

GUIDANCE FOR OFFICE BUILDINGS

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 [General Relaunch Guidance](#), this guidance, and any other applicable Alberta Health guidance found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

This document is developed to support owners and operators of office buildings in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees (including tenants, visitors, workers, volunteers, visitors, and general public). The guidance provided outlines public health and infection prevention and control measures specific to office buildings.

This document and the guidance within it are subject to change and will be updated as needed. Current information related to COVID-19 can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-information.aspx>

COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

General Guidance

- Office buildings often have multiple tenants. Owners and operators should advise each tenant of their responsibility to implement COVID-19 measures outlined in the [COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance](#), and any other applicable [guidance](#), in their work spaces.
 - If contractors are employed in the workplace, owners and operators should develop plans to communicate with the contracting company regarding modifications to work processes and requirements for the contractors to prevent transmission.
 - The building owner and operator should ensure measures are implemented in all common areas of the building (e.g. elevators, stairways, entrances, concourses, food courts).
 - Refer to the [General Relaunch Guidance](#) for information on building maintenance (e.g., ventilation).
 - Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol should be placed in convenient locations throughout the facility.
 - Encourage attendees to practice hand hygiene.
 - COVID-19 signage should be posted in highly visible locations:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ “Help prevent the spread” posters are available.○ When possible, provide necessary information in languages that are preferred by clients.○ Tenants should self-screen for symptoms using the COVID-19 Self- Assessment tool.● Post signage to reinforce distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.● Operators and attendees should keep up to date with the masking requirements set at the local level.● All Albertans must follow CMOH Order 05-2020, which establishes legal requirements for quarantine and isolation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19; with a history of international travel in the last 14 days; or with close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days must remain at home.
Screening & Response Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Owners and operators should develop a building-wide rapid response plan to respond or assist in the event that an attendee or tenant shows symptoms of COVID-19.● Tenants should be familiar with and follow the building’s rapid response plan, and develop rapid response plans for their own employees that align with the building operator’s plan.● Rapid response plans should include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Immediately isolating the symptomatic person from others.○ Requiring hand hygiene and masking of the symptomatic individual.○ Cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces that the symptomatic person may have contacted.○ Safe transport of the symptomatic person to their home for isolation.● To support public health contact tracing efforts in the event that an attendee tests positive, operators should maintain lists of the names and contact information of all onsite building staff and contractors and should request that tenants maintain daily attendance records for their onsite staff, contractors, and volunteers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The building operator and each of its tenants must obtain an individual’s consent and notify them about the purpose and legal authority for the collection.○ Tenants are not required to provide contact lists to the building operator.

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Physical Distancing

Physical distancing means maintaining a distance of at least 2 metres between attendees who are not from the same household or cohort at all times

- In areas where attendees may come within 2 metres distance, such as meeting rooms, break rooms, cafeterias or dining halls, locker rooms, check-in areas, waiting areas, and routes of entry and exit, the operator or building tenants should consider physical controls such as:
 - Placing barriers, partitions or cubicle walls between attendees.
 - Reducing or removing seats from waiting areas, lunch rooms and dining areas.
 - Arranging desks, work spaces, breakrooms and any other common spaces to accommodate 2 metres between individuals.
 - Partitioning urinals that are less than 2 metres apart.
- Where physical controls are not possible or appropriate, the operator and building tenants should consider:
 - Reducing the number of attendees onsite at one time.
 - Directing traffic flow with signs, ropes, or floor decals.
 - Staggering employee start and end times.
 - Establishing dedicated entry and exit points into busy areas.
 - Eliminating back-to-back meetings in meeting rooms, or ensuring that shared work-spaces are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between users.
 - Restricting elevator capacity to the minimum number of riders that will both sustain operational requirements and enable 2 metres distance or the widest distance possible between riders. If 2 metres of distance cannot be maintained, all riders should wear non-medical masks inside the elevator.
 - For the average-sized elevator, no more than 4 riders should be in the elevator with the maximum distance between them (i.e., standing in the corners).
- Develop strategies to minimize the handling of objects between multiple attendees (i.e. self-serve supply rooms) and ensure frequent cleaning and disinfecting of communal objects (e.g., copiers, shredders, paper cutters).
 - Remove unnecessary, frequently-touched items that cannot be easily cleaned, such as newspapers, magazines, puzzles or toys.
- Operators and tenants can encourage onsite staff and contractors to incorporate physical distancing considerations into normal work activities by:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working from home where possible and appropriate. ○ Offering options for virtual participation in all meetings and gatherings. ○ Booking higher-capacity meeting rooms to ensure that all in-person attendees can physically distance. ○ Wiping down high-touch surfaces such as on/off buttons, computer mice, and keyboards in meeting rooms before and after use. ● Consider asking staff, contractors, volunteers, and visitors to use masks or barriers if unable to maintain physical distancing.
<p>Cleaning and Disinfecting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and implement procedures for increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of high traffic areas, common areas staff rooms and public washrooms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain cleaning logs and an inventory of supplies. ○ Respond immediately to sanitation concerns. ● Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces as per AHS' Public Health Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning of Public Facilities during Respiratory Illnesses in the Community. ● Consider scheduling cleaning and maintenance services outside of normal working hours to minimize the number of people in the office building at one time. ● Consider providing disposable towels and spray cleaners, or disposable wipes, to tenants, contractors, volunteers and visitors (as necessary) to regularly clean commonly used surfaces such as tables and countertops.
<p>Events and Gatherings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow the current gathering restrictions. ● Refer to the relevant guidance for events on Alberta Biz Connect.
<p>Food Courts and Restaurants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All food service providers and licensed drinking establishments in office buildings must adhere to the Food Regulation and follow the guidance for Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs and Bars to the extent possible.