

OVERVIEW

This guide should be consulted when determining how to respond to COVID-19 issues and is part of It's My Life Kamloops Society Pandemic Policy.

Precautionary Measures

Services, resource and activities will need to be modified to reduce the risk of the spread of the virus. This will include: avoiding areas where there are large crowds (10 or more people) and/or crowded areas, including public facilities, events and public transit. Ensuring social distance wherever possible (2 meters from others) and avoiding any unnecessary contact, including handshakes and hugs. Canceling activities that may risk exposure, taking special precautions for those with compromised immune systems, Coaching and/or educating self-advocates and families on risks. Any other precautions outlined by Public Health Authority.

Infection Control

All staff should exercise enhanced universal precautions, including proper handwashing, using personal protective equipment when needed (e.g. gloves and masks), and following sneezing and coughing etiquette. Persons served should also be supported with infection control as much as possible. Posters have been provided on our Sharevision website on hand washing and coughing/sneezing etiquette. If you are supporting someone who is exhibiting symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19, consult with your supervisor and your local health unit around additional precautions.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Ensure that thorough cleaning and disinfecting happens of all surfaces being touched/exposed to germs (e.g. handles, counters, faucets, phones, keyboards, equipment, etc.).

All residential worksites must perform enhanced cleaning/disinfecting at least once per shift (morning, evening, night).

Office – enhanced cleaning/disinfecting at least twice per day.

Visitors and Exposure of Persons Served

At this time, it is recommended that no visitors, including family visit the homes.

Immediately enhance screening measures for visitors to all homes. No visitors, including visitors with any degree of respiratory symptoms, should be permitted to visit. If there is urgency to visit (e.g. due to rapidly declining health status of a resident) where sick visitors must be present, please arrange for PPE (e.g. masks) in advance to protect the health of others.

If someone receiving supports has had contact with a person who is in self-isolation, exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 and/or has tested positive for COVID-19, contact 8-1-1 and/or your local health authority for advice prior to them returning to the home and/or further service provision. If a visit is being considered (e.g. with a family member), planning should occur to ensure that the person is not exposed to someone in self-isolation or who is symptomatic prior to returning to the resource.

What to do if a Person Receiving Services Becomes sick in a Staffed Residential Service:

If someone you support becomes ill, follow the steps below:

1. Immediately isolate all persons with new or worsening respiratory symptoms. If the person cannot be isolated without using restricted practices, isolate other people in the home as much as possible and support each person to maintain social distance (minimum 2 meters).
2. Immediately inform your Manager. The Manager, or a delegated staff should contact 8-1-1 or your local health unit for direction.
3. In consultation with your local health unit, Public Health (if applicable) and Director, develop a plan for further support and follow-up to mitigate risks of spread. If a person you support is diagnosed with COVID-19: Notify Public Health. The Manager should notify your Director. The Manager and Director will work with the health authority to determine a response plan and ensure appropriate communications. Current guidelines indicate that no residents need to be moved to acute care with a diagnosis of COVID-19 unless their clinical status requires it.

If someone has flu-like symptoms such as fever, coughing and difficulty breathing, they should be advised to stay home and away from others. They can call 811 at anytime to speak with a registered nurse. (People who are deaf and hearing impaired, call: 711).

If someone displays symptoms during service provision:

1. Immediately isolate all persons supported with symptoms. If the person cannot be isolated without using restricted practices, isolate other people in the home as much as possible and support each person to maintain social distance (minimum 2 meters).
2. Immediately inform your Manager. The Manager, or a delegated staff should contact 8-1-1 or your local health unit for further direction.
3. In consultation with your local health authority and Director, develop a plan for further support and follow-up to mitigate risks of spread.

If someone has tested positive for COVID 19 and was in contact with other individuals or staff in the home:

1. Immediately inform your Manager, The Manager should notify the Director. 2. The Manager and Director will work with the local health authority and seek direction from them on who may be at risk and who should be notified. Your local health authority is the primary authority for how to respond to people who may have COVID 19.

3. In consultation with your local health authority and Director, develop a plan for further support and follow-up to mitigate risks of spread.

Staffing Measures Self-Isolation/Quarantine:

Employee isolation or quarantine for the 10-day incubation period should be done only with the approval of a medical professional unless the employee is returning from international travel and is required to under the current guidelines from the Medical Health Officer. Current guidelines for return from international travel are as follows: **Employees working in staffed residential homes need to self-isolate for 10-days only if they have returned from a high-risk area and/or if they are symptomatic (currently Hubei Province, Italy or Iran). Staff who are asymptomatic and/or have returned from an area that is NOT designated as high risk may return to work immediately.** However, they should take the following additional precautions:

- i Self-monitor daily for signs and symptoms of illness;
- ii. Wear a surgical mask at all times and in all areas of the workplace;
- iii. Follow infection prevention and control protocols including diligent hand hygiene and the use of personal protective equipment when delivering care;
- iv. Reduce close contact with other workers and avoid shared spaces where possible;
- v. Avoid close contact with others when traveling to and from work and between shifts; and
- vi. Self-isolate at home on days when not required at their workplace. self-monitor their health and apply a low threshold when feeling unwell to stay home until they are better.

All other employees who have not travelled outside of Canada and who are concerned about having contracted the virus should contact 8-1-1, their primary care physician, or local public health office, to secure and follow directions on self-isolation, even though asymptomatic. Employees who are directed by a medical professional or required by provincial guidelines to self-isolate would be placed on an unpaid leave of absence for the duration of the recommended isolation period, they may use available vacation credits or apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, and those who are authorized to work from home would continue to be paid as usual.

Employees who commence travel outside of Canada after March 13 contrary to the direction of the Provincial MHO do so at their own risk. Upon returning to Canada, they would be placed on an unpaid

leave for the 10-day self-isolation period, or they may use available vacation credits or apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. Employees should avoid contact wherever possible with any person who is in self-isolation, exhibits symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19. If such contact has occurred, employees should contact 8-1-1 or their local health unit for advice and notify their manager before returning to work. All self-isolating employees should keep their manager updated regarding the status of any direction or updates they receive from a qualified medical professional.

Staffing Coverage

While we understand that employees may experience concern around exposure to COVID-19, it is important to follow all guidelines from provincial health authorities around work attendance. Employees who are not showing symptoms of illness or who do not actively secure direction from a qualified medical professional to self-isolate are expected to attend, and remain at, work as scheduled, despite understandable personal concerns about potential exposure in the community or in the workplace.

In order to ensure that staffing coverage is available, any new vacation requests will only be approved as able. Depending on developments, it may also be necessary in the future to consider the cancelling of vacations already granted. (This will only occur in extreme circumstances and will be looked at situation by situation.)

Additional Resources

IMLKS has developed an online resource on ShareVision that includes communications, planning and response information, resources, tools and publications. This can be accessed from the ShareVision Home Page. You can also find additional information at the following sites:

BC Centre for Disease Control: <http://www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/information-on-novel-coronavirus>

CLBC: https://www.communitylivingbc.ca/for-service-providers/information-about-the-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-for-clbc-funded-service-providers/?mc_cid=66c5008b66&mc_eid=4128ba32f1

HealthLink BC: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/public-health-alerts>

Public Health Agency of Canada:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/publichealth/services/publications/diseases-conditions/know-facts-about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>