

Going Forward Strategy – BC Restart Plan (May 2020)

Summary to Date (May 15th, 2020) and Considerations for Individuals & Employers

BCSTH Member Programs are essential services supporting a vulnerable population and have been open and providing essential services since the Provincial State of Emergency Declaration on March 18th, 2020. Some of the measures discussed below, as part of the Going Forward/BC Restart Plan, have already been implemented by your programs to comply with the Provincial Health Authority mandates such as the physical distancing requirements which still are in effect.

To respond to the BC Restart Plan, BCSTH is providing this summary which will be updated as we go forward together. BCSTH is researching areas of particular concern raised by our member programs such as: playrooms; PEACE Program counselling space, toys, books, coloring sheets; Libraries and books; DVDs, games, etc.; file rooms; thrift shops; common spaces; office equipment; conference rooms; common kitchen with shared plates and utensils, coffeemakers. **We will provide support going forward based on our research as to these concerns and please let us know if you have additional concerns and how we can support your programs.**

Summary

On May 6, 2020, Premier John Horgan unveiled the provincial government's plan to safely restart British Columbia. The [B.C. Restart Plan](#) ("Plan") outlines a process to gradually lift restrictions on social and economic activities, and allow for the safe reopening of various sectors and businesses closed or impacted by COVID-19. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan#getting-back-to-work>

As part of this Plan, the government will work together with public health officials, industry organizations and businesses. Certain sectors will be asked to develop 'enhanced protocols' for operating safely and in accordance with public health and safety guidelines. The creation of the protocols will be overseen by a committee of deputy ministers, with input and advice from the Provincial Health Officer. **The Social Services Roundtable started by Minister Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, will be developing Social Service Sector Guidelines and Resources to assist social service sectors as they restart their activities and BCSTH will forward these guidelines to members when finalized.**

WorkSafeBC

New Health Guidelines and Checklists will be available at [WorkSafeBC.com](https://www.worksafebc.com).

Employers will be required to:

- Review the new Health and Safety Guidelines, best practices and other resources at [WorkSafeBC.com](https://www.worksafebc.com) and,
- Adapt these materials into appropriate COVID Safe Plans for each workplace. The Plan should address how: 1) your workplace is organized and arranged; 2) Specific activities are carried out;

3) you clean and sanitize; 4) changes and precautions will be communicated to everyone at the workplace.

The WorkSafeBC Guide to reduce the risk of COVID-19 discusses how to:

1) Assess the risk of transmission at your workplace; 2) Implement measures to reduce the risk of transmission; 3) Develop policies ; 4) Communicate the policies and train the workplace; 5) Monitor your workplace and update plans as needed; 6) Assess and address risks to restart operations.

See <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation>

FAQs <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/faqs-returning-to-safe-operation>

Posters

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/posters/help-prevent-spread-covid-19-handwashing?lang=en>

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/posters/help-prevent-spread-covid-19-occupancy-limit?lang=en>

For employers and retailers seeking detailed information, please refer to the BC COVID-19 Go-Forward Management Strategy and Checklist, as well as resources at WorkSafeBC.com.

Provincial Health Office and the BC Restart Plan

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Covid-19_May4_PPP.pdf

This is the May 4th, 2020 BC Restart Plan slide show of Dr. Bonnie Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix.

- People’s current contacts with others has been reduced to 30% of what it was before COVID-19, and now those contacts could double – up to 60% of normal and would still be projected to result in a relatively flat COVID-19 transmission rate.
- The highest risk is the frequency of contacts people have with other people and the number of people involved.
- Slide 25 shows the hierarchy of controls to keep increased contact as safe as possible from most to least effective:
 1. Physical distancing is the most effective.
 2. Engineering controls, such as plexi-glass barriers is second.
 3. Administrative controls, such as staggering work times, or tape on the ground to remind about physical distancing, is third.
 4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is the least effective.

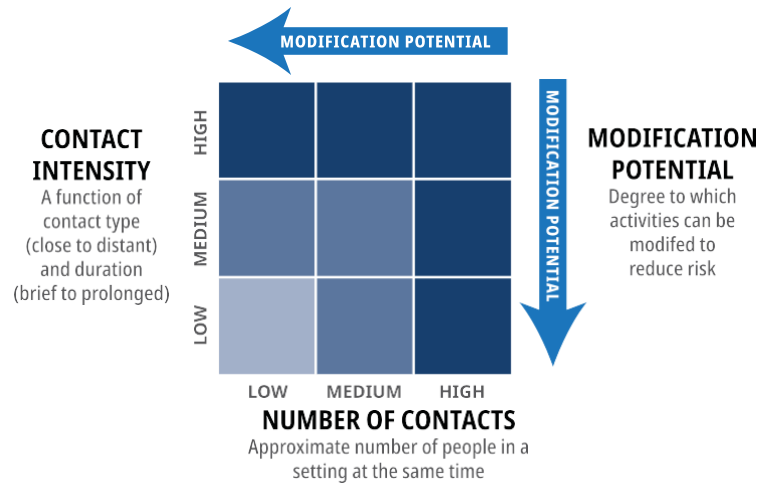
The “New Normal”

The Plan emphasizes that we will all need to continue to do our part in order for the Restart Plan to be a success. It asks individuals to inform themselves of the risk of transmission and to assess your own risk and tolerance and think through your interactions at home, at work and in the community and design a

plan that reduces transmission. Particular caution and accommodations should be provided to those at higher risk such as over 60, have compromised immune systems or underlying chronic conditions or caring for people who are in these higher risk categories.

