

AME OFFICE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION PLAN – JULY 2021

Version 1.1.1 – Effective July 28, 2021

- ***This Communicable Disease Plan has been developed in accordance with WorkSafeBC's OHS Guideline G-P2-21 Communicable disease prevention effective July 1, 2021. This plan will be updated as required.***
- ***This plan reflects BC's Restart Plan issued May 25, 2021 and will be revised with each step.***

BACKGROUND

In May 2020, AME adopted a COVID-19 Safety Plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

As vaccinations have become widely available to British Columbians, the overall risk of COVID-19 transmission is reduced. However, the virus may still circulate, as will viruses for other communicable diseases, such as seasonal influenza, norovirus and others. This document has been prepared to outline safe work procedures following the reopening of the office as follows, reflecting Step 3 and Step 4 of BC's Restart Plan.

Note that the timing of the following steps is contingent on the following:

- Declining COVID-19 case counts
- Increasing vaccination rate in people 18+ (all persons 12+ are encouraged to be vaccinated)
- Declining COVID-19 hospitalizations, including critical care
- Declining COVID-19 mortality rate

STEP 3: JULY 2, 2021

Members and public are allowed in accordance with occupancy limits

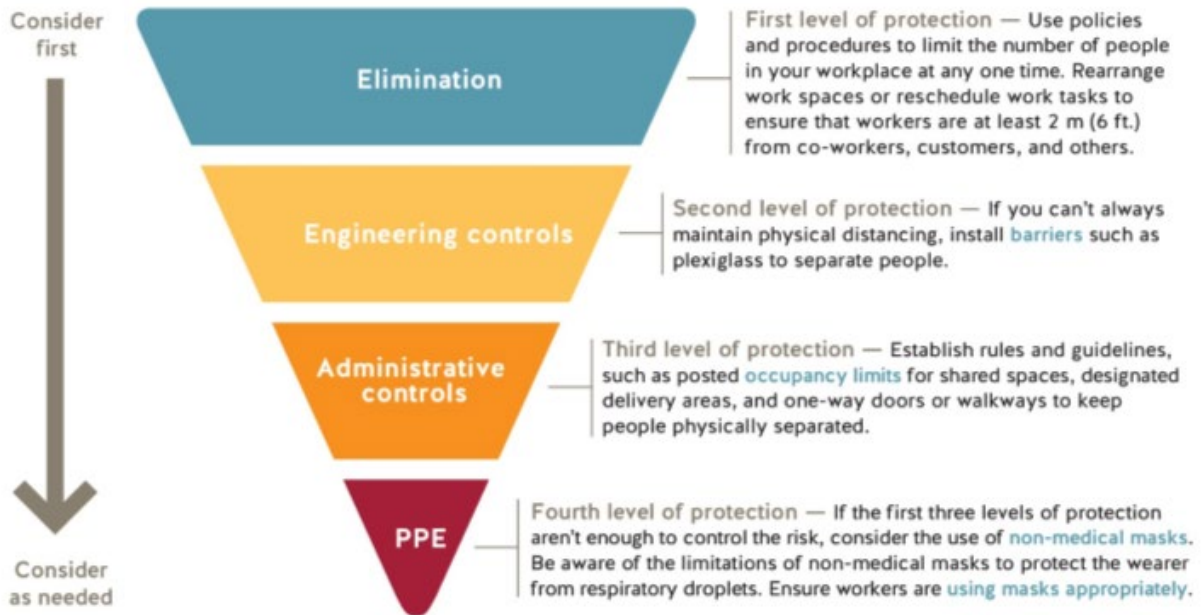
- **Corresponding guidance from BC's Restart Plan:**
 - *Continued return to the workplace*
 - *Seminars and bigger meetings allowed*
 - *Workplaces will transition to a Communicable Disease Plan.*

STEP 4: SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 (TENTATIVE) -

AME office is fully reopened.

- **Corresponding guidance from BC's Restart Plan:**
 - *Workplaces fully reopened*

As a general guideline, this communicable disease prevention plan advocates for using controls that provide the highest level of protection. Elimination of a hazard is the highest level of protection, followed by engineering and then administrative controls, with personal protective equipment as being the lowest level of protection.



Source: WorkSafeBC

OVERVIEW OF KEY CHANGES

The following table outlines key changes as of July 2021 in regard to the BC Restart Plan:

COVID-19 Control	BC Restart Plan – Step 2 <i>June 15 to June 30</i>	BC Restart Plan – Step 3 <i>Starting July 1</i>
Daily Health Check entering the workplace	Yes	No
Capacity Limits in rooms	Yes	No, but office entry still restricted
Physical Distancing	Yes	No
Mask wearing in public spaces	Yes	Recommended – 0-1 vaccinations; Optional – 2 weeks after 2 nd vaccination
If sick stay home, isolate, speak with Public Health (i.e., 811)	Yes	Yes
Cough and sneeze into the arm	Yes	Yes
Regularly wash or sanitize hands	Yes	Yes

Adapted from University Golf Club Communicable Disease Plan

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

The first responsibility of employers is to the health, safety and welfare of our staff as well as members, visitors and contractors. This includes measures that will reduce the risk of exposure to communicable disease either in the workplace or on site.

