City of Prince George workplaces and employees. Special provisions may exist for some City of Prince George operations such as Prince George Fire Rescue and RCMP Support Services.

3. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 response at the City of Prince George commenced with the activation of our Emergency Operations Centre – COVID19, on March 12, 2020. This initiated a series of facility closures to the public and analysis of much of our work to ensure compliance with the directions and orders of the Provincial Health Authorities. Since then, as advice and direction has changed over the course of the pandemic, we have adapted our work to the many new and differing requirements that are necessary to ensure the health and safety of all City of Prince George staff. The following Safety Plan outlines these changes.

4. RIGHT TO REFUSE UNSAFE WORK

Workers in BC have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. An undue hazard is an “unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate” risk, beyond the potential exposure a general member of the public would face through regular, day-to-day activity. In these circumstances, the worker should follow some specific steps within their workplace to resolve the issue. The worker should report any undue hazard to their supervisor for investigation. Each refusal of unsafe work is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If the issue is not resolved between the worker and the supervisor, the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee member is notified of the concern and an investigation is conducted with the relevant supervisor. If the matter is not resolved, the worker and the supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC and a prevention officer will then investigate and take steps to find a workable solution for all involved.

5. REPORTING SAFETY CONCERNS

All staff can report safety concerns to their supervisor or manager. They may also report issues directly to any member of the Health and Safety Team or Human Resources Department.

6. ASSESSING THE RISKS AT THE CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

The City of Prince George has implemented extensive inspections of City locations by Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee members to identify risks of COVID-19 transmission.

1. Locations where staff/public can gather.
2. Tasks and processes where staff are close to each other or the public.
3. Equipment and machinery that staff share.
4. Common touch surfaces.
5. Illness Protocols.

7. IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES TO CONTROL THE COVID-19 RISK

1. Elimination of Proximity

- Meeting Rooms have Occupancy Limits posted on the door.
- Where possible, meetings have been moved to online platforms (e.g. Zoom, Webex). Where this is not possible, larger spaces have been utilized to allow physical distancing requirements to be maintained.
- Change rooms have occupancy limits posted on the door. Shift start times have been staggered to assist in maintaining occupancy limits.
- Meeting with the public has been minimized where possible and is by appointment if possible.
- Staff in confined working areas have been relocated to allow for physical distancing. Where relocation is not possible, start times, break times and task planning have been altered to prevent staff working less than two (2) metres apart.
- Toolbox meetings have been relocated to larger outdoor locations to allow for physical distancing.
- Single cab trucks are limited to a maximum occupancy of one (1) person.

2. Engineering Controls to Minimize Proximity

- Barriers are in place at all customer service locations (both public and internal).
- Specialized barriers meeting WorkSafeBC guidelines will be installed between staff where physical distancing cannot be maintained and extended periods of time may be spent in proximity (e.g. Council meetings).
- City Fleet crew cab trucks have 'cough guard'- a special see-through vinyl screen installed to isolate the front cab from the rear passenger area.

3. Administrative Controls to Minimize Transmission of COVID-19

- In wider hallways that allow, two individuals may pass each other while maintaining the two (2) metre physical distancing requirement, even if there is not a full two (2) metres separation, as long as individuals do not congregate.
- In order to avoid congregation and congestion in hallways, staff are to move conversations to open areas (e.g. lobby, meeting room, outdoors) where physical distancing is possible.
- Some narrow hallways or walkways that do not have sufficient space for two (2) individuals to pass each other while maintaining physical distancing are designated as one way. In other narrow hallways, staff are expected to stop and communicate before coming within two (2) metres to navigate the space.
- Staff exiting workstations or offices are encouraged to pause, look both ways and then proceed into hallways or walkways.
- Where the path of two individuals crosses in any space, staff are encouraged to converse with their colleague to navigate the space. This may mean one person backtracking to where they started or into an open area, providing the other person with the ability to pass.
- Staff are to clean meeting room chairs and all high touch surfaces at the beginning and the end of meetings.
- All vehicles are to be cleaned at the beginning and end of use/shift by the driver.
- Individual work places are encouraged to introduce additional cleaning of kitchen areas, photocopy rooms and common use areas by staff.
- Staff working in some operational areas where physical distancing is not always possible should change clothing at the beginning and end of their shift (washing facilities are provided).
- Staff wearing City-supplied coveralls are advised to change and send them out for laundering frequently.
- Where operational work cannot be accomplished with physical distancing, staff are to wear a face shield or half face respirator, and gloves.
- Staff shall maintain records of meetings which include names and contact information of external attendees to allow for contact tracing by health authorities.

