

# GUIDANCE FOR WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

## Overview

Under current Chief Medical Officer of Health Orders, businesses and entities are required to:

- implement practices to minimize the risk of transmission of infection among attendees;
- provide procedures for rapid response if an attendee develops symptoms of illness;
- ensure that attendees maintain high levels of sanitation and personal hygiene;
- comply, to the extent possible, with the [COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance](#), this guidance, and any other applicable Alberta Health guidance found at [Alberta.ca/BizConnect](https://alberta.ca/BizConnect).

This document has been developed to support operators of warehouses in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees (including workers, volunteers, patrons and the general public). The guidance provided outlines public health and infection prevention and control measures, specific to warehouse settings.

This guidance is subject to change and will be updated as needed. Current information related to COVID-19 can be found at [Alberta.ca/covid19](https://alberta.ca/covid19).

## COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

<b>General Guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage and facilitate staff and visitors staying up to date with developments related to COVID-19.</li><li>• Notify staff of the steps being taken to prevent the risk of transmission, and the importance of their roles in these measures.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ COVID-19 signage should be posted in highly visible locations.</li><li>○ “Help prevent the spread” posters are available.</li></ul></li><li>• When possible, provide necessary information, training, and communication about reducing the risk of transmission in languages that are preferred by staff and visitors.</li><li>• All Albertans must follow CMOH Order 05-2020, which establishes legal requirements for quarantine and isolation.</li><li>• Increase ventilation and fresh air return in the facility as much as possible.</li><li>• To support public health contact tracing efforts in the event that an individual tests positive, operators should maintain a record of the names and contact information of staff, clients and visitors that have been to the warehouse (visitors include anyone coming to the facility who does not regularly work there, such as delivery persons, repair technicians, and social visitors).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Providing information is voluntary. An organization must obtain an individual’s consent and notify them about the purpose and legal authority for the collection.</li><li>○ Information about attendees will only be requested by Alberta Health Services if a potential exposure occurs onsite.</li></ul></li></ul>
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# GUIDANCE FOR WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For warehouses, this includes staff, temporary or contract workers, and volunteers on shift.</li> <li>○ Records should only be kept for 2 weeks.</li> <li>○ The operator and each of the tenants must make reasonable security arrangements to protect any personal information.</li> <li>○ Any personal information that is collected for COVID-19 contact tracing can only be used for this purpose, unless an individual provides their consent.</li> <li>○ For more information, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner has released <a href="#">Pandemic FAQ: Customer Lists</a> about collecting personal information from customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>○ For questions about your obligations under PIPA, please contact the FOIP-PIPA Help Desk by phone at 780-427-5848 or by email at <a href="mailto:sa.accessandprivacy@gov.ab.ca">sa.accessandprivacy@gov.ab.ca</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Screening &amp; Response Plan</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Operators should:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instruct those who are symptomatic or who may have been exposed to COVID-19 to not enter.</li> <li>○ Consider implementing active screening of visitors (where applicable) and staff, such as temperature checks, and screening for symptoms of fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose or difficulty breathing.</li> <li>○ Encourage the use of the Alberta Health Services <a href="#">COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool</a>.</li> <li>○ Consider the use of the daily checklist found in the COVID General Relaunch Guidance document.</li> <li>○ Develop a rapid response plan that sets out a fast-action plan for operators when an individual shows symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.</li> <li>○ Make staff aware of the rapid response plan and what to do if an individual becomes symptomatic while onsite. This should include:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immediately isolating the individual from others.</li> <li>▪ Cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces that may have come into contact with the symptomatic individual.</li> <li>▪ Requiring hand hygiene and masking of the individual.</li> <li>▪ Facilitating safe transport of the symptomatic person to their home.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical Distancing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Operators should consider how to enable physical distancing and implement appropriate controls for their settings and services. Strategies include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Placing barriers or partitions between staff and workspaces, if distancing is not possible.</li> <li>○ Reducing or removing seats from waiting areas, lunchrooms and break areas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# GUIDANCE FOR WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Re-arranging lockers and workspaces so that staff on the same shifts are placed further apart.</li> <li>○ Placing barriers between urinals and hand sinks that are less than two metres apart, or putting every other urinal or hand sink temporarily out of service.</li> <li>○ Placing additional hands-free garbage bins with removable linings at all entrances and exits.</li> <li>● Where physical controls are not possible or appropriate, the operator should consider:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reducing the number of staff in an area at one time.</li> <li>○ Directing staff movement within a site. This can be accomplished with signs, ropes, floor decals, etc.</li> <li>○ Providing visual cues (e.g. floor markings, signs) to remind staff to maintain distancing.</li> <li>○ Staggering work shifts, entry and exit times.</li> <li>○ Dedicating staff to monitoring entry and exit points to ensure physical distancing is appropriately maintained.</li> <li>○ Schedule operational activities and work times in a manner that prevents multiple crews being together on the floor at once.</li> <li>○ Where feasible, adjust the number of shifts per day to minimize exposure.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A warehouse that normally operates one daytime shift may be able to split workers from one shift into two or three shifts over a 24-hour period.</li> <li>▪ Include time for environmental cleaning between shifts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Consider cohorting workers to reduce the spread of the viral hazard.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assign the same groups of workers to the same shifts to reduce wide-spread exposure.</li> <li>▪ Grouping may reduce the number of workers required to isolate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Postpone non-essential maintenance or servicing, or perform after normal work hours.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Direct traffic through aisles and around stations to limit contact.</li> <li>● Reduce staff movement within the facility by assigning specific lunchrooms, break rooms, or locker rooms to certain shifts/cohorts.</li> <li>● Set up procedures for shipping and receiving that support physical distancing as well as enhanced hygiene and cleaning practices.