The following requirements are outlined in *OHS Guideline G-P2-21 Communicable disease prevention*:

Employers must implement the following general measures of communicable disease prevention to the extent practicable in their workplaces, and communicate them to their workers.

- *Policies to support staff with symptoms*
 - *Implement a policy for supporting workers who have symptoms consistent with a communicable disease. Workers should not remain, or be permitted to remain, at the workplace if they are experiencing symptoms of a communicable disease.*
- *Hand-hygiene facilities*
 - *Ensure basic hand-hygiene facilities are available and provide the necessary supplies.*
 - *Workers should be reminded to maintain basic levels of hand hygiene.*
 - *As required by section 4.85 of the Regulation, ensure plumbed or portable washroom facilities are readily available and are maintained and kept clean.*
- *Clean environment*
 - *Maintain a clean environment through routine cleaning processes that are appropriate for the workplace and industry.*
- *Building ventilation (HVAC systems)*
 - *Ensure the building's ventilation system is in good operating condition as designed, and that preventative maintenance is conducted.*
 - *Employers must comply with sections 4.70 through 4.80 of the Regulation related to indoor air quality. These sections of the Regulation require ventilation systems to be properly balanced, which means verifying that the system meets its design conditions for air flow, temperature, humidity, and other design parameters.*
- *Supporting vaccination*

- *Support workers in receiving vaccinations for COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable illnesses.*
- *Take into consideration workers who cannot be vaccinated. In rare instances, some workers may be advised by their physicians that they should not be vaccinated due to a medical condition, such as a severe allergy to parts of the vaccine. Some workers may choose not to be vaccinated due to other reasons.*
- *Be mindful of privacy and human rights laws, and seek advice when implementing policies requiring vaccines in the workplace.*

Workers may continue to work from home. When working from home and away from the office, it must be remembered that many health and safety roles, rights and responsibilities are just as applicable at home as they are in the workplace.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Whether at home or in the office, the employee has responsibilities to their own health and safety as well as to their colleagues.

- If you or anyone in your household is showing COVID-19 like symptoms, seek guidance from Public Health. If you test positive for COVID-19, you must self-isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms, until the symptoms have completely resolved, and you have had no fever for 72 hours. *(See Appendix A.)*
- If you have travelled internationally, you must follow current standards for self-isolating.
- In the workplace, employees should comply with all employer's instructions around minimizing exposure to communicable disease.
- Employees should wash their hands frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds, using soap and water. *(See Appendix B.)*
- Employees must take steps to minimize exposure to communicable disease while away from the workplace including using hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol minimum content where handwashing is not available.

All employees have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. This is defined as "an unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate" risk, above and beyond the potential exposure a general member of the public would face through regular, day-to-day activity.

Steps should be followed to resolve the issue with their employer, starting by reporting the undue hazard for investigation. Employers then consider the refusal on a case-by-case basis, depending on the situation.

If the matter is unresolved, then the employee or employer must contact WorkSafeBC whereby a prevention officer will investigate and take steps to find a workable solution.

VISITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Protocols respecting communicable disease prevention are similar to those for employees. Visitors must be signed in and out, as per usual office protocol. During Step 3 of BC's Restart Plan, the AME office remains closed to the public and open by appointment only.

The following should be communicated to any visitors: when confirming a meeting and/or in person.

AME Protocols for Visitors in Response to COVID-19

- If you or anyone in your household is showing COVID-19 like symptoms, you must self-isolate at home for a minimum of 14 days from the onset of symptoms, until the symptoms have completely resolved, and you have had no fever for 72 hours.
- If you have travelled internationally, visitors must follow current standards for self-isolating.
- Visitors should comply with all AME instructions around minimizing exposure to communicable disease.
- Visitors should wash their hands frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds, using soap and water or hand sanitizer (with a minimum 60% alcohol content).

SANITIZING AND EQUIPMENT HANDLING

- Provide hand-sanitizing stations in all common areas including the lobby, library, storage room and boardrooms.
- Clean all common areas and surfaces after use.
- All staff should use equipment exclusively for their use where possible. This includes computers, staplers, hole punches and other stationery items.
- All shared equipment should be cleaned using soap and water, or in the case of electronics, alcohol wipes. Pay special attention to high-use surfaces, including keypads, touch screens or hand holds.
- Water coolers should be sanitized after each use, and any glasses or containers filled at water coolers must be washed after each use.
- Coffee dispensers should be sanitized after each use. Hands should also be washed before and after each use.