4. Personal Protective Equipment

- Fleet vehicles may have a driver and passenger in the rear (opposite side of vehicle). Passengers in fleet vehicles must wear a face shield if a cough guard is not installed.

- Staff are encouraged to use gloves for handling mail, deliveries and external documents or to sanitize or wash hands after handling such items.
- Workers are encouraged to wear gloves when handling cash.

8. CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

The City of Prince George has initiated increased cleaning protocols in line with the requirements of the Provincial Health Officer. These include but are not limited to:

- Increase in sanitization of high touch surfaces and common use areas and equipment.
- Disinfectant mist spraying of all indoor work locations weekly and fleet vehicles.
- Mandatory cleaning of vehicles and meeting areas before and after use.

Cleaning materials used by the City are approved by Health Canada for dealing effectively with the Coronavirus. The City will ensure that workers conducting cleaning tasks are provided with appropriate training and materials. Additional details of cleaning protocols are contained in Staff Health and Hygiene and Disinfection and Cleaning Procedures (see Appendix).

9. DEVELOPING PROCEDURES

The City of Prince George has developed and implemented policies and protocols regarding illness during the COVID-19 pandemic as outlined in the Staff Health and Hygiene Procedure.

First aid attendants will work according to the modified protocols as outlined by WorkSafe BC in their OFAA Protocols.

Should any staff test positive for COVID-19 they should self-isolate for a minimum period of ten (10) days, and only return to work once they are symptom-free. The City will undertake a comprehensive cleaning and disinfecting of any work areas that the staff member has used.

10. COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

The City of Prince George has communicated all requirements to staff in the form of emails, signage, posters, toolbox talks and safety meetings. The City maintains a COVID-19 page on its intranet that includes a Frequent Questions Section and links to all posters,

policies and documents. Once completed, all COVID-19 Safety Plans (Corporate or Facility specific) will be uploaded to this page, and all staff will be provided with a copy.

11. MONITORING AND UPDATING

The City will continue to monitor the situation and follow the direction of WorkSafe and the BC Public Health Authorities. All relevant policies, procedures and protocols will be updated as required and any new directives will be implemented via our standard procedural and communication approach.

12. RESUMING OPERATIONS

When facilities that have been closed are reopened, a Facility COVID-19 Safety Plan will be completed to detail the required safety protocols, changes to procedures and associated training requirements. These facility plans will follow the procedures and protocols outlined in the Corporate Plan.

APPENDIX

Staff Health and Hygiene

Category: COVID-19 Procedures

Approved by: Health and Safety Manager - June 2020

Revised:

Procedure

COVID-19 Health Assessment

To avoid risk of transmission between employees and/or the public, every employee suspected or confirmed to have contracted COVID-19 must stay home.

Staff COVID-19 Self-Assessment

Any employee experiencing respiratory illness similar to the flu or a cold such as fever, chills, cough, and shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, stuffy or runny nose, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue or loss of appetite should stay home from work and start to self-isolate immediately. Contact the Northern Health COVID-19 Information line at 1-844-645-7811 for advice. Follow the advice you receive and inform your supervisor.

It is likely that you will be required to self-isolate at home for a minimum of ten (10) days from the onset of these symptoms and to stay home until these symptoms are completely resolved. If you are advised to be tested for COVID-19 and your test result is negative, you must continue to isolate until your symptoms are resolved. Should a positive test result occur, Northern Health will advise of next steps.

Sick Workers

- Employees who start to experience symptoms while at work are to immediately notify their supervisor, self-isolate and go home and contact the Northern Health COVID-19 Information line at 1-844-645-7811 for advice.

Health Directives

Employees who return from travel outside of Canada will be required to self-isolate for a period of fourteen (14) days before returning to work. Any staff directed by a Public Health Authority to self-isolate must notify their supervisor and comply with these requirements.

Hygiene

Hand Hygiene

Employees must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entry to the building and:

- Before eating/breaks;
- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- After going to the bathroom.

Personal Hygiene

- Avoid physical greetings such as handshakes and hugs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cough or sneeze into elbow or with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the garbage.

Keeping Shared Spaces and Equipment Clean

Shared Staff Areas and Equipment

Each work area in City Hall and the City Yard buildings has been provided with a supply of sanitizing solution and protective latex gloves so that employees may do additional sanitizing as they see fit. Divisions may organize a roster for additional cleaning of common areas such as kitchens or photocopier rooms in their area if they wish.

