

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia Communicable Disease Plan – April 2022 (Version 3.0)

Transitional Measures

In keeping with the recommended advice of the Provincial Health Officer, the Legislative Assembly will be maintaining the following measures and protocols from its COVID-19 Safety Plan:

- *Physical distancing to reduce points of congestion*
- *Optional use of face masks*
- *Use of physical barriers*
- *Personal hygiene supports*
- *Regular cleaning protocols*

These measures and protocols are intended to be transitional and will be monitored and re-evaluated on a regular basis. A detailed listing can be found in Appendix 1.

Introduction

This Communicable Disease Plan (“Plan”) is designed to promote the health and safety of those working on the Legislative Precinct (Precinct), and members of the general public by providing information that can be used to prevent the contraction and spread of communicable diseases and the appropriate response to a communicable disease outbreak. A communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from one person to another. Examples of communicable disease that may circulate in the workplace include COVID-19, norovirus, and seasonal influenza.

The Legislative Assembly’s (“Assembly”) communicable disease prevention, mitigation, and response activities are guided by the Plan. Any changes to prevention measures, such as during periods of elevated risk (i.e. flu season) or if an outbreak of communicable disease occurs, will be communicated to all Precinct Building occupants.

This Plan has been developed in conjunction with the guidelines recommended by WorkSafeBC and the Provincial Health Officer (PHO). The Assembly will continue to review and modify the Plan based on the advice of the PHO and in response to any changes in provincial public health guidance.

Any questions or concerns regarding the Plan can be directed to Human Resources by email human.resources@leg.bc.ca or phone 250-387-5576.

Communicating and Monitoring

The health and safety of those working at the Legislative Precinct remains the number one priority. Updates will be provided to all members of the Precinct community when there are significant changes to the Assembly’s Plan or approach to communicable disease management. These updates will be through email communications, intranet posts, and signage around the precinct.

The Assembly's Joint Health and Safety Committee plays an important role in identifying and resolving workplace health and safety issues and will be consulted as part of any updates. Regular workplace inspections will be conducted to ensure the measures outlined in this Plan are in place.

Reducing the Risk

Ongoing Measures

Preventing communicable disease involves implementing measures to reduce the risk of transmission in the workplace. Vaccines, antibiotics, antivirals, innate immunity, and/or acquired immunity can provide some protection against certain communicable diseases. Not all communicable diseases are treatable, nor are current treatments guaranteed to protect against a communicable disease. Therefore, it is important to limit the spread of a communicable disease before it has the potential to cause serious illness/disease by implementing these measures.

- Support employees who have symptoms of a communicable disease (e.g., fever or chills, coughing, diarrhea) to remain at home so they can avoid being at the workplace when sick, by offering remote work and sick leave options.
- Provide hand-hygiene facilities with appropriate supplies (e.g., soap, hand sanitizer) and encourage regular hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Maintain a clean environment through routine cleaning procedures.
- Ensure building ventilation is adequate and ventilation systems are properly maintained.
- Support staff in receiving vaccinations for COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable conditions.

The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level, or within the workplace. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a communicable disease and understanding the modes of transmission is the first step in reducing the incidence of disease associated with communicable diseases. Signs and symptoms will vary depending on the disease, but common characteristics associated at the onset of most communicable diseases typically include fever and other flu-like symptoms.

Response Procedures

Precinct Building Occupants

The following procedures should be followed whenever there is a communicable disease outbreak such as a regional communicable disease outbreak, a pandemic, or a public health emergency is declared by local, provincial or national officials. For all other routine, seasonal, or individual health issues, consult your healthcare provider. Routine, seasonal, and individual health issues do not need to be reported unless advised to do so by your healthcare professional.

Precinct Building occupants who are diagnosed or believe they have a communicable disease should:

- Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Inform Human Resources by email human.resources@leg.bc.ca or phone 250-387-5532 of your condition and relay pertinent information provided by your healthcare provider. All employee medical information is considered private and will be kept in strictest confidence.



- Inform your Supervisor.
 - Stay home when sick and avoid close contact with others.
 - Do not return to work until advised to do so by a healthcare professional or, in the absence of medical consultation, do not return to work for the duration of the illness and 24-hours after symptoms abate.
- To limit the spread of a communicable disease, avoid traveling when sick, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by a healthcare professional.
- Use antibiotics and antivirals appropriately and exactly as prescribed for the full duration of the prescriptions – do not self-medicate or share medicines with others.
- Maintain awareness of the situation and the progression and nature of the communicable disease outbreak by monitoring reliable media outlets.

