



Police and Security Agencies

COVID-19 Preventive Measures in the Workplace
Interim recommendations



Pour des milieux de travail en santé
Réseau de santé publique
en santé au travail

Last updated on June 15, 2020: changes made **in yellow**

These measures apply when sustained community transmission has been confirmed by public health authorities. Based on current knowledge, it is known that the disease can be transmitted by asymptomatic people who are carriers of the disease. Therefore, preventive measures are recommended at all times.

Any resumption of non-essential services must be carried out in such a way as to control the transmission of COVID-19. In order to avoid a resumption of transmission, several conditions described [here](#) must be met.

The preventive measures recommended by the government for the general population and the [basic recommendations for all workplaces](#) [in French only] apply, unless more restrictive measures are specified.

Special attention must be given to pregnant workers and to workers with certain health conditions.

Please refer to the following recommendations:

[Pregnant or nursing workers](#)

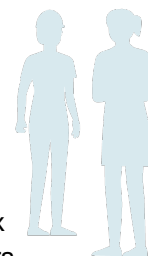
[Immunosuppressed workers](#) [in French only]

[Workers with severe chronic diseases](#) [in French only]

Adjustment of work methods and schedules

To protect the health of employees and others in the workplace, employers and workers are asked to adhere to the isolation guidelines (returning from travel, COVID-19 cases, case contacts) and to take into account other constraints (voluntary school attendance, limited public transit, etc.):

- ▶ Encourage teleworking.
- ▶ Allow flexible hours.
- ▶ Review tasks and arrange for them to be carried out alone, with a small team or in accordance with the new distancing criteria.



Triage of symptomatic workers

- ▶ Advise workers not to come to work if they present symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (see text box below). A symptom questionnaire can be completed before the start of each work shift for all workers.
- ▶ Systematic temperature taking prior to workplace entry is not recommended. If carried out, this measure should be used cautiously and with full knowledge that its ability to detect cases of COVID-19 is limited, for the following reasons, among others:
 - ▶ Not every case of COVID-19 presents with fever;
 - ▶ Fever fluctuates greatly throughout the day, creating a risk of false negatives;
 - ▶ Taking fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen) or consuming cold or hot drinks may falsify results;
 - ▶ Some temperature measurement devices, such as non-contact devices, may have a significant margin of error.
- ▶ In addition, the personnel taking temperatures must be adequately trained and protected (gloves, procedural mask and protective eyewear).
- ▶ It is also necessary to advise clients not to enter workplace areas if symptoms are present.
- ▶ If a worker or client starts experiencing symptoms in the workplace:
 - ▶ Have them wear a procedural mask and isolate them in a room designated for this purpose;
 - ▶ Call 1 877 644-4545 for instructions;
 - ▶ The symptomatic person should consult the [Self-Care Guide](#) for further details. Leave a hard copy of the guide in the isolation room.
- ▶ Workers who have been in contact with the symptomatic person should self-monitor for symptoms while waiting for public health instructions and call 1 877 644-4545 if they develop symptoms.

COVID-19 Symptoms

If you have the following symptoms, call 1 877 644 4545:

1 of these symptoms	OR	2 of these symptoms
Onset or worsening of a cough		A general symptom (muscle pain, headache, extreme fatigue or significant loss of appetite)
Fever (temperature of 38°C or higher, taken orally)		Sore throat
Difficulty breathing		Diarrhea
Sudden loss of sense of smell without nasal congestion, with or without loss of sense of taste		



Hand hygiene

- ▶ Promote and practice hand hygiene by providing workers with all necessary supplies (running water, soap, hydroalcoholic solutions, touchless trash cans, disposable tissues or paper towels, etc.).
- ▶ Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
- ▶ Use a hydroalcoholic solution (at least 60% alcohol) for at least 20 seconds if soap and water are not available; at a minimum, all workers should be able to wash their hands on entering and leaving work, after touching frequently touched surfaces (switches, door handles, microwaves, handrails, etc.), before and after breaks and meals, when using the washroom, and when entering and exiting elevators.
 - ▶ Refer to the information provided by [Health Canada](#).
- ▶ Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with hands or gloves.
- ▶ In general, wearing gloves to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 is not recommended unless otherwise advised, as it may produce a false sense of security. Gloves can become contaminated and thus contaminate the wearer who touches their face or contaminate the various surfaces touched.

