

Employers must develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan. To develop your plan, follow the six-step process described at [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#).

This planning tool will guide you through the six-step process. Each step has checklists with items you need to address before resuming operations. You may use this document, or another document that meets your needs, to document your COVID-19 Safety Plan.

WorkSafeBC will not be reviewing or approving the plans of individual employers, but in accordance with the order of the [Provincial Health Officer](#), this plan must be posted at the worksite.

Step 1: Assess the risks at your workplace

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways. It can spread in droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face.

The risk of person-to-person transmission increases the closer you come to other people, the more time you spend near them, and the more people you come near.

The risk of surface transmission increases when many people contact the same surface and when those contacts happen over short periods of time.

Involve workers when assessing your workplace

Identify areas where there may be risks, either through close physical proximity or through contaminated surfaces. The closer together workers are and the longer they are close to each other, the greater the risk.

- We have involved frontline workers, supervisors, and the joint health and safety committee (or worker health and safety representative, if applicable).
- We have identified areas where people gather, such as break rooms, production lines, and meeting rooms.
- We have identified job tasks and processes where workers are close to one another or members of the public. This can occur in your workplace, in worker vehicles, or at other work locations (if your workers travel offsite as part of their jobs).
- We have identified the tools, machinery, and equipment that workers share while working.
- We have identified surfaces that people touch often, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, and light switches.

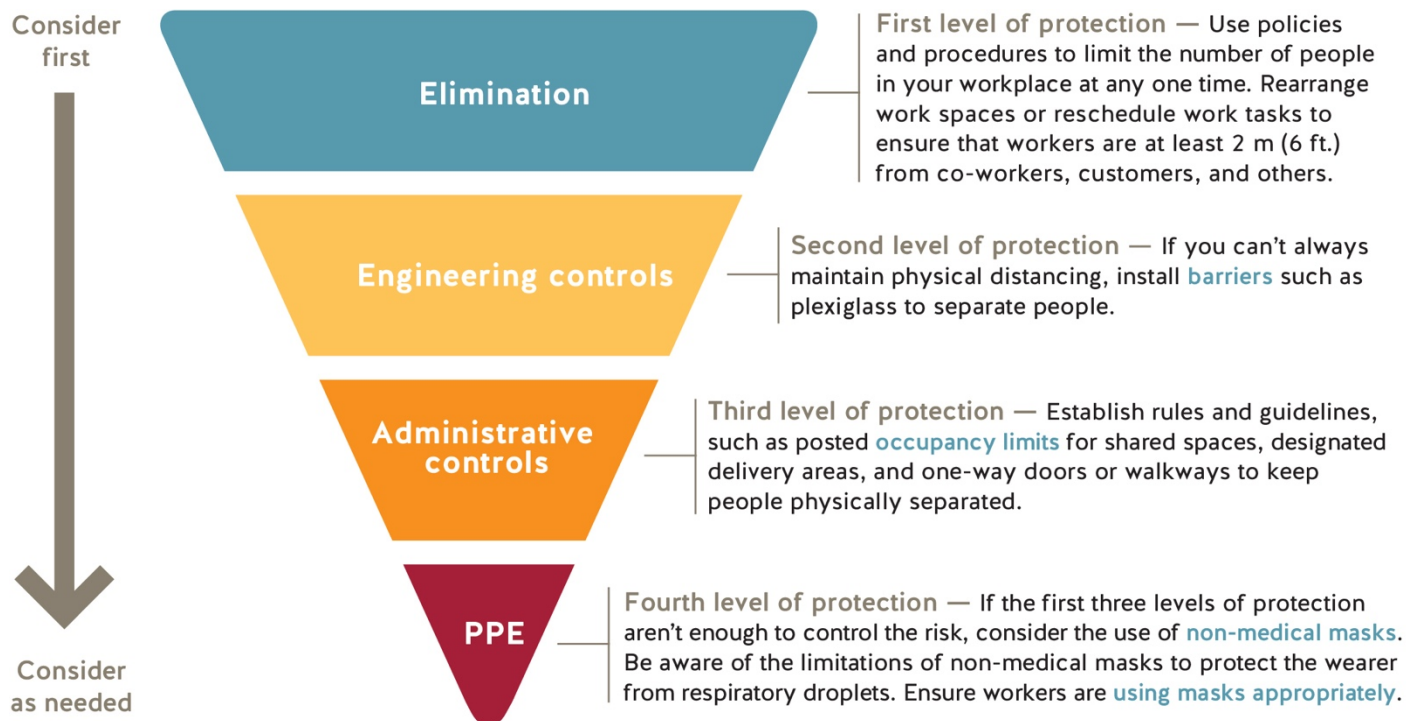
Step 2: Implement protocols to reduce the risks

