

## Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for Establishments in the Restaurant and Bar Sectors – COVID-19

# OHS is everyone's business!



The purpose of this guide is to support establishments in the restaurant and bar sectors for management of occupational health and safety (OHS) in their work environment. It seeks to guarantee that operations can resume or continue under the safest and healthiest possible conditions in the context of COVID-19. Activities are resuming gradually. You can consult the [list of activities](#) authorized to resume by the Gouvernement du Québec.

In a crisis period, it is important that workers, employers and other players in the workplace collaborate to have healthy and safe work environments for all! Dialogue and cooperation are essential to achieve this.



### Management of occupational health and safety

Management means implementing the necessary measures to honour the employer's legal obligations, namely identify, correct and control the risks and encourage the workers' participation in this preventive approach.

Good cooperation between the employer and the staff is essential to encourage management of OHS.



The employer must **proceed with identification of the risks of transmission of COVID-19 in the work environment**. If the risks of contamination cannot be eliminated, the employer must seek to reduce and control them. The employer must identify the tasks during which workers may be exposed to the virus. The suppliers, subcontractors, partners and customers have been informed of the measures implemented in the facility in compliance with the guidelines issued by Santé publique (the public health authorities) and made aware of the importance of complying with these measures.

The preventive measures that may be applied are based on the principles of exclusion of symptomatic persons from the workplace, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and maintenance of hygiene measures for the tools, equipment and frequently touched surfaces.

The COVID-19 context can be a major stress factor, whether for the employer or for the workers, suppliers, subcontractors, partners and customers, due to the upheaval it causes in the different spheres of society. [Special attention must therefore be paid to the psychosocial health of personnel.](#)



### **Exclusion of symptomatic workers from the workplace**

Persons exhibiting symptoms are part of the COVID-19 transmission chain in the workplace. Procedures accounting for the following factors can avoid transmission of the disease:

- The workers are informed that in case of symptoms of cough or fever, difficulty breathing, sudden loss of smell or taste without nasal congestion or any other symptom associated with COVID-19, they must not report to work;
- Identification of workers with COVID-19 symptoms before they enter the workplace, by means such as:
  - a questionnaire,
  - self-evaluation by the workers;

The answers to these questions are confidential information. The employer must take the necessary measures to protect the confidentiality of this information;

- When a person exhibits symptoms associated with COVID-19, as indicated on the government website, he or she must be isolated immediately. Since this person must be removed from the workplace, a call to 1-877-644-4545 will provide him/her with directions;
- Once the person exhibiting symptoms has left, prohibit access to these premises while waiting to clean the room where the person was isolated and disinfect the surfaces and objects touched by the person;
- Workers who test positive for COVID-19 must notify their employer according to the instructions received from the Direction générale de la santé publique;
- The results of the public health investigation will make it possible to determine whether the people who have been in contact with the symptomatic person can return to work or must self-isolate;
- The customers who exhibit symptoms are informed of their obligation to postpone their visit to the establishment. Catering or home chef services must be postponed or cancelled if one of the customers exhibits COVID-19 symptoms.



## Physical distancing

- Whenever possible, a minimum of 2 metres of distancing between people must be maintained at work, from arrival to departure;
- This distance must also be maintained during breaks and lunch hour;
- Handshakes, hugs and any physical contact must be avoided.

**Adjustments\* must be made to limit the risk of transmission** when the principles of physical distancing cannot be respected: For example:

- Use of technological means is preferred (e.g. telework for administrative tasks, online menu and prepayment, etc.);
- Physical barriers (full partitions that are easy to disinfect) have been installed between the different workstations that are too close to each other or that cannot be spaced;
- Physical barriers (full partitions that are easy to disinfect) have been installed to separate the workers from the customers at the cash registers, in front of open kitchens, at the bar, at the reception counter, etc.;
- By modifying the organization of work. For example:
  - prefer teams that are as small and stable as possible,
  - if applicable, do not hold meetings that require a physical gathering,
  - avoid sharing objects,
  - limit outings and trips to those strictly necessary;
- The number of customers in the facility is limited according to the applicable public health provisions. As needed, a person outside or at the reception of the facility is responsible for managing the queue;
- The delivery persons are informed they must deposit the packages on a clean surface in the presence of the facility's staff, without handing them over and respecting at least 2 metres of physical distancing whenever possible;
- Whenever possible, one-way traffic has been established to prevent people from encountering each other;
- Signage (e.g. floor marking) has been deployed to establish the minimum physical distancing measurement of 2 metres near the cash registers, the reception counter, and the locker room, if applicable (wherever a line or a bottleneck may form);
- All the useful information for the customer is communicated clearly (for example, a sign is installed at the entrance to the facility (reminder of the instructions, organization of the service, organization of queues, terms of payment, removal of takeout orders, the possibility of preordering by phone or online);

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\* If an occupational health and safety committee or a prevention representative is present in the work environment, they contribute.

- The suppliers, subcontractors, partners and customers have been informed of the measures implemented in the establishment to control the risks associated with COVID-19 and made aware of the importance of complying with these measures;
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to and worn by personnel who perform a task requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person, in the absence of physical barriers.