</li> <li>● Share COVID-19 procedures with delivery drivers and visitors prior to their arrival.</li> <li>● Consider wearing face masks in situations where physical distancing is difficult.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cleaning &amp; Disinfecting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Operators should increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ high traffic areas, common areas, and washrooms</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# GUIDANCE FOR WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ high-touch and shared surfaces, particularly during shift changes or when moving to a new station or set of tools.</li> <li>● High-touch and shared surfaces include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work station controls, steering wheels of forklifts and pump trucks, and handles of reusable picking boxes.</li> <li>○ Door handles, light switches, toilet handles, faucets and taps, elevator buttons, railings.</li> <li>○ Phones, computers, remote controls, keyboards, desktops, conference room equipment, pin pads, cash registers, surface counters, customer service counters.</li> <li>○ Equipment handles, hand tools, machinery control panels, seat belt buckles, joysticks, and controls on powered mobile equipment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Ensure disposable towels and spray cleaners, or disposable wipes, are available to staff to regularly clean commonly used surfaces, and to clean and disinfect work spaces between and during shifts.</li> <li>● Line waste containers with plastic bags for safer garbage disposal.</li> <li>● Create a log to track frequency of cleaning and disinfecting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hand Hygiene &amp; Respiratory Etiquette</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Operators should promote and facilitate frequent and proper hand hygiene for all staff and visitors. Operators should consider the following:</li> <li>● Enabling and instructing staff to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol content).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide an accessible means to sanitize hands at points of entry and locations throughout the site where individuals are known to handle objects.</li> <li>○ Hand washing with soap and water is required if the individual has visibly dirty hands.</li> <li>○ The AHS <a href="#">Hand hygiene education webpage</a> has more information, posters and videos about hand hygiene.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Operators should make every effort to encourage respiratory etiquette (e.g., coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow, promptly disposing of used tissues in a lined garbage bin).</li> <li>● The use of highly visible <a href="#">posters</a> that remind staff and visitors to practice respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene is strongly encouraged (e.g., entrances, washrooms and staff rooms).</li> <li>● Operators should encourage staff to launder uniforms and work garments between shifts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public Spaces &amp; Common Areas</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Operators should implement contact-free modes of interaction for workers. This might include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offer online services where possible.</li> <li>○ Virtual meetings and celebrations.</li> <li>○ Curb-side pick-up, contactless delivery, drive-in or drive-through services for customer pick up.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Contactless transactions, such as scanned or digital copies of receipts, waybills, and other transactions normally completed in hard copy or through high-touch methods.</li> <li>● Consider:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keeping communal doors open to reduce contact with door handles (if compliant with relevant fire codes).</li> <li>○ Restricting public access to lunchrooms and staff areas.</li> <li>○ If staff need certain common areas (such as a prayer room) at a particular time, consider designating temporary supplemental space to ensure physical distancing requirements can be maintained.</li> <li>○ Using the building intercom system to remind staff about safe work procedures during shifts. This does not replace supervision or feedback from supervisors, but may mean that supervisors will have to do fewer person-to-person reminders in the course of their walk-arounds.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Vending machines and water dispensers should be cleaned and disinfected more frequently. If this is not feasible, consider removing them from service. Consider providing bottled water or disposable cups instead.</li> <li>● In designated smoking areas, encourage people to maintain physical distancing and perform hand hygiene before and after smoking.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shared Items, Goods and Equipment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Remove shared items that cannot be easily cleaned, such as newspapers and magazines. Limit the touching of shared objects where possible.</li> <li>● Wherever possible, minimize sharing of equipment and objects by assigning them to individual workers.</li> <li>● All equipment and objects that will be shared between more than one person, should be cleaned and disinfected at an enhanced frequency.</li> <li>● In the event that a worker becomes symptomatic while at work, or if an asymptomatic worker tests positive for COVID-19, the following steps should be observed:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Before putting on gloves and non-medical face mask.</li> <li>▪ Immediately after removing gloves and non-medical face mask.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ All items the positive worker handled should be handled while wearing a non-medical mask or face covering.</li> <li>○ Consider disposing of the object or equipment if appropriate.</li> <li>○ Hard-surfaced objects should be cleaned and disinfected.</li> <li>○ Soft-surface objects and equipment that cannot be cleaned and disinfected, or discarded, should be left untouched for a period of seven days.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>Truck Drivers / Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operators should:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Develop specific screening protocols for international truck drivers, as they may have travelled through higher risk areas with higher rates of infection. Contact with international drivers should be minimized where possible.</li><li>○ Encourage truck drivers to use of the Alberta Health Services <a href="#">COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool</a>.</li><li>○ Have drivers wait in their vehicles, or a designated area, to limit contact. Wherever possible, have facility staff unload or load a shipment.</li><li>○ Make a washroom available for use to truck drivers, preferably outside of the main facility.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Carpooling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operators are encouraged to speak to their employees about carpooling. While it is often a necessity for staff, staff should be encouraged to implement measures to travel to and from their jobs safely. Measures could include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Limiting the number of people per vehicle so that distancing can be achieved.</li><li>○ Reminding people to clean hands before entering the vehicle and when arriving at the destination.</li><li>○ Using face masks in shared vehicle spaces.</li><li>○ Installing barriers between occupants to prevent droplet transmission.</li><li>○ Cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces (e.g. door handles, handrails, seatbelt buckles) after each trip.</li><li>○ Staying home when sick.</li><li>○ Have a back-up plan for travel home if an employee becomes sick at work.</li></ul></li><li>• Operators should consider providing training, supplies and/or equipment to keep carpool vehicles as safe, clean and sanitary as possible.</li><li>• If feasible, consider providing company shuttle bus options that meet physical distancing requirements.</li></ul>