Select and implement protocols to minimize the risks of transmission. Look to the following for information, input, and guidance:

- Review [industry-specific protocols](#) on worksafebc.com to determine whether any are relevant to your industry. Guidance for additional sectors will be posted as they become available. If protocols are developed specific to your sector, implement these to the extent that they are applicable to the risks at your workplace. You may need to identify and implement additional protocols if the posted protocols don't address all the risks to your workers.
- Frontline workers, supervisors, and the joint health and safety committee (or worker representative).
- [Orders, guidance, and notices](#) issued by the provincial health officer and relevant to your industry.
- Your health and safety association or other professional and industry associations.

Reduce the risk of person-to-person transmission

To reduce the risk of the virus spreading through droplets in the air, implement protocols to protect against your identified risks. Different protocols offer different levels of protection. Wherever possible, use the protocol that offers the highest level of protection. Consider controls from additional levels if the first level isn't practicable or does not completely control the risk. You will likely need to incorporate controls from various levels to address the risk at your workplace.



First level protection (elimination): Limit the number of people at the workplace and ensure physical distance whenever possible

- We have established and posted an occupancy limit for our premises. Public Health has advised that the prohibition on gatherings of greater than 50 people refers to “one-time or episodic events” (weddings, public gatherings), and is therefore not intended to apply to workplaces. However, limiting the number of people in a workplace is an important way to ensure physical distancing is maintained. [Public Health has developed [guidance for the retail food and grocery store sector](#) that requires at least 5 square metres of unencumbered floor space per person (workers and customers). This allows for variation depending on the size of the facility, and may be a sensible approach for determining maximum capacity for employers from other sectors that do not have specific guidance on capacity from Public Health.]
- In order to reduce the number of people at the worksite, we have considered work-from-home arrangements, virtual meetings, rescheduling work tasks, and limiting the number of customers and visitors in the workplace.
- We have [established and posted occupancy limits](#) for common areas such as break rooms, meeting rooms, change rooms, washrooms, and elevators.
- We have implemented measures to keep workers and others at least 2 metres apart, wherever possible. Options include revising work schedules and reorganizing work tasks.

Measures in place

Second level protection (engineering): Barriers and partitions

- We have installed **barriers** where workers can't keep physically distant from co-workers, customers, or others.
- We have included barrier cleaning in our cleaning protocols.
- We have installed the barriers so they don't introduce other risks to workers (e.g., barriers installed inside a vehicle don't affect the safe operation of the vehicle).

Measures in place

Third level protection (administrative): Rules and guidelines

- We have identified rules and guidelines for how workers should conduct themselves.
- We have clearly communicated these rules and guidelines to workers through a combination of training and signage.

Measures in place

COVID-19 Safety Plan

Fourth level protection: Using masks (optional measure in addition to other control measures)

- We have reviewed the information on [selecting and using masks](#) and [instructions on how to use a mask](#).
- We understand the limitations of masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets. We understand that masks should only be considered when other control measures cannot be implemented.
- We have trained workers in the proper use of masks.

