Does the protocol include an employee/contractor self-declaration form?

You are encouraged to implement a comprehensive screening and monitoring program to prevent COVID-19 infected individuals from entering the worksite. You should encourage employees to stay home if they feel sick and are exhibiting any symptoms related to COVID-19. You may also implement pre-shift screenings, which may include requiring employees/contractors to complete a self-declaration form that they are not exhibiting any symptoms related to COVID-19.

Does the protocol include disinfecting work areas and hygiene practices?

The Public Health Agency of Canada provides guidance on cleaning and disinfecting of workplaces.

Surfaces frequently touched with hands are most likely to be contaminated. These include doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons, light switches, cabinet handles, faucet handles, tables, countertops and electronics. It is not yet known how long the virus causing COVID-19 lives on surfaces, however, early evidence suggests it can live on objects and surfaces from a few hours to days.

When cleaning public spaces, choose products that clean and disinfect all at once (e.g. premixed store-bought disinfectant cleaning solutions and/or wipes when available). Cleaning products remove germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces by using soap (or detergent) and water. Cleaning does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. Disinfecting products kill germs on surfaces using chemicals.

Use only approved hard-surface disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms the disinfectant product is approved and safe for use in Canada.

Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for safe use of cleaning and disinfection products (e.g. wear gloves, use in well-ventilated area, allow enough contact time for disinfectant to kill germs based on the product being used).

Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after removing gloves.
Use damp cleaning methods such as damp clean cloths, and/or a wet mop. Do not dust or sweep which can distribute virus droplets into the air.

Contaminated disposable cleaning items (e.g. mop heads, cloths) should be placed in a lined garbage bin before disposing of them with regular waste. Reusable cleaning items can be washed using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C). Clean and disinfect surfaces that people touch often.

In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that are frequently touched with hands should be cleaned and disinfected more often, as well as when visibly dirty. Shared spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms should also be cleaned more often.

For more information: Canada.ca/coronavirus

- Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
- Gloves and gowns should be compatible with the disinfectant products being used.
- Additional PPE might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions regarding other protective measures recommended on the product labeling.
- Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area. Be sure to clean hands after removing gloves.
- Employers should develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all cleaning staff on site prior to providing cleaning tasks. Training should include when to use PPE, what PPE is necessary, how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE, and how to properly dispose of PPE.
- If you require gloves or masks or other PPE, prepare a simple half-page Job Safety Analysis (JSA): list the hazards and the PPE (gloves, masks, etc., as needed), and the person who drafts the JSA should sign and date it.

If you are using cleaners other than household cleaners with more frequency than an employee would use at home, you must also ensure workers are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace and maintain a written program in accordance with the WHMIS provisions contained in the OHSA. Simply download the manufacturer’s Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and share with employees as needed, and make sure the cleaners used are on your list of workplace chemicals program.

You should maintain routine cleaning and disinfection procedures after reopening to reduce the potential for exposure.
While not mandated, you should promote personal hygiene by providing additional short breaks to allow employees to wash their hands often and providing tissues and no-touch trash receptacles.

**Does the protocol include staggering the return of the workforce?**

In order to promote social distancing, you are encouraged to stagger the return of the workforce. Further, you are encouraged to stagger break times or create additional, temporary break areas. It is also advisable that you stagger when employees arrive and leave the workplace to avoid congestion in parking areas, locker rooms, and near time clocks. The key is to take as many steps and precautions to encourage social distancing as possible.

**Does the protocol include temperature screenings?**

You may implement pre-shift screenings, including taking employees’ temperatures. You should not allow employees with symptoms or a fever of 38 degrees Celsius or greater to enter the workplace.

**Does the protocol require medical clearance for those with elevated temps?**

For employees who have confirmed cases of COVID-19, the infected employee should remain at home until released by a physician or public health official. If a medical note releasing the employee is unavailable, follow local public health authority guidelines on when an employee may discontinue self-isolation, which contain specific requirements dependent upon whether the employee tested positive for COVID-19 and the symptoms exhibited.

**Does the protocol include contact tracing?**

You should implement a plan for contact tracing after an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19. You should ask infected employees to identify all individuals who worked in close proximity (two metres) for a prolonged period of time (10 minutes or more to 30 minutes or more depending upon particular circumstances, such as how close the employees worked and whether they shared tools or other similar items) with them during the 48-hour period before the onset of symptoms. Employers should send home all employees who worked closely with the infected employee for 14 days to ensure the infection does not spread. While quarantined, those employees should self-monitor for symptoms, avoid contact with high-risk individuals, and seek medical attention if symptoms develop. If they develop symptoms, they should remain home for at least seven days from the initial onset of the symptoms, three days without a fever (achieved without medication), and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).
Does the protocol include isolation requirements for those who test positive COVID test?

Have the infected employee follow the direction of their medical provider or local public health official regarding the duration of self-isolation. In general, employees are able to return to work 14 days after their symptoms start if they had COVID-19. There are no tests of clearance that are required to return to work.

Does the protocol require physical distancing at work?

Employees should continue to maintain a two metre distance from others and otherwise observe social distancing in the workplace as work duties permit. You should focus on social distancing rules for work areas and common areas such as restrooms, employee entrances and exits, vending/food services, conference rooms, and break areas.

Does the protocol include non-essential travel restrictions?

You should minimize non-essential business travel and adhere to Public Health Agency of Canada guidelines regarding isolation following travel. Cancel non-essential travel.

Does the protocol include employee Safe Return to Work Training/Education?

You should train all staff in the additional healthy hygiene practices and cleaning/disinfection policies that you are implementing.

You should also plan on training employees and demonstrating the new safety measures in places to protect them from further spread of the virus. The more employees understand about what safety measures are being taken, and why, the more likely there is to be employee buy-in, and the less likely that employees may make complaints to a provincial regulator or other third parties regarding perceived risk in the workplace.