HYGIENE AND FOOD SAFETY

- Continue good hand hygiene protocols. This is most important at the following times:
 - Before eating or preparing food
 - After coughing, sneezing or blowing one's nose
 - Before and after contact with an ill person
 - After touching dirty surfaces such as taps and doorknobs and after going to the washroom.
- Ensure safe food handling. Employees should bring food in their own containers and take those containers home with them at the end of the day. Employees should take special care when handling any tableware; these should be washed thoroughly both before and after use. Special care should be taken to touch only the items you need and not the surrounding items.
- Any garbage or recyclables must be carefully disposed of using the usual process. Food, drink items, dishes and cutlery are not to be shared.
- Hands must be washed before and after using shared items.
- Other measures include:
 - Practice good hand hygiene when handling food.
 - Do not prepare food for yourself or others if you are feeling ill.
 - Ensure all surfaces in the food preparation / eating areas are cleaned and disinfected after each meal. Pay attention to areas such as the underside edge of chair seats.

USE OF PPE INCLUDING MASKS

Masks are no longer required for everyone in all workplaces in shared work areas and areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained. Masks are highly recommended for use in shared areas for those who have not been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (i.e., not vaccinated through 14 days after receiving the second dose of a COVID vaccine).

Should employees and visitors wish to wear a mask in situations where they are not required, this is a personal choice.

Please review the following information sheets before using masks:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks>

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/covid-19-health-safety-selecting-using-masks?lang=en>

SICKNESS AND FIRST AID

If an employee or visitor starts to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while in the office, they should be allowed to self-isolate and call 811 for further advice. Advise the rest of the team that a person is currently isolated. Note that at this time the sick person may need to provide additional information about the work situation, colleagues and movements to Health Authorities, so having that recorded as part of a standard safety plan is recommended. If a worker or visitor is severely ill (e.g. has difficulty breathing or has chest pain, 911 should be called immediately).

The need for First Aid on site should be minimized at all times under regular management protocols and diligence. However, accidents and incidents can still happen, and so the usual procedures for dealing with potential communicable diseases should be followed. First aid kits must contain gloves and facemasks (N95 if possible). Additional items such as eye protection are also advisable.

CLEANING, SANITIZING AND DISINFECTING

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of communicable disease from contaminated objects and surfaces. Common areas of the office should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document.

This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least once a day.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched shared surfaces at least twice a day. (e.g. doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, electronic devices, keyboards)
- Cleaning and disinfecting of any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Using common, commercially available detergents and disinfectant products and closely following the instructions on the label.
- Limiting items that are not easily cleaned and disinfected (e.g. shared fabric or soft items such as upholstered chairs).
- Using paper hand towels rather than hand dryers.
- Emptying garbage containers daily.
- Wearing disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.
- Washing hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Washrooms should be cleaned at least twice a day keeping in line with the high touch surface area protocols.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- AME will use multiple channels to communicate with members and key stakeholders including: email, conference and video calls, social media, posters and news releases as required.
- AME’s website contains a page dedicated to information related to communicable disease prevention. Communications will be evaluated regularly to ensure that messaging is being received as intended.
- Staff are familiar with the Communicable Disease Prevention Plan.
- Staff and visitors are encouraged to share concerns and ask questions.

APPENDICES

Further resources are available here: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/bcs-four-step-restart>:

APPENDIX A: KEEP OUR WORKPLACE SAFE FROM COVID-19

Keep our workplace safe from COVID-19

Please do not enter this workplace if you:

- Have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days
- Have been identified by Public Health as a close contact of someone with COVID-19
- Have been told to isolate by Public Health
- Are displaying any of the following new or worsening symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Loss of appetite
- Extreme fatigue or tiredness
- Headache
- Body aches
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If you are displaying symptoms consistent with COVID-19, refer to HealthLink BC at 811.

[worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com)

11/20

WORK SAFE BC

APPENDIX B: HOW TO HANDWASH

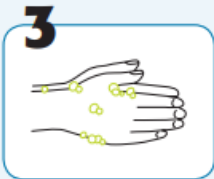
HOW TO HANDWASH



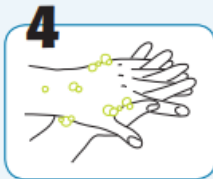
1
Wet hands with warm water.



2
Apply soap.



3
Lather soap and rub hands palm to palm.



4
Rub in between and around fingers.

Lather hands for a total of 30 seconds



5
Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.



6
Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.



7
Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.



8
Rinse thoroughly under running water.



9
Pat hands dry with paper towel.



10
Turn off water using paper towel.



11
Your hands are now safe.



Vancouver
CoastalHealth