Measures in place

Reduce the risk of surface transmission through effective cleaning and hygiene practices

- We have reviewed the information on [cleaning and disinfecting](#) surfaces.
- Our workplace has enough handwashing facilities on site for all our workers. Handwashing locations are visible and easily accessed.
- We have policies that specify when workers must wash their hands and we have communicated good hygiene practices to workers. Frequent handwashing and good hygiene practices are essential to reduce the spread of the virus. [[Handwashing](#) and [Cover coughs and sneezes](#) posters are available at worksafebc.com.]
- We have implemented cleaning protocols for all common areas and surfaces — e.g., washrooms, tools, equipment, vehicle interiors, shared tables, desks, light switches, and door handles. This includes the frequency that these items must be cleaned (number of times per day) as well as the timing (before and after shift, after lunch, after use).
- Workers who are cleaning have adequate training and materials.
- We have removed unnecessary tools and equipment to simplify the cleaning process — e.g., coffee makers and shared utensils and plates

Cleaning protocols

Step 3: Develop policies

Develop the necessary policies to manage your workplace, including policies around who can be at the workplace, how to address illness that arises at the workplace, and how workers can be kept safe in adjusted working conditions.

Our workplace policies ensure that workers and others showing symptoms of COVID-19 are prohibited from the workplace.

- Anyone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 10 days. Symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
- Anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate.
- Anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada or who has had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case must **self-isolate for 14 days and monitor** for symptoms.
- Visitors are prohibited or limited in the workplace.
- First aid attendants have been provided **OFAA protocols** for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We have a **working alone policy** in place (if needed).
- We have a **work from home policy** in place (if needed).
- Ensure workers have the training and strategies required to address the risk of violence that may arise as customers and members of the public adapt to restrictions or modifications to the workplace. Ensure an appropriate **violence prevention program** is in place.

Our policy addresses workers who may start to feel ill at work. It includes the following:

- Sick workers should report to first aid, even with mild symptoms.
- Sick workers should be asked to wash or sanitize their hands, provided with a mask, and isolated. Ask the worker to go straight home. [Consult the **BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool**, or call 811 for further guidance related to testing and self-isolation.]
- If the worker is severely ill (e.g., difficulty breathing, chest pain), call 911.
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces that the ill worker has come into contact with.

Step 4: Develop communication plans and training

You must ensure that everyone entering the workplace, including workers from other employers, knows how to keep themselves safe while at your workplace.

- We have a training plan to ensure everyone is trained in workplace policies and procedures.
- All workers have received the policies for staying home when sick.
- We have posted signage at the workplace, including occupancy limits and effective hygiene practices. [A customizable **occupancy limit poster** and **handwashing signage** are available on worksafebc.com.]
- We have posted signage at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the premises, including **visitors** and **workers** with symptoms.
- Supervisors have been trained on monitoring workers and the workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.

Step 5: Monitor your workplace and update your plans as necessary

Things may change as your business operates. If you identify a new area of concern, or if it seems like something isn't working, take steps to update your policies and procedures. Involve workers in this process.

- We have a plan in place to monitor risks. We make changes to our policies and procedures as necessary.
- Workers know who to go to with health and safety concerns.
- When resolving safety issues, we will involve joint health and safety committees or worker health and safety representatives (or, in smaller workplaces, other workers).

Step 6: Assess and address risks from resuming operations

If your workplace has not been operating for a period of time during the COVID-19 pandemic, you may need to manage risks arising from restarting your business.

- We have a training plan for new staff.
- We have a training plan for staff taking on new roles or responsibilities.
- We have a training plan around changes to our business, such as new equipment, processes, or products.
- We have reviewed the start-up requirements for vehicles, equipment, and machinery that have been out of use.
- We have identified a safe process for clearing systems and lines of product that have been out of use.

Be advised that personal information must not be included in the COVID-19 Safety Plan

Personal information is any recorded information that uniquely identifies a person, such as name, address, telephone number, age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, fingerprints, or blood type. It includes information about a person's health care, educational, financial, criminal or employment history. Visit <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/about/legislation/> for more information.

EFFECTIVE JUNE 1st, 2020

COVID SAFETY PLAN PONDEROSA PRIMARY CARE CENTRE

The following was prepared using “the doctor is in” recommendations from Doctors of BC.

