

Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for
Qualifying Training – COVID-19

OHS is everyone's business!



The purpose of this guide is to support the qualifying training sector 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. The information contained in this Guide is taken from the interim recommendations produced by the Réseau de santé publique en santé au travail (RSPSAT) and the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) and specifies the CNESST's expectations in relation to [these recommendations](#).

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 learners have been informed of the measures implemented in the company in compliance with the guidelines issued by the public health authorities to control the risks associated with COVID-19 and make them 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 learners, 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:

- Identification of workers with COVID-19 symptoms before they enter the workplace, by means such as:
 - a questionnaire,
 - self-evaluation by the workers;

Answers to these questions are confidential and employers must take the necessary steps to ensure protection of their confidentiality;

- Posters are installed as reminders of the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing at key locations and locations conducive to contamination (exterior doors, rooms, washrooms, locker rooms, etc.);
- The suppliers, subcontractors, partners, workers and learners have been informed of the preventive measures implemented in the training environment to reduce and control the risks associated with COVID-19 and make them aware of the importance of complying with these measures;
- Every person exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms is informed of their obligation to stop participating in training activities until they are able to resume them in compliance with the established sanitary standards;
- When a person exhibits symptoms associated with COVID-19, as indicated on the [government website](#), that person 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;
- The results of the public health investigation make it possible to determine if the people who have been in contact with the symptomatic person may return to the training environment or must self-isolate;
- Once the person exhibiting symptoms has left, prohibit access to these locations by waiting to disinfect the room, the surfaces and the objects touched by the person, if applicable.



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;
- The organization of work and activities has been reviewed to respect at least 2 metres of physical distancing between workers and learners, whenever possible;
- Proximity traffic and interactions between workers and learners are limited;
- Sharing objects is to be avoided. If this is impossible, implement strict hygiene measures;
- Avoid holding meetings that require a physical gathering;
- Handshakes and hugs must be avoided.

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

- The use of technological means (telework, videoconference, etc.) is preferred;
- Physical barriers (full partitions) have been installed between the different workstations that are too close to each other or that cannot be spaced;
- The organization of work has been reviewed. For example:
 - prefer teams that are as small and stable as possible,
 - reduce the number of workers present at the same time in the training environment,
 - avoid sharing objects,
 - spread out the learners' arrival and departure times so as to avoid gatherings at the entrances,
 - limit the number of learners in the waiting room, by encouraging appointments, waiting in vehicles or waiting outdoors if space allows and ask the learner to come alone, if possible;
- Signage (e.g. floor marking) has been deployed to establish 2 metres of physical distancing near the service counters.

Measures for theoretical training and taking written tests

- The layout of the room favours at least 2 metres of physical distancing between trainers and learners (e.g. reduce the number of learners per group);
- If possible, the learners must be kept in the same group, in the same rooms, at the same desk, and the trainer should always have the same group of learners;
- If the same room is used by more than one group of learners, one after the other, the desks and other frequently touched surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected between uses by each group of learners.

Measures for practical training with equipment

- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to the trainers for tasks requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person and in the absence of physical barriers (full partitions);
- The equipment units, objects or tools that will be used during training are cleaned and disinfected before and after their use;
- The trainers and learners who must handle equipment, objects or tools wash their hands frequently;
- The clothes (e.g. overgarment) that are loaned to the learners are set aside and washed with the usual laundry soap or set aside for 3 hours before they are worn by another learner.

Measures for driving courses with company vehicles

- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to the trainers;
- If a second learner, an internship monitor, a supervisor or a training evaluator must be a passenger in a vehicle with a learner or a trainer, this additional person must be seated in the rear of the vehicle and separated from the learner and the trainer by a physical barrier (transparent full partition). In the absence of this physical barrier, a procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are worn and are supplied by the employer;
- Suitable ventilation in the vehicle is ensured by avoiding air recirculation and encouraging opening of windows whenever possible, for example;
- The driver's station is cleaned and disinfected between learners (e.g. steering wheel, interior and exterior door handles, interior mirror, seat belts, doors, seat);
- The trainer's station is cleaned and disinfected every shift or during a change of driver (e.g. interior and exterior door handles, seat belts, doors, seat).

Measures for driving evaluations with learners' vehicles

- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to the evaluators for tasks requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person;
- A disposable or cleanable cover (plastic or other material) to cover the evaluator's seat is placed on the seat before the evaluation and removed afterwards. This cover, supplied to the evaluators, is discarded or cleaned and disinfected between uses;
- If a supervisor or a training evaluator must be a passenger in a vehicle with a learner or a trainer, this additional person must be seated in the rear of the vehicle;
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are worn and are supplied by the employer;

- The evaluator's place is cleaned and disinfected before and after each evaluation (e.g. interior and exterior door handles, seat belts, doors);
- The evaluator proceeds with hand hygiene after each evaluation and after removing protective equipment;
- Suitable ventilation in the vehicle is ensured by avoiding air recirculation and encouraging opening of windows whenever possible, for example.

Measures for motorcycle driving courses

- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to the trainers for tasks requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person. This equipment must be worn by the trainer only when not wearing a full face motorcycle helmet with a visor;
- The frequently touched surfaces on the motorcycle (e.g. handlebars, rear-view mirror) must be cleaned and disinfected before and after use;
- The learners must wear their own motorcycle helmet and gloves, because no lending of this type of equipment is permitted;
- The clothes (e.g. bib) that are loaned to the learners are set aside and washed with the usual laundry soap or set aside for 3 hours before they are worn by another learner;
- People who must handle the clothes loaned to the learners must wash their hands frequently.

Measures for singing or music courses

- For group courses, the number of participants must be reduced to respect the minimum distance of 2 metres between persons, unless each person is separated by plastic barriers (full partitions);
- If possible, only one learner who sings or plays a wind instrument is present at a time in the teaching room, unless each person is separated by physical barriers (full partitions). In addition, the trainer must not be placed in the direction of the breath of a learner who sings or plays a wind instrument;
- After each course, the floor of the work area of the learner who sings or plays a wind instrument is cleaned;
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to the trainers for tasks requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person;
- If microphones are used, they are disinfected after each use.



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;
- when entering and leaving the job site;
- after handling something that is frequently touched;
- before putting on and removing protective equipment.

When a hand washing facility is unavailable nearby, provide a no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60%).

Contactless payment (e.g. bank card or contactless terminals) is preferred to prevent learners from touching the terminals. If learners pay with cash, the persons receiving payment disinfect their hands immediately afterwards with a no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60%).



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;
- frequent hand washing;
- 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 at least after each 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 after each shift and when they are visibly soiled. For example:
 - tables,
 - doorknobs,
 - faucets,
 - toilets,
 - telephones,
 - computer accessories;
- Clean the tools and equipment used at least after each shift or when they must be shared;
- Use the appropriate cleaning products or disinfectants (see the manufacturer's recommendations and do not mix cleansers);
- 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.

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- Ministère de la Sécurité publique

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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