The risk of transmission is a direct function of 2 variables: the number of contacts (number of people present at the same time) and the contact intensity (the type of contact, i.e. close or distant and the length of contact, i.e. brief or prolonged). These factors can be rated as low, medium and high risks:

FIGURE 6: Reducing transmission



Steps individuals can take to reduce transmission:

- Inform themselves of the risk of transmission and assess your own risk and tolerance and think through your interactions at home, at work and in the community and design your own plan that reduces transmission.
- Stay at home when you have cold or flu symptoms (coughing, sneezing, runny nose, sore throat, fatigue). Do not go to school, work or social events. Consider self-distancing from family members.
- Maintain physical distancing outside your home. No handshaking or hugging. Keep the number of your contacts low and at a safe distance.
- Consider using non-medical facemasks when physical distancing is not possible (e.g. shopping, or on transit).
- When visiting with friends in family (mid-May and beyond), only get together in small groups (around 2-6 people) and continue to maintain physical distancing. Persons over age 60 or with underlying medical conditions are encouraged to take extra precautions.
- Practice good hygiene (including regular hand washing; avoiding touching your face; covering coughs and sneezing) and disinfect.
- Clean your home and workspace more regularly and in particular, frequently touched surfaces.

- Minimize non-essential personal travel.
- Stay informed and follow public health advice.

Employers are advised in the BC Restart Plan to:

- Create clear workplace policies that ensure people with cold or flu symptoms do not come to work.
- Implement sick day policies that allow people to be off or work safely from home when they are ill or have symptoms of a cold or flu.
- Provide work from home options, when possible, to reduce contact intensity. When it's not an option, consider measures such as staggered shifts, small groups and virtual meetings as much as possible.
- Implement strategies that reduce the number and intensity of contacts – make necessary contacts safer with physical distancing, engineering controls such as partitions and plexi-glass barriers and redesigning space, to administrative steps such as work from home policies and use of posters to limit occupancy and tape to demonstrate 2 meters. When these steps are not sufficient, consider the use of masks or gloves understanding the limitations.
- Organize work habits to maintain 2 meters – employ the use of dollies or other aids to allow tasks to be done by one person.
- Provide adequate hand-washing options and develop policies for washing hands – including when arriving at work, before and after breaks, before and after handling materials or cash, before and after handling common tools/machines.
- Clean “high-touch” areas in workplaces frequently and provide hand sanitizer at entrances. Implement a cleaning protocol for door knobs, elevator buttons, light switches, equipment and shared tools.
- Focus on common spaces – kitchens, conference rooms, waiting areas, file rooms, play rooms, counselling spaces, open/shared spaces and offices and determine how to maintain physical distancing and hygiene.
- What materials are exchanged – money, credit cards, paperwork, etc.? Can you reduce these exchanges?
- Focus on higher-risk employees including those 60+, those with underlying medical conditions and taking care of these populations – from more flexible hours, to work from home options and workspace accommodation.
- Communicate clearly and train staff. Use signage.
- Ensure that staff have a process to raise safety concerns through a worker representative or health and safety committee.

More information and resources regarding the Plan are available on the British Columbia government website [here](#).

Four Phases of the BC Restart Plan

The Plan is broken down into four phases:

<p>Phase 1 (Where we are today)</p>	<p>Essential services and others able to continue operations under existing public health orders and guidelines.</p>
<p>Phase 2 (Mid-May onward)</p>	<p>Under enhanced protocols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restoration of health services, including rescheduling elective surgery • medically related services (dentistry, physiotherapy, RMT, chiropractors, speech therapy, physical therapy and similar services) • retail • hair salons/barbers and other personal service establishments • in-person counselling • restaurants/cafes/pubs (with sufficient distancing measures) • museums, art galleries, libraries • office-based worksites • recreation/sports • parks, beaches and outdoor spaces (parks that can accommodate physical distancing will be open for day use only beginning May 14, 2020) • child care • small social gatherings (2-6 people) • recalling the provincial legislature

<p>Phase 3 (June-September, if transmission rate remains low or in decline)</p>	<p>Under enhanced protocols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotels and resorts (June) • Parks – broader opening (overnight camping to reopen June 1) • Film industry, beginning with domestic productions (June/July) • Select entertainment – movies and symphony, but not large concerts (July) • Post-secondary education – mix of online and in-class (September) • K-12 education – partial return in June; full return in September (further announcements expected in the coming weeks)
<p>Phase 4 (TBD) – conditional on at least one of wide vaccination; community immunity or broad successful treatments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large gatherings, such as conventions, live audience professional sports and concerts • International tourism