

District of Squamish

# Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

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## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to promote the health and safety of District of Squamish employees, visitors, patrons, and contractors, by providing up-to-date information that can be used to prevent and reduce the risk of contraction, spread, and impact of communicable disease.

Preventing communicable diseases involves taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk of communicable disease transmission in our workplaces. It also involves implementing additional measures when advised to do so by Public Health during periods of elevated risk.

This document is intended to be a guide to assist our employees in following policies and procedures designed to minimize the risks associated with communicable disease.

Communicable Disease - WorkSafeBC advises that communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted by contact with infected individuals or their bodily discharges or fluids, by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects. Examples of communicable diseases that may circulate in a workplace included Coronaviruses such as COVID-19 and seasonal influenza.

### 1.1 Legislation:

**WorkSafeBC** – Communicable disease prevention guidelines are G-P2-21

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-guidelines/guidelines-for-workers-compensation-act#243B12EB12934E9797DEDB9ABE3C6862>



## 2.0 Scope

Communicable diseases falling within the scope of this plan are those typically caused by viruses and which are normally spread through direct or indirect human contact – particularly when the risk of communicable disease in the region or workplace is elevated, as advised and directed by Public Health. Examples include, but are not limited to, coronaviruses and seasonal influenzas.

This plan will outline preventative measures during:

- Normal level of community transmission of communicable disease.
- Elevated risk level of transmission of communicable disease such as during an outbreak or fall/winter influenza season.

In the event of a communicable disease outbreak such as an epidemic or pandemic, the District will work with the Provincial Health Officer and Vancouver Coastal Health, notify affected staff, take actions to protect the health and safety of staff, visitors, and contractors, and provide additional guidance as necessary.

## 3.0 Normal Risk Level Prevention

Preventing communicable disease involves taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk of communicable disease transmission in the workplace. There are a multitude of methods that can be applied to control communicable disease. The primary means of prevention include hand and surface hygiene, sanitation, isolation, and immunization. Vaccines and/or acquired immunity can provide some protection against certain communicable disease. It is important to limit the spread of a communicable disease before it has the potential to cause serious illness/disease by implementing the additional measures:

### 3.1 Protective Measures

	DO'S:	DON'T:
<b>WORKPLACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for 20 sec or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.</li> <li>• Use proper respiratory/cough sneeze etiquette.</li> <li>• Get tested if you have communicable disease symptoms.</li> <li>• Promote increased personal space in shared spaces such as lunchrooms, and during meetings.</li> <li>• Clean and disinfect work surfaces or high traffic touch points.</li> <li>• Use barriers where it makes sense.</li> <li>• Post communicable disease prevention signs and posters in the workplace.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't come to work when sick with communicable disease-like symptoms, contact a medical professional or 8-1-1 for guidance.</li> <li>• Don't touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with un-sanitized hands.</li> <li>• Don't have close contact with people displaying symptoms of respiratory illnesses.</li> <li>• Don't engage in unnecessary physical contact such as hand shaking.</li> </ul>
<b>PERSONAL</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't visit public places when sick to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Communicable Diseases Examples

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a communicable disease and understanding the modes of transmission is the first step in reducing the incidence of illness 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: achiness, upset stomach, fatigue, fever, and headaches. When traveling abroad, be aware of communicable disease threats; certain communicable diseases are endemic to certain regions of the world.

NAME	VACCINE PREVENTABLE	DESCRIPTION OF SYMPTOMS
<b>CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties</li> <li>• Transmission: Person to person via droplets</li> </ul>
<b>INFLUENZA</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever cough, sore throat; runny or stuffy nose; muscle/body aches; headaches; fatigue; sometimes vomiting and diarrhea</li> <li>• Transmission: Person to person via droplets</li> </ul>

Seek medical attention from your medical health care provider and contact 8-1-1 for guidance and direction if you are symptomatic or may have come into contact with a person displaying the symptoms of a communicable disease.

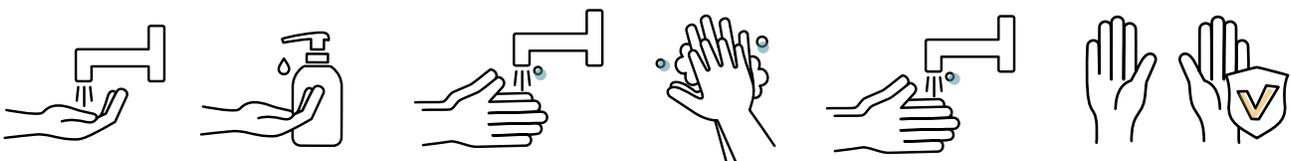
Please follow Canadian Public Health Guidelines and [Travel Advisories](#) when traveling abroad.

The District of Squamish will monitor and review communicable disease-related information issued by Vancouver Coastal Health medical health officer, or the Provincial Health Officer related to our industry, region, or workplace. This includes orders, guidance, notices, and recommendations issued.

### 3.3 Personal Hygiene

Frequent hand washing is one of the best ways to minimize the risk of infection. Proper hand washing helps prevent the transfer of infectious material from the hands to other parts of the body – particularly the eyes, nose, and mouth – or to other surfaces that are touched.