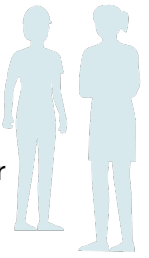
Respiratory etiquette

- ▶ Respect and promote respiratory etiquette: coughing into one's bent elbow or into a tissue and blowing one's nose into a tissue that is discarded in a lidded trash can immediately after use, then washing hands as soon as possible.

Physical distancing and minimization of contacts

The more contact between different persons, the greater the risk that one of these contacts will be with a contagious person and, therefore, the greater the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Thus, minimizing the number, frequency and duration of contacts, as well as respecting a physical distance of two metres at all times between all persons are the most effective measures and must be prioritized:

- ▶ Opt for teleworking.
- ▶ Reduce activities to those deemed essential.
- ▶ Keep the number of workers present on site to the absolute minimum required.
- ▶ Limit the number of persons in the workplace (workers, clients or any suppliers or subcontractors) by reorganizing work and services.
- ▶ Opt for small work teams that remain consistent over weeks or even months, to avoid the multiplication of interactions:
 - ▶ Always keep the same work teams – have as few workers as possible on these teams.
- ▶ Keep the same workers at the same workstations in so far as possible and ensure that workers are assigned to a single worksite.
- ▶ Avoid direct contact (handshakes, hugs).
- ▶ Reorganize physical workspaces and work activities so as to respect the minimum two-metre physical distance between persons:
 - ▶ Modify work methods;



- ▶ Avoid in-person meetings and gatherings. Opt for alternative methods such as videoconferencing, or pre-recorded telephone or video messages. If meetings are absolutely necessary (e.g., for security reasons):

NOTE: Passing by someone without contact, in a corridor or on a staircase, for example, represents a low risk.

Pay particular attention to the following situations

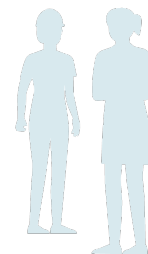
Bottlenecks

Pay particular attention to areas acting as bottlenecks (e.g., entrance to production areas, cafeteria entrance, areas where time stamps are located, etc.):

- ▶ Avoid lineups of people standing close together in these areas.
- ▶ If necessary, slightly stagger work, break and meal schedules.
- ▶ Install easily accessible hydroalcoholic solution dispensers in open areas to avoid installing them where they will create other bottlenecks.

Breaks and meals

- ▶ Ensure that physical distancing measures are applied during breaks and meals (e.g., avoid gatherings).
- ▶ Remove non-essential objects (magazines, newspapers, knick-knacks) from common areas.
- ▶ Ensure workers have access to rooms large enough to allow a minimum two-metre distance between each of them. Arrange for additional rooms if necessary.
- ▶ If no other room is available, modify meal time schedules so as to have a limited number of workers in the dining room at all times or ask personnel who can eat at their desks to do so.
- ▶ Ensure that the same groups of workers eat at the same time, in the same room, day after day. If workers eat outside the facility, ensure that they respect the minimum two-metre distance between each person.
- ▶ Do not share food or objects (e.g., cigarettes, pens or pencils, cell phones, coins or bills). If objects are shared, make sure they are cleaned between users.
- ▶ Do not exchange cups, glasses, plates, or utensils; wash dishes in hot water with soap.



Working less than two metres apart

For tasks **where it is impossible to maintain a minimum two-metre distance from anyone for more than 15 cumulative minutes in a single work shift, adjustments** must be made:

- ▶ Install an adequate physical barrier to separate the worker from other workers when the two-metre distance cannot be respected: refer to the recommendations of the [IRSSST](#) for details on physical barriers [in French only].
- ▶ If it is impossible to implement distancing measures or a physical barrier or while waiting for this to be done:
 - ▶ Wearing a **quality medical procedure mask¹** and eye protection (goggles with side protection or visor) is recommended.

Patrol and service vehicles

General instructions

- ▶ Opt for individual transport in so far as possible.
- ▶ Always assign the same officers or agents to the same places in the vehicle for each trip.
- ▶ Remove non-essential objects (e.g., magazines, newspapers, knick-knacks) from the vehicle.
- ▶ Do not set the ventilation system to recirculation mode inside the vehicle, but ventilate well by opening the windows, whenever possible.
- ▶ Provide officers and agents with a hydroalcoholic solution of at least 60% alcohol or with disinfectant wipes so they can clean their hands when there is no access to soap and water.
- ▶ Clean and disinfect regularly touched vehicle surfaces at a minimum on every work shift and when there is a change of driver or passenger, using the usual cleaning and disinfectant products (dashboard, steering wheel, gear stick, interior and exterior door handles, interior mirror, etc.).

Officer tandems having close contacts (continuous and unavoidable) in a vehicle

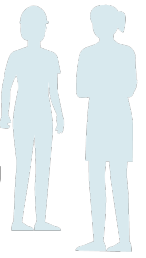
- ▶ Opt for consistent pairings of workers to avoid the multiplication of interactions, i.e., paired officers who work together continuously for weeks, or even months.
- ▶ Maintain the same position, driver or co-pilot, for the entire work shift, in so far as possible.
- ▶ If consistent tandems/pairings are not possible, wear a **quality medical procedure mask¹**

Preventive measures when interacting with individuals or groups

During interventions:

- ▶ If it is possible, maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from other persons or, if this is not possible, keep the duration of interaction to a minimum:
 - ▶ Interaction while maintaining a 2-metre distance requires no additional measures;

¹ Ideally, masks with compliance testing (ASTM) should be preferred. For details on quality standards and for criteria to help the employer choose the right masks in situations of real or apprehended shortages, refer to the following documents: [Mesures exceptionnelles pour les équipements de protection individuelle lors de pandémie](#) and [Masques chirurgicaux ou de procédures : choix de l'équipement](#) [in French only].



- ▶ Brief interaction (less than 15 minutes) less than 2 metres apart from other individuals (e.g., speeding ticket) requires no additional measures. Always wash your hands after the interaction with people;
- ▶ However, the cumulative duration of interactions within two metres with all individuals (except stable tandem partners) without personal protective equipment should not exceed 15 cumulative minutes per work shift. Beyond that time limit, officers must wear **a quality medical procedure mask¹** and eye protection (goggles with side protection or visor) is recommended.
- ▶ If the situation is likely to require a long intervention (more than 15 min.) or if the intervention implies high aggressiveness levels (e.g., risks of spitting, biting) within 2 metres of the other person (Bertillon measurements and breathalyzer tests fall into this category if it is impossible to maintain a 2-metre distance):
 - ▶ Wear a quality procedure mask and eye protection (safety glasses that protect the sides of the eyes or visor).
- ▶ After the intervention:
 - ▶ Remove eye protection and wash hands with a hydroalcoholic solution;
 - ▶ Safely remove procedure mask handling it only by its straps, dispose of it after use in a tightly closed bag or a re-closable non-contact garbage can, and wash your hands with a hydro-alcoholic solution;
 - ▶ Disinfect reusable equipment (e.g. protective eyewear, if reusable) using a product recommended for this purpose;
 - ▶ Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer following the interaction;
 - ▶ Make sure to wash your hands with soap and water (lather for at least 20 seconds before rinsing) or use a hydroalcoholic solution.

Transporting an accused in the police vehicle:

- ▶ Make sure there is a physical barrier between the front and rear seats.
- ▶ If the person is coughing, exhibits difficulty breathing or chills (fever), have him/her wear a procedure mask while in the vehicle. If the person is uncooperative or cannot tolerate a mask (e.g. due to difficulty breathing), and if there is no divider between the front and back seats, the officers should continue wearing procedure masks and eye protection while in the vehicle.

Responding to a call at the home of a person under investigation for COVID-19, a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19, or a person exhibiting symptoms (refer to the chart on symptoms p.2):

- ▶ If an interaction of less than 2 metres from the person is necessary, BEFORE entering the room where the person is located:
 - ▶ Put on **a quality procedure mask²**, eye protection (safety glasses that protect the sides of the eyes or visor) and gloves.

² Ideally, masks with compliance testing (ASTM) should be preferred. For details on quality standards and for criteria to help the employer choose the right masks in situations of real or apprehended shortages, refer to the following documents: [Mesures exceptionnelles pour les équipements de protection individuelle lors de pandémie](#) and [Masques chirurgicaux ou de procédures : choix de l'équipement](#) [in French only].