Staff are encouraged to clean their personal office spaces/desks as often as they deem appropriate with a recommendation of at least once at the beginning of each work day.

Staff will clean allocated vehicles and keys at the beginning and end of their shift or workday. For shared vehicles, users are to sanitize the vehicle and keys at the beginning and end of use.

In non-office based work areas where common tools are used, staff will wear gloves or clean tools between uses.

Hand Washing

Employees working in jobs or locations where hand-washing facilities are not readily available are to use supplied hand sanitizer frequently and, upon return to a location where hand-washing facilities are available, to use them.

Facility Admission and Access

Category: COVID-19 Procedures

Approved by: Health and Safety Manager - June 2020

Revised:

Procedure

Facility Admission

City of Prince George is implementing entry signs at facilities:

1. At the entrance, signs are installed to inform patrons that:
 - a. Patrons must not enter if they suspect they have COVID-19 or if they have any of the known COVID-19 symptoms.
 - b. Patrons must maintain physical distance of two (2) metres from other patrons and staff.
 - c. On arrival, patrons must wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

Facility Access

1. Facility access is provided with separate entry and exit points wherever possible.
2. Signage, floor markings and barriers are installed to guide patrons in and out of the building.
3. Physical markers are installed on the floor, which indicate two (2) metre physical distancing for the public waiting in line.
4. Signage and barriers are installed to encourage physical distancing.
5. Occupancy limits are posted for all public and staff spaces.
6. Staff visiting from other facilities must meet all the entry requirements of the facility they are visiting.
7. Staff must leave the building immediately after their shift ends.

Facility Signage

- Do not enter if you are sick or are required to self-isolate.
- Ensure you maintain a physical distance of two (2) metres from others.
- Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer upon entry.

Disinfection and Cleaning Procedures

Category: COVID-19 Procedures

Approved by: Health and Safety Manager - June 2020

Revised:

Procedure

The disinfection procedures listed are in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures are in addition to regular facility cleaning procedures.

High Touch Surfaces

Printers/photocopiers

Kitchen appliances/taps

Counters/tables/chairs/drawers

Keyboards and mice

Light switches

Elevator buttons and keypads

Phones

Doors and door handles

Vehicle controls

Soap/sanitizer dispensers

Common Areas

Kitchens

Meeting rooms

Hallways and entrances

Open plan office areas

Change/Locker rooms

Washrooms

Lunch rooms

Lobbys

Reception areas

Customer service counters/barriers

Print/photocopy rooms

Elevators

Personal Protection

The risk of exposure to cleaning staff is inherently low; however, cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for all cleaning tasks, including handling trash. Personal protective equipment should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and surrounding area. Work uniforms should be washed after each shift.

Cleaning Procedures

High touch surfaces are the most likely to be contaminated. These surfaces are the highest priority for cleaning, particularly in common areas. These areas are cleaned a minimum of twice per day (at least once during the day and once at night) by cleaning staff and employees are encouraged to clean their own working spaces as often as they like. Cleaning supplies are available in all locations for staff.

In addition to the minimum twice-a-day cleaning, once per week, each facility will be cleaned with an electrostatic disinfectant spray unit, after hours once the night time cleaning has been completed.

Safety Education & Customer Guidelines

Category: COVID-19 Procedures

Approved by: Health & Safety Manager: June 2020

Revised:

Procedure

Safety Education and Customer Service

- When providing information to customers about new rules and COVID-19 guidelines, it is important for staff to remember that not all customers may be initially accepting of the new protocols.
- Staff should be patient and take a customer-focused approach to safety education.
We're here to help!
- Staff should maintain physical distancing while providing effective and consistent guidance to the public.

Applying the Guidelines

1. Prior to entering the facility, educate the public on new admission standards using signage, including health questions and their responsibilities regarding physical distancing from non-family members for all activities and while using all facility amenities.
2. Educate the public concerning one-way traffic and other measures put in place to avoid crowd gathering such as distancing markers for waiting lines for service.
3. Staff should maintain physical distancing while providing effective and consistent rule enforcement and accident prevention.
4. Staff should follow and maintain new protocols regarding disinfection of common contact surfaces throughout the day.

References

- City of Prince George. (2020). *COVID-19 Updates (FAQ)*. Retrieved from City Wide Web: http://cww/Projects/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx#ctl00_PlaceHolderMain_pnlCPGPageFAQ
- WorkSafe BC. (2020). *COVID-19 Safety Plan*.