Clinic Safety Measures

- Signage on the front door and barrier in the waiting room, to ensure only scheduled patients are entering the clinic. This ensures patients will remain the required physical distance to personnel at all times.
- Patients have been informed to arrive no more than 5 minutes before their appointment. If patients arrive earlier than 5 mins, they need to wait in their vehicle or outside until appointment time.
- Designated “dirty” work area (physician workspace) in case they are unable to complete charting in the exam room (e.g. patient needs to wait 15min after vaccine.)
- We have limited the number of exam rooms used as much as possible.
Procedure room, PT room, Exam Rooms 6 and 7, and Meeting Room for in patient visits.
- All necessary PPE is easily accessible at the front reception, in exam rooms, and supply (autoclave) room.
- Hand sanitizer and a glove station is set up for each exam room for easy access.
- ***Working in pods (teams) 2 on site MOA’s, 2 providers, 1 Allied health and 1 RN will work in office each shift to reduce PPE usage and exposure.)***
- 2 Medical Office Assistant’s set up at clinic entry to see patients enter the clinic.
- Only 1 provider will work in each designated provider workspace per shift.
- We have installed barriers at the reception desk.
- We have added markings on the floor to ensure the required minimum 2 m distance between patients and staff as well as arrows for one-way traffic through the clinic.
- Signage at the clinic entrance to assist with communicating expectations (i.e. hand hygiene, physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, reporting illness or travel history, occupancy limits and no entry if unwell or in self isolation)
- Limited exchange of papers during transactions (i.e. email receipts and forms with consent).
- All staff will make sure to read training for donning/doffing/use of PPE, safety plan.
- All patients will be screened for COVID symptoms prior to and upon arrival.
- All staff are required to work from home when symptomatic.

When staff arrive at the clinic for your shift

- Please arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before your shift.
- Please leave all jewellery including watches at home.

- Please have dedicated shoes for the office only.
- Please bring lunch in a bag that can be laundered or sanitized.
- Please wipe down and sanitize your workspace when you arrive.
- All staff must use hand hygiene upon arrival and don appropriate PPE.
- MOA's, GP's or NP's if you are working the late shift please work out of a rear exam rooms #2-5) until the morning shift is done.

While working your shift at the clinic

- Please follow arrows when walking through clinic.
- Please wipe down workspace at beginning of shift.
- Please wipe down all common areas after use, lunchroom, bathroom, and doorknobs.
- Please make sure to adhere to occupancy limits of each common area. (example lunchroom) what are the occupancy limits?
- Please make sure to wear a mask in common areas.
- First point of contact with patient should be phone or virtual (video). Provider to decide if an in person visit is required.
- Please ensure to schedule in patient appointments alternating by provider to reduce risk of exposure. (Only 1-2 per hour)
- Please make sure to validate patient demographics by confirming contact information and collecting email addresses.
- Please educate patients to use their providers MOA extension first, before using the 0 function.
- Please make sure to clean exam room, waiting room or any other common areas patients have been in contact with after each patient.
- Please have patient call upon arrival to answer screening questions prior to entering building
- Please ensure patients have read clinic protocol signage or staff has communicated protocols.
- Please ensure patients are wearing a mask and have sanitized their hands immediately upon entering clinic.
- Please ensure patients drop off cloth mask and use hand hygiene prior to leaving clinic.
- All staff should use frequent hand hygiene while at work.

Booking the appointment

MOA will call patients before their appointment to educate them on new clinic protocols:

1. Call to remind patient of their appointment and to arrive with mask on if possible.
2. All patients to be screened for COVID symptoms (patients should be notified of this upon booking their appointment they will be called for screening).

3. All patients screening positive should be redirected home for a virtual appointment or referred to the McLaren Assessment/Testing Clinic or the Emergency Department (depending on severity of symptoms).
4. Patients should attend appointments alone, **when possible**, and not bring friends or children.
5. Email patients any forms that need to be filled out so providers can complete them before arrival to the clinic.
6. Educate patient to call when they arrive and wait in their vehicle or knock on front door. Patients to be brought into clinic when an exam room is ready.