- ▶ After the intervention:
 - ▶ Remove the gloves after leaving the room and dispose of them on-site (in a hermetically sealed bag or a garbage can that can be closed without contact);
 - ▶ Remove eye protection and wash your hands with a hydroalcoholic solution (alcohol-based hand sanitizer);
 - ▶ Remove the mask handling it only by its straps and without touching the face-covering part. Dispose of the mask after use in a hermetically sealed bag or a garbage can that can be closed without contact. Wash your hands with a hydroalcoholic solution;
 - ▶ Disinfect reusable equipment (e.g., eye protection, if reusable) using a product suitable for this purpose, as well as the place where the equipment was left pending disinfection;
 - ▶ Throw away the bag with used gloves and masks;
 - ▶ Make sure to wash your hands with soap and water (lather for at least 20 seconds before rinsing), or use a hydroalcoholic solution after the procedure.

Situations requiring use of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or automated external defibrillator (AED):

- ▶ In areas where sustained community transmission of COVID-19 has been confirmed by local public health authorities, AED-equipped officers and first responders are to follow the directives of the National Medical Director of Pre-hospital Emergency Services.

[New recommendations](#) were issued on May 27, 2020 [in French only].

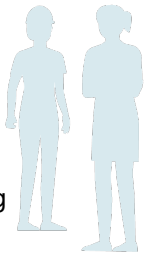
Changing rooms

- ▶ Set up a schedule for the use of changing rooms or assign a person to control access to changing rooms to ensure that a limited number of workers have access to a changing room at the same time.
- ▶ Avoid lineups of people standing close together in these areas.
- ▶ Do not share objects (e.g., shampoo).

Elevators

If possible, respect the minimum two-metre distance between users, otherwise:

- ▶ Reduce the number of users to the smallest number necessary to prevent any physical contact between them.
- ▶ The further people are from each other, the lower the risk of virus transmission.
- ▶ Display the maximum number of people at the entrance to each elevator.
- ▶ Advise users to avoid all physical contact.
- ▶ If workers use procedural masks in the course of their work, they must wear them in the elevator when the two-metre distance cannot be respected.
- ▶ Suggest to users who do not already wear a procedural mask in the course of their work that they wear a face covering.



- ▶ The minimum two-metre physical distance is a recognized measure for avoiding transmission of the virus and should be prioritized at all times. The face covering is a measure that complements distancing and does not replace it.
- ▶ If you touch your face covering, wash your hands afterwards to avoid contaminating your surroundings and those around you.
- ▶ Ensure that the elevator's ventilation system is well maintained and operates according to current standards.
- ▶ For more recommendations concerning the use of elevators in the workplace, refer to the [INSPQ information sheet](#) on workers using elevators [in French only].

Handling of objects and signing of documents

- ▶ It is recommended that a protocol for the safe handling of documents be established. Whenever possible, minimize the exchange of hardcopy documents (e.g., sign contracts and delivery slips electronically).
- ▶ Where hardcopy documents are required:
 - ▶ Hand over and retrieve documents by placing them on a clean surface, while maintaining the two-metre distance between individuals;
 - ▶ Do not share pens with others; they must use their own pen;
 - ▶ Set out pens for clients to keep if they did not bring their own pen to sign documents;
 - ▶ Clean the pen with a damp cloth and mild soap as needed or with pre-moistened wipes, when soiled;
 - ▶ When retrieving documents, place them in an envelope and transport them in a document carrier. When submitting the contract, inform the client of the preventive measures that must be respected.

Portable air conditioning and ventilation

- ▶ When conditions require it, stand-alone air conditioners and fans can be used with care while respecting certain measures outlined in the following [information sheet](#) [in French only].

Cleaning and disinfection of areas and surfaces

Cleaning only

- ▶ Infrequently touched surfaces and objects:
 - ▶ Clean with commonly used products, in accordance with usual maintenance procedures.
- ▶ Refer to the information provided by [Health Canada](#) and by the [INSPQ](#) [in French only].