### **Special measures for establishments in the restaurant and bar sectors**

- During table, buffet or bar service, the service staff concerned must wear a procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) if their tasks make it absolutely necessary to be within 2 metres from another person, without a physical barrier;
- During food preparation activities, the kitchen staff concerned must wear a procedure mask and protective eyewear if their tasks make it absolutely necessary to be within 2 metres from another person, without a physical barrier. If the higher temperature in the kitchen makes it impossible to wear a procedure mask (constantly wet), wearing a visor covering the face from the forehead to the chin is a solution of last resort;
- A sufficient quantity of necessary personal equipment, including a procedure mask, protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin), must be provided and made available to the workers;
- Prolonged wearing of protective equipment should be favoured over putting it on and removing it repeatedly;
- Remove personal protective equipment safely. Discard non-reusable protective equipment in the trash can or in reclosable bags or containers reserved for this purpose. Disinfect reusable equipment with an adapted product;
- Limit exchanges of objects with the customers (e.g. present the menus or slates or screens);
- Frequently clean and disinfect the equipment used by all service staff, such as the credit card scanner, cash registers, touchscreens, headphones (car order service), reusable plasticized menus, trays, etc.



### **Hand hygiene**

Frequent hand washing with soap and water or with a hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60% for at least 20 seconds limits the risks of transmission in the work environment, particularly:

- before touching the face (eyes, nose, mouth);
- after coughing, sneezing or wiping the nose;
- before and after eating;
- after handling something that is frequently touched or a package received;
- before putting on and removing protective equipment.

Install at the entrance to the facilities and at key locations (e.g. public washrooms, etc.) dispensers of hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60% for disinfecting hands, and encourage the customers to use them (e.g. poster).

Contactless payment (e.g. bank card or contactless terminals) is preferred to prevent customers from touching the terminals. If customers pay with cash, the cashiers or the servers disinfect their hands immediately afterwards with a no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60%). If a customer handles the payment terminal, it must then be disinfected. Covering it with a flexible surface makes it easier to clean (e.g. plastic film).

Wearing gloves is not recommended at the checkouts or for service. It risks creating a false sense of security and contamination by contact with multiple surfaces without changing gloves. Wearing gloves does not eliminate the need for hand washing.



### **Respiratory etiquette**

Respecting respiratory etiquette consists of:

- covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and using tissues or the crook of your elbow;
- using single-use tissues;
- immediately discarding used tissues in the trash can;
- not touching your mouth or eyes with your gloved or bare hands.



### **Maintenance of hygiene measures for tools, equipment and frequently touched surfaces**

Given that the virus responsible for COVID-19 can live on surfaces, application of hygiene measures is essential.

- Ensure efficient operation and maintenance of the ventilation systems, according to the regulatory requirements for the type of facility and the tasks performed;
- Clean the sanitary facilities depending on the traffic, at least every shift, and disinfect them daily;
- Clean the meal areas before each meal and disinfect them daily. For example:
  - refrigerator door handle,
  - chair backs,
  - microwaves;
- Clean and disinfect the frequently touched surfaces (e.g. every shift) and when they are visibly soiled. For example:
  - tables,
  - counters,
  - doorknobs,

- faucets,
  - toilets,
  - telephones,
  - computer accessories,
  - railings,
  - switches;
- Clean and disinfect the tools and equipment used after every shift or when they are shared;
  - Use the appropriate cleaning products or disinfectants (see the manufacturer's recommendations and do not mix cleansers);
  - In areas where customers circulate, clean at least daily, and even more frequently if possible (every 2 or 4 hours depending on traffic);
  - Any object, equipment or service that may be in contact with food is cleaned and disinfected according to the methods recommended by [the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation](#);
  - Remove non-essential objects (magazines, newspapers and knickknacks) from the common areas.

Resources are available online for more information concerning [cleaning of surfaces](#) or the [recommended disinfectants](#).



## Legal obligations

Legal obligations with respect to occupational health and safety, for both the employer and for workers, must be applied in the context of COVID-19. They are summarized below.

### Employer

The employer has an obligation to protect the health, safety and physical well-being of their workers. *The Act respecting occupational health and safety* (AOHS) stipulates that the employer must take all the necessary measures to do so ([section 51](#)). This includes using methods to identify, correct and control risks.

In the context of COVID-19, the employer must ensure that the usual preventive measures are still appropriate. If not, they must modify them to protect workers against the risk of contamination.

The employer must also inform them about the risks associated with their work, including those associated with COVID-19. They must also provide workers with appropriate training, assistance and supervision so that everyone has the skill and knowledge required to safely perform the work assigned to them.

## Worker

Every worker has an obligation to take the necessary measures to protect their health, safety or physical well-being and to ensure that they do not endanger the health, safety or physical well-being of other people in the workplace ([section 49](#) of the AOHS). To do this, they must follow the rules and measures put in place in the context of COVID-19, just as they follow the other rules applied in the workplace. Workers must also participate in identifying and eliminating risks. If they see risks or have suggestions in this regard, they must inform the health and safety committee (if there is one), their superior or a representative of the employer.

## Acknowledgments:

- Confédération des syndicats nationaux
- Unifor
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- Restaurant Canada
- Corporation des propriétaires de bars, brasseries et tavernes du Québec
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The guide and the kit result from a reflective process intended to support the work environments in management of occupational health and safety in the context of COVID-19. The project is scalable and will harmonize with the preventive measures ordered by the Direction de la santé publique (public health authorities).

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**COVID-19 information line: 1 877 644-4545**

**To contact a CNESST inspector: 1 844 838-0808**