Prepping for the appointment

- Review daily in-person appointments and put in “prep” notes so that onsite staff can prepare the necessary equipment for the provider (baby scale, chemstrip urine dipstick, etc.) and ask staff to have these items either in the room before the patient arrives or close to the room.
- When provider ready to see first patient: don PPE (mask should already be on), gloves and eye protection.
- Prep all labels, requisitions and equipment prior to appointment.
- All patients should be screened for COVID symptoms upon arrival. Patients screening positive should be redirected home for a virtual appointment or referred to a Health Authority assessment clinic or the Emergency Department (depending on severity of symptoms).
- If physical examination is necessary patients screened positive should be referred to the McLaren Assessment/testing site (patients can now self-refer by contacting the Health Unit).
- All individuals seeing patients are to perform hand hygiene and put on a mask as soon as they arrive in the clinic prior to doing anything else. This mask stays on until it is removed for lunch.

After the appointment

Please ensure the following steps have been taken:

1. Don't leave room.
2. Perform hand hygiene.
3. Wipe down stethoscope, equipment, and clear exam table paper.
4. Open door for yourself and before leaving room discard gloves in garbage can provided.
5. Perform hand hygiene.
6. Then either chart at a dedicated workstation (if available) or leave charting until the end of day.
7. Put on gloves before next patient and repeat process above until all patients have been seen.
8. Once last patient seen (at end of day or at lunch), complete all steps below:

1. Whether patient remaining in room or leaving, clear exam table paper leaving table exposed.
2. Discard gloves in room.
3. Remove goggles and stethoscope and place in “Do Not Use” bin at designated dirty area for later disinfection.
4. Perform hand hygiene.
5. Wipe down stethoscope and eye protection.
6. Leave exam room.
7. Perform hand hygiene.
8. Remove mask and discard.
9. Perform hand hygiene.

When you are finished with your shift at the clinic

For each exam room used please ensure the following steps have been taken:

1. Discard exam table paper, wipe exam table with a disinfectant wipe, remove gloves and discard in room.
2. Leave room.
3. Perform hand hygiene.
6. Remove mask and discard.
7. Perform Hand hygiene.
8. Let staff know last patient has left, so that: Staff can lock doors.
9. Staff perform hand hygiene after locking door.
10. Please sanitize all common areas including doorknobs etc.
11. Change into clean clothes, remove dedicated shoes.
12. Shower when you arrive at home.

Closing the clinic

For each workspace and common area, after the above steps are taken.

- Please make sure to sanitize all high touch points: doorknobs, light switches, bathrooms, and lunchroom.
- Ensure dishwasher has been started.

Make sure all doors of clinic have been locked

- Please make sure to sanitize hands prior to and after locking door.

Thank you,

Ponderosa Primary Care Centre

There may be some machinery or equipment in your workplace that isn't used often. To reduce the amount of cleaning you have to do, consider cleaning these items and then boxing them or covering them with plastic drop sheets or tarps until you need them.

Handwashing

Regular handwashing is an important part of maintaining clean surfaces. Establish handwashing procedures and communicate them to workers. Establish policies to ensure that workers are washing their hands regularly: at a minimum, when they arrive, immediately before any breaks, and just before leaving. This may be the most important infection control for your workplace.

Ensure workers have access to handwashing facilities. If none are available, set up handwashing stations or provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Let's all do our part

When workplaces in British Columbia are healthy and safe, they contribute to a safe and healthy province. As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and more businesses resume operations, let's all do our part. For more information and resources on workplace health and safety, visit worksafebc.com.

COVID-19 health and safety

Cleaning and disinfecting

The virus that causes COVID-19 is easily destroyed by mild soap and water. This works well for handwashing, but cleaning surfaces effectively can be a challenge. That's why it's important to clean and disinfect surfaces, especially high-contact surfaces, which are surfaces that are contacted frequently and/or by many people.

How COVID-19 spreads

COVID-19 is an infectious disease that mainly spreads among humans through direct contact with an infected person and their respiratory droplets. Respiratory droplets are generated by breathing, speaking, coughing, and sneezing. Your exposure risk is greatest when you have prolonged close contact with an infected person.

The virus can also spread if you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your eyes, mouth, or nose. A surface can become contaminated if droplets land on it or if someone touches it with contaminated hands.