Cleaning and disinfection

- ▶ Cleaning followed by disinfection is recommended for frequently touched objects and surfaces (e.g.; tables, door handles, switches, counters, handles, desks, telephones, computer accessories, computer keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks, photocopiers, payment terminals), at least on every work shift and, when appropriate, between each user (e.g., telephone).



- ▶ Allow sufficient contact time with the disinfectant to inactivate the virus (according to the manufacturer's specifications).
- ▶ Refer to the information provided by [Health Canada](#) and by the [INSPQ](#) [in French only].

Dining rooms

- ▶ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the dining room after each meal period (tables, chairs, fridge handle, faucets and taps, counters, microwaves, coffee maker, etc.).

Washrooms and changing rooms

- ▶ Clean and disinfect at a minimum on every work shift.

Wearing gloves

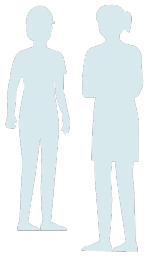
- ▶ Wearing waterproof gloves is recommended to protect hands from being irritated by the products used.
- ▶ Avoid touching the face while wearing gloves.
- ▶ When removing gloves, discard them or, if reusable, clean them and allow them to dry properly. Wash your hands immediately afterwards.

Cleaning and disinfection of work areas and rooms used for temporary isolation that have been occupied by infected (confirmed cases) or symptomatic workers

- ▶ Close off the work area and the room.
- ▶ Clean and disinfect the work area and the room used by the person.
- ▶ If possible, open the outside windows to increase air circulation in the area in question.
- ▶ Allow sufficient contact time with the disinfectant to inactivate the virus (according to the manufacturer's specifications).
- ▶ Once disinfection is completed, the work area and the room can be reopened.

Washing clothes

- ▶ If possible, remove work clothes at the end of the shift and place them in a closed plastic or cloth bag.
- ▶ Wash clothing worn at work at the end of each workday in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, using the hottest water setting suitable for these articles of clothing and the usual detergent.
- ▶ Avoid shaking dirty clothing.
- ▶ This clothing does not have to be washed separately from other clothes.
- ▶ Ensure proper drying.
- ▶ Ensure that work clothing and gloves are always used by the same worker if they have not yet been washed. Consider increasing stores of spare replacement equipment so it can be washed more frequently.



Dishwashing

- ▶ Whenever possible, each user should wash their own dishes (while respecting the minimum two-metre distance).
- ▶ Dishes and utensils must be washed with hot water and the usual dish soap.
- ▶ A dishwasher can also be used.
- ▶ Whenever possible, avoid using spray heads (chef-style faucets) to dislodge food to avoid splashing the face; instead, use pre-soaking or dislodge food residue with a cloth or sponge.
- ▶ Wash your hands after handling dirty dishes.

First-aid workers in the workplace

- ▶ For more details on the recommendations made to first-aid workers in the workplace, refer to the following information sheet: [COVID-19: First-Aid in the Workplace - Preventive Measures in the Workplace](#).

Information–promotion–training

Place posters reminding people of the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing in strategic areas.

Have a plan for informing and training workers and managers with regard to protective and preventive measures.

Follow the available online training courses on preventive and protective measures to be taken in relation to COVID-19: [COVID-19 et santé au travail](#) (in French only).

Psychological health and prevention of psychosocial risks at work

- ▶ In addition to controlling the risks of transmission of COVID-19, it is recommended that attention also be paid to ensuring a psychosocial work environment conducive to psychological health and to taking the necessary actions to prevent worker psychological distress directly or indirectly related to the pandemic.
- ▶ Refer to the [INSPQ information sheet](#) and the [IRSST guidelines](#) [both in French only].

Pandemic contingency plan

- ▶ Have a pandemic contingency plan adapted to the specific context of your workplace and see to its implementation. Refer to the [MSSS publication](#) and also a [model proposed by the IRSST for SMEs](#) [in French only].

NOTE: The preceding recommendations are based on the latest information available at the time of writing. Given that the situation and knowledge about the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) are evolving rapidly, the recommendations in this document are subject to change.

Police and Security Agencies

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The French version is entitled *Services policiers et agences de sécurité* is also available on the website of the Institut national de santé publique du Québec at: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2935-policiers-agents-de-securite-covid19>

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