Supervisors

Supervisors who become aware of an employee under their supervision who exhibits communicable disease symptoms or is diagnosed with a communicable disease must not release the employee's name, identifying information, or condition to other employees. All employee healthcare concerns must be forwarded to Human Resources. Supervisors and employees can contact Human Resources with any questions or concerns they may have regarding workplace issues surrounding communicable disease.

Resources

For additional information about a specific communicable disease including symptoms, prevention, treatment, and communicable disease outbreak, please visit the following:

- BCCDC Communicable Disease Control Manual: [Communicable Disease Control \(bccdc.ca\)](https://www.bccdc.ca)
- Island Health Communicable Disease Prevention & Control: [Communicable Disease Prevention & Control | Island Health](#)
- WorkSafeBC: [Communicable disease prevention: A guide for employers | WorkSafeBC](#)
- Your personal healthcare provider(s) or physician

Appendix 1: Transitional Measures

Reducing the Risk

A communicable disease can be transmitted in the workplace from one person to another. The Legislative Assembly will be maintaining a series of measures until further notice to assist in managing and keeping the risk of spreading communicable diseases low, including:

- Physical distancing to reduce points of congestion
- Optional use of face masks
- Use of physical barriers
- Personal hygiene supports
- Regular cleaning protocols

Physical distancing to reduce points of congestion

Physical distancing reduces the potential of communicable diseases being transmitted through airborne droplets. The Legislative Assembly has implemented the following protocols and measures to reduce the risk of transmission of communicable diseases throughout the workplace:

- Optional use of face masks when in common areas for on-site employees and external visitors.
- Continued use of alternative methods, such as video or conference calls, for conducting business and meetings to prevent close personal contact.
- Rearrangement and/or removal of furniture to improve physical distancing in the Chamber, committee rooms, office workspaces, and common areas, such as reception, break rooms, bike rooms, change rooms, washrooms, and elevators, where applicable.
- For public access to proceedings of the Legislative Assembly (sitting days only), a limited number of visitors are permitted in the public galleries at any one time, in keeping with physical distancing practices.
- Adherence to occupancy limits in all meeting rooms and common areas as set by public health guidelines.

Use of Face Masks

The Legislative Assembly will be taking a cautious approach to personal safety measures in the workplace and therefore face masks will still be recommended as outlined below:

- For External Visitors: Use of face masks are optional when entering the buildings. Disposable, non-medical face masks can be provided free of charge to external visitors.
- For Precinct Building Occupants: Use of face masks are optional when in common areas. Precinct Building occupants will be responsible for supplying their own face mask and for proper disposal or frequent cleaning of the face mask, dependent on which type of face mask they choose to utilize. For the purposes of this Plan, common areas include but are not limited to hallways, stairways, washrooms, break rooms, meeting rooms, bike rooms, change rooms, the Parliamentary Dining Room (both dine-in and take-out), the Parliamentary Gift Shop, the Legislative Library, the public gallery, elevators, and screening areas.



Use of Physical Barriers

Installation and regular disinfecting of protective barrier services and physical barriers for:

- Security/Visitor Log-in Office
- Legislative Library Circulation Desk
- Parliamentary Gift Shop Service Counter
- Parliamentary Tour Guide Kiosk

Personal Hygiene Supports

- Posting of signage on proper “hand hygiene” techniques and proper respiratory etiquette, throughout the Precinct Buildings.
- Interior handwashing locations readily available, visible and accessible.
- Interior and exterior hand sanitizer locations visible and accessible.
- At least one no-touch paper towel dispenser and faucet in each washroom.

Regular Cleaning Protocols

- Necessary materials in place to maintain a clean environment appropriate to the specific department or work area.
- Continuation of standard daily and night (evening shift) cleaning protocols.
- Cleaning/disinfecting of washrooms twice daily.
- Readily available supply of refillable disinfectant spray bottles, paper towels and refillable bottles of hand sanitizer for each office suite or department area; supplies are replenished as required.
- Touchless hand sanitizer stations throughout Precinct Buildings and at main entry and exit points.
- Instructions to building occupants on how to disinfect regularly touched surfaces within their own workspace(s) recommending at least twice daily (i.e., start and end of day).