

COVID-19 - General Safety Precautions for temporary entry into ECCC buildings

To reduce the risk of exposure or transmission of COVID-19 virus, the following general safety precautions aim to protect the health and safety of employees.

These precautions come from various occupational health and safety documents from within ECCC and other jurisdictions/ administrations including Public Health Agency of Canada, Water Survey (ECCC), Parks Canada, BC Parks, and Saskatchewan Parks. They have been adapted for general use and will be further expanded upon as we resume regular office activities.

Hazards/ Risks

- Contaminated surfaces or equipment
- Exposure to infected persons
- Airborne droplets (as a result of cough or sneeze)
- Risk of staff exposure outside of work (e.g. live with front line health care worker)
- Staff with high risk factors (e.g. compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment)

Each manager will need to determine the unique risks associated with their staff and determine suitability for work.

Universal Safe Work Procedures

I. Stay Home if Unwell

- a) All employees must [self-monitor](#) for symptoms when at home, as well as monitor for symptoms of those within their household, prior to leaving to go to work.
- b) All employees must stay at home if they are feeling unwell, or if someone within their household is symptomatic, and must inform their manager so that proper protocols can be applied if required.
- c) Should an employee have or develop a symptom of COVID-19 such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing while in the workplace, the employee should immediately leave the workplace and inform their manager. When a manager observes a symptomatic employee, they should send the employee home (avoiding the use of public transportation), and the employee should immediately call a health care professional or local Public health authority and follow their advice. The employee should describe their symptoms and any travel or community/ workplace exposures. Local Public health authorities will provide advice to the employee regarding follow up actions and instructions regarding the exposure risk to others. In emergency situations, call 911.
 - Until the employee can leave the workplace, they should adhere to respiratory etiquette and isolate in a separate room. The employee should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue and maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others.

- Anyone interacting with the employee should maintain physical distancing of 2 metres away from the sick person and practice rigorous [hand hygiene](#).
- The manager will report the situation to the COVID-19 inbox (ec.questions-covid19-questions.ec@canada.ca) and follow the established [Procedure for Symptomatic, Presumptive and Confirmed COVID-19](#).

II. Practice Proper Hygiene

Proper hygiene is required to prevent both contraction and transmission of COVID-19. If you find that hygiene cannot be maintained while carrying out your intended work, isolate yourself, STOP WORK and discuss with your supervisor or manager immediately.

A) Hygiene

- Before eating, smoking or after using the washroom, as well as anytime a shared surface is touched, ensure that hands are washed for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and hot water (as per SWP #157), or cleaned with an appropriate hand sanitizer (e.g. containing > 60% alcohol), using the same basic principles as SWP #157 when preparing food, before eating, or after using the washroom as well as anytime a shared surface is touched.
- Hand sanitizer should not be the single method of cleaning hands after using the washroom or if hands are visibly dirty. Use soap and water as the primary method of handwashing in these instances.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with hands at all times.
- When coughing or sneezing: cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand. Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a lined wastebasket and wash your hands afterwards.
- Change into clean clothes at the end of the day each day to reduce the risk of potentially spreading the virus.

III. Practice Physical Distancing

A) [Physical distancing](#) must be a top priority whenever possible.

- Keep a distance of approximately 2 meters (of at least two arms lengths) from others.
 - Avoid passing people in closer areas (i.e. hallways, staircases, bathrooms, etc.).
 - If encountering a colleague in the hallway, maintain physical distancing through pausing or retreating.
- Avoid prolonged (>15 minutes) interactions in close contact (within 2 metres) with others. Prolonged exposure is defined as lasting for more than 15 minutes. The 15 minutes can be from one continuous exposure or the cumulative duration of interactions with the same individual while in the setting.
- Avoid any crowded areas.
- Self-isolate from colleagues and community if symptomatic and inform your supervisor immediately.