- Wash your hands immediately:
  - Before leaving a work area
  - After handling materials that may be contaminated
  - Before eating, drinking, smoking, handling contact lenses, or applying makeup.
- Wash and rinse your hands for at least twenty seconds.
- Use soap and warm running water; it does not have to be hot to be effective. If water is unavailable, use a waterless hand cleanser that has at least 70% alcohol. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions on how to use the cleanser.
- Hand sanitizer stations have been placed in our work areas for staff and visitors to use.
- Hand washing signs will be displayed in washrooms and lunchrooms for staff member and visitor reference.



### **3.4 Respiratory Cough/Sneeze Etiquette**

All staff and patrons are expected to follow cough/sneeze etiquette, which is a combination of preventative measures that minimize the transmission of diseases via droplet or airborne routes. Cough/sneeze etiquette includes the following components:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a sleeve or tissue when coughing or sneezing;
- Use tissues to contain secretions, and dispose of them promptly in a waste container;
- Turn your head away from others when coughing or sneezing; and
- Wash hands regularly.

### **3.5 Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Cleaning with products containing soap or detergent reduce germs on surfaces by removing contaminants and decrease risk of transmission from surfaces.

- All District cleaning products can disinfect against viruses that cause communicable diseases. The District standard cleaning protocol under normal conditions is at least once a day for all common surfaces throughout all buildings.
- All Janitorial employees are trained on proper use of cleaning and disinfecting products and equipment. They know to read labels for instructions. This could include using PPE (such as gloves, glasses, or goggles), additional ventilation, or other precautions.
- Additional cleaning and disinfecting products will be made available in high traffic areas such as kitchens or shared spaces for employees to use during the day if required.
- Additional cleaning can be requested through the facilities maintenance requests if required

### 3.6 Building Ventilation

Strategies to optimize ventilation system functionality:

- Maintain ventilation systems. WorkSafeBC requires employers to ensure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort for workers (Part 4 of the OHS Regulation).
- Ensure preventative maintenance is conducted (for example, regular filter changes and inspection of critical components).
- Make sure the system is properly balanced, which means verifying that the system meets its design conditions for air flow, temperature, pressure drop, noise and vibration.
- During periods of communicable disease events limiting occupancy in facilities or vehicles should be considered.

For all activities that take place indoors, basic principles of good indoor air quality include supplying outdoor air to replenish indoor air by removing and diluting contaminants that naturally accumulate in indoor settings, especially in well-sealed buildings.

The District's Facilities department maintains all our buildings' HVAC systems, and the systems are on a preventative maintenance schedule.

All HVAC system filters were upgraded during the pandemic to stronger filters that filter out germs.

### 3.7 Use of Masks

A Non-Medical Mask is a protective barrier worn on the face, covering at least the nose and mouth, and is used to contain large droplets generated during coughing and sneezing by the person wearing the mask. Non-Medical Masks help minimize the spread of potentially infectious material from the infected wearer to other people. Non-Medical Masks are not considered full protection.

Non-medical masks can be worn voluntarily by employees at any time, but particularly if they have had contact with someone who is sick. Even if the employee does not currently have symptoms, they may be an asymptomatic carrier.

If an employee chooses to wear a face mask it is important that the wearing of the mask is done correctly. Improper donning and removal of a face mask creates greater risk of infection. Always follow product instructions for use and storage of a mask, and procedures for how to put on and remove a mask.

### 3.8 Stay Home when Sick

All employees, patrons or public who have symptoms of a communicable disease should stay home and follow public health recommendations.

- BCCDC - <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/communicable-disease-control-manual>
- HealthlinkBC - <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/healthlinkbc-files/category/disease-prevention>



## 4.0 Elevated Risk Level Prevention and Controls

The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including Coronavirus, may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level, or within a certain workplace and can be monitored by:

- [Reportable Disease Data Dashboard](#)
- [BC COVID Dashboard](#) in your community;
- Low vaccination rates in your community;
- Infrequent use of other prevention measures, such as hand hygiene; or
- The space is occupied by people at increased risk for severe illness.

Once the risks have been identified with guidance from Vancouver Coastal Health, the principles used to eliminate or reduce the risk are based upon the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Hierarchies.

The hierarchy of controls in order of their effectiveness:

1. Elimination or substitution: Remove the hazard, the communicable disease, from the workplace.
  - Stay home when sick
  - Physical distancing
  - Cleaning and/or disinfecting high touch surfaces
  - Cleaning and/or disinfecting contaminated surfaces
2. Engineering controls: Contain the hazard or reduce the risk with an engineered control.
  - Barriers
  - Well maintained ventilation systems
  - Addition of HEPA air scrubbers
  - Placement or installation of hand sanitation stations

3. Administrative controls: Reduce the risk through organizational processes or behaviour change of employees and/or clients.

- Work from home
- Promote vaccinations for communicable diseases
- Promote safe cough and sneezing methods
- Wash or sanitize hands frequently
- Formal or informal daily health checks before entering the workplace
- Capacity limits for rooms, structures or equipment
- Cleaning or sanitizing shared tools, equipment and workstations, after use
- Communication and signage of expected actions of employees and clients
- Promote awareness and availability of mental health supports

4. Personal protective equipment (PPE): Reduce risk by equipment worn by an employee.

- Respirators
- Droplet protection eye or face shields or sealed goggles
- Gloves, Gowns
- Disposable non-medical mask
- Three-ply reusable cloth mask

5. When directed by Public Health, additional measures will be implemented, and may include:

- Promote physical distancing;
- Follow Occupancy Capacities recommendations;
- Utilize physical barriers;
- Wear non-medical masks indoors or when physical distancing can not be maintained;
- Work from home if possible; and/or
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection.