

COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN

Applicability: Ingram Street

Effective Date: June 01, 2020 - Latest Revision July 08, 2020

PURPOSE:

To establish a process to ensure the safe and manageable reintroduction of the public into CVRD facilities in compliance with WorkSafeBC requirements.

POLICY:

Following a period of restricted access of CVRD buildings to the public for COVID-19 management, it is desirable to find a way to allow the public back into the building in a controlled and safe manner. This policy will outline considerations that are necessary to ensure the risk to staff remains as low as possible as operations increase. This document will outline protective measures with a focus on staff, understanding that measures that protect staff should also protect the public. Where relevant, sections focused on public protection will be identified and are included.

At all times, the directions and guidelines put out by the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), Island Health, the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), and WorkSafeBC, will be followed. The guidelines that are issued may change and their directions will be the guiding principles and take precedence for safety purposes, irrespective of any information contained in this document. It is understood that the COVID-19 Pandemic represents a fluid risk and adaptability in planning and response is necessary for protection of staff and the public.

The re-opening process is based on the principles of risk management and hazard control. To be effective, the CVRD recognizes that it must use the expertise of managers and staff to ensure that implemented controls and processes allow for operational needs to be met while maintaining safety.

PROGRAM DETAILS

The CVRD COVID-19 Safety Plan follows the recommended sections from WorkSafeBC:

1. Assess the risks of the workplace
2. Implement controls to reduce risk
3. Develop plans and procedures
4. Communication of plans
5. Monitoring and updating plans as needed
6. Address new risks arising from restarting operations.

Recommendations from WorkSafeBC, the CDC, PHO, and industry best practices have been brought together to direct this plan.

1. Assess the Risks of the Workplace

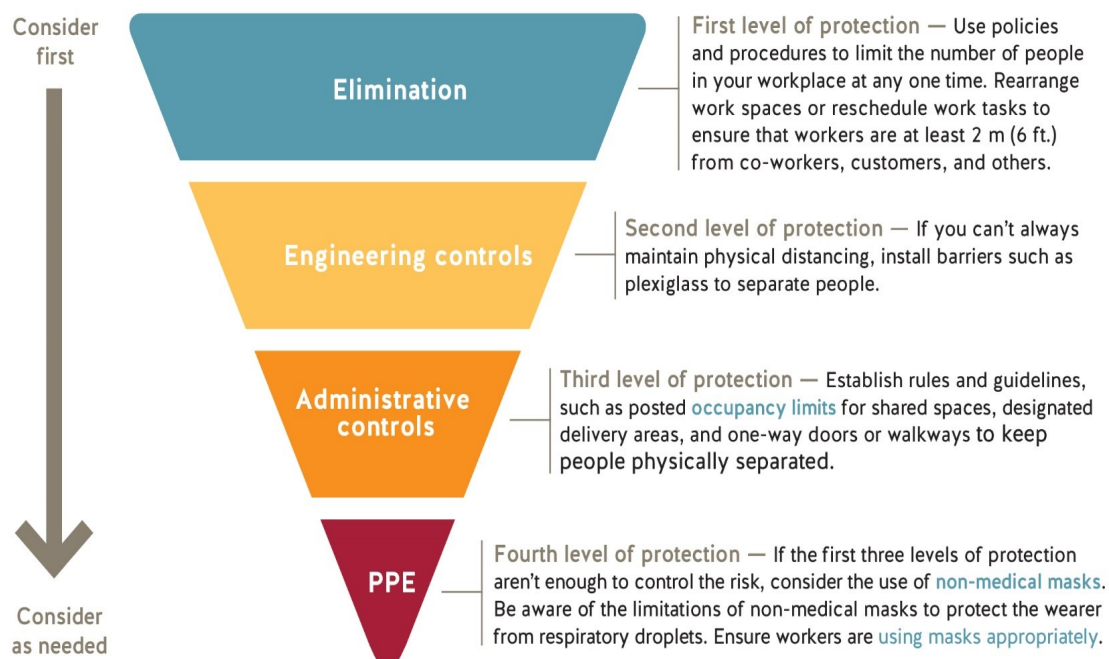
The CVRD will work to ensure that sources of risk are identified. Risk cannot be controlled until identified so it is necessary to understand where risk resides, such as in commonly touched surfaces, interactions with other people, etc. Risks for Ingram street were assessed against a variety of hazards related to altered operations because of COVID-19 including biological, chemical, and physical hazards.

The predominant risk is biological risk via the COVID-19 virus itself. The virus is understood to transmit via exposure to airborne particles containing the virus, arising through proximity to a person who has the virus. Additionally, contacting contaminated surfaces and then touching a mucus membrane such as an eye or the mouth.

Any additional risks identified in the workplace arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic will be assessed and controlled as well.

2. Implement Controls to Reduce Risk

Controls for COVID-19 risks were structured against the Hierarchy of Controls, an Occupational Health and Safety standard for determining appropriateness of hazard and risk controls. The Hierarchy of Controls is described here:



Elimination – *Remove the hazard or hazard risk from the workplace to prevent exposure from occurring*

The main use of the elimination control has been through social distancing and the reduction of staff at the facility. By lowering the number of staff at a facility, the number of potential spreaders and recipients of the virus is reduced. A staff member working from home cannot contract the virus from a co-worker. With the lower overall number of people, it is easier to ensure social distancing protocols can be met.

Social Distancing

Social distancing guidelines from the province have been followed including the direction to staff to maintain a distance of 2 metres wherever possible.

The guideline of the BC Municipal Safety Authority of 55 square feet was used to determine occupancy for work areas and areas such as the staff lunch-room and elevator have occupancy limits to ensure distancing.

In-person meetings have been curtailed, with the use of electronic meetings for staff and the Board used to ensure business can be conducted. By not meeting in person, the chance of exposure is limited and represents a best-practice to control risk aligned with WorkSafeBC recommendations.

Some workspaces have been re-arranged to reduce staff congregating or bottle-necking in common areas such as near printers.

Staff are currently directed to not share company vehicles where social distancing cannot be maintained.

Engineering – *Physical changes or equipment that reduce risk, usually by creating a physical barrier that prevents exposure*

In work areas where staff may work in proximity to each other, barriers have been implemented between work areas. These barriers protect from virus spread by physically limiting the area the virus could spread to.

Barriers have been installed in areas where the public will interact with staff. These barriers act to ensure staff can communicate and conduct business, but the risk from an airborne exposure is significantly reduced.

An increased cleaning regime with dedicated staff routinely cleaning common areas and high-touch surfaces. The current cleaning cycle exceeds the recommended twice daily minimum from WSBC.

Additional hand sanitizer has been provided for staff use where hand-washing is not a viable option.

Administrative – Rules, guidelines, procedures, and signage that will help people to take appropriate actions to keep themselves safe

Signage has been put in place to remind staff and the public about the requirement to not enter facilities if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or are otherwise proscribed because of

PHO guidelines, such as from travel outside of the country.

Markers have been placed on the floor to direct the public where to stand to ensure social distancing can be maintained.

Contractors are required to complete forms to verify they do not present a risk when working extended periods in staff areas where some engineering controls may be limited.

Signage has been increased to encourage regular hand washing as a means of protecting others.

The Intranet has been updated with rules, procedures, and best practices to keep staff safe.

PPE – Personal Protective Equipment is to be used when other, more effective, methods of protection are not available. These should be considered the last line of defense to protect workers and should not be the primary protective measure.

Staff have been provided with gloves when engaging in cleaning activities or when engaged in limited duration activities where item handling is required.

Staff are permitted to wear masks in the workplace as an optional additional protection option.

3. Develop Plans and Procedures

The primary approach of the CVRD has been to reduce the risk from staff by ensuring staff can work from home where feasible for their job duties. Staff working from home are provided direction and guidance in-line with WSBC requirements for safely working remotely. For those that are required to work at a facility, staff are directed to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and follow the direction of the PHO in self-isolating if required.

Staff are directed to not attend any CVRD facility if they are experiencing any symptoms that could be related to COVID-19. Staff are directed to assess via the BC Assessment Tool, contact 8-1-1, and are encouraged to coordinate testing when symptoms are present. Staff cannot return until symptoms have abated and a period of 10 days since symptoms appears has passed. Staff can return sooner than 10 days with a negative COVID-19 test and cessation of symptoms.

Anyone who has travelled outside of Canada or who has had close contact from a confirmed COVID-19 case must self-isolate and monitor for symptoms, under the direction of the PHO.

Any other person that has been directed to isolate by the PHO or designate cannot attend a CVRD site until cleared.

Staff that develop symptoms or feel ill are directed to advise their supervisor. They will be provided a mask, information on coordinating testing via 8-1-1, and directed home. Areas that staff member has been working in will be provided a thorough, immediate cleaning.

Staff are directed to sign in and out of the building to assist with contact tracing if required because of a positive case amongst staff.

The CVRD has implemented a limited re-opening of in-person services to the public. This means some services are limited to reduce the presence of additional persons in the building. The public is encouraged to conduct business online or via phone where staff are happy to assist.

Business that require an in-person interaction is arranged in advance, on a case-by-case basis, with appropriate increased controls put in place. With reduced on-site staff and necessary controls, some business cannot be conducted with these preparations.

4. Communication of Plans

Staff have been communicated via the staff intranet, emails, posted signage, and directions from managers and supervisors.

Work areas and staff are monitored to ensure compliance with requirements, particularly regarding social distancing and monitoring for illness.

Signage is clearly displayed in public areas to ensure the public is aware of any requirements for interacting safely with staff and for the controls that are in place.

5. Monitoring and Updating Plans as Needed

Re-opening plans have been developed that are forward-looking with the goal of safely increasing in-person service delivery levels.

Plans are being developed to ensure that in-person meetings, where required, can be conducted safely. In the meantime, meetings continue to be conducted via remote technologies.

The main Safety Plan will be amended and adjusted as business levels and service delivery changes. This plan will be updated regularly to address any changing requirements.

6. Address New Risks Arising from Restarting Operations.

New risks may arise from the requirements of safely working during the pandemic. As issues are identified, they will be addressed to ensure continued safety.

Staff are encouraged to discuss concerns with their Manager, a Health and Safety Committee Representative, or the Safety and Wellness Advisor.

Identified concerns will be investigated and addressed according to the hierarchy of controls and operational requirement