Cleaning and disinfecting

Effective cleaning and disinfection involves a two-stage process.

Cleaning

To disinfect a surface effectively, you must clean it first to remove surface dirt and debris. Any residue left on work surfaces and equipment may deactivate the disinfectant. Use soap or detergent as a cleaning agent.

Disinfection

After cleaning, apply a disinfectant to the surface. You need to leave the disinfectant on for a specified contact time to neutralize any remaining organisms. Look for recommended contact times on product instructions.

What surfaces you should clean and disinfect

Start by cleaning and disinfecting all the common surfaces that workers and customers touch. Examples include doorknobs, light switches, handles, countertops, desks, tables, phones, keyboards, touch screens, toilets, faucets, gas pump handles, and ATM machines.

Conduct a survey of your workplace to determine if there are other surfaces that workers, customers, or children touch regularly. A workplace where the public can come and go will need a more thorough assessment and plan than a small shop where there are normally just a few workers.

Clean and disinfect common high-contact surfaces inside and outside to limit the chance of the virus spreading through touching contaminated surfaces.

What you can use to clean and disinfect

For cleaning, you can use regular soap and water or another cleaning solution. Depending on how many people are in the space and how it's used, you may need to clean some spaces more frequently.

There are a number of products you can use for disinfection. Health Canada has a [list of disinfectants for use against COVID-19](#). They all have an assigned drug identification number. These are consumer products that don't require a safety data sheet, like some controlled products you may be familiar with. However, it's still important to follow whatever safety information is available for the product. Use these products with caution, as directed on the label, to avoid introducing other hazards into your workplace.

One of the most common disinfectant solutions is water and bleach. You can make a 500 ppm bleach solution by adding 42 mL (3 tablespoons) of bleach to 4 L (1 gallon) of water. For other quantities, use this [bleach calculator](#). Never mix bleach with other disinfecting products. This can result in dangerous fumes. For more information, visit the BC Centre for Disease Control's [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) webpage.

Some sanitizing solutions contain up to 70 percent alcohol and will release flammable vapours. Use these with caution, and don't use them if there are ignition sources nearby.

Make a plan for cleaning and disinfecting your workplace

Ask the following questions when making your plan:

- What surfaces and objects are workers likely to touch? Do they share any tools or equipment?
- What cleaning materials and supplies will you need? Buy a reasonable supply.
- How often will you need to clean? Clean at least once a day for most surfaces and at least twice a day for high-contact surfaces. Consider how many workers are in the space; whether customers, children, or other members of the public are in the space; how long they're in the space; and how they use the space.
- When is the best time to clean? Consider cleaning before or after shifts, or before opening or after closing. Allow enough time for a thorough cleaning. Time the cleaning so it limits worker and customer exposure to cleaning and disinfecting odours.
- Who will do the cleaning? You may need to limit the number of cleaners and ensure they have time to clean effectively. Make sure workers who are cleaning have been trained to use the cleaning products safely.
- What personal protective equipment (PPE) will the cleaners need to protect against the cleaning chemicals?

Working from home:

A guide to keeping your workers healthy and safe

Working from home on a regular basis can benefit both you and your workers by reducing business expenses, allowing for a more flexible lifestyle, and improving the environment. Sometimes it can also be necessary to work from home temporarily while dealing with health concerns, child care arrangements, or other issues that may unexpectedly arise in daily life.

As an employer, you must ensure the health and safety of your workers when they work from home. It's important to understand that working from home is an extension of the workplace, and the *Workers Compensation Act* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* still apply. With consideration and planning, working from home can be positive and safe for both workers and employers.

This guide discusses a health and safety policy for working from home and outlines some useful tips and resources to help ensure the health and safety of your workers.

Develop a health and safety policy for working from home

As an employer, ensure you have a working from home health and safety policy in place, and that everyone understands their roles, duties, and responsibilities. This policy should require workers to assess their workspace and report any potential hazards to their manager. Your policy should also include the following information:

- Protocols for evacuating from the worker's home to a safe location if needed and how workers can contact you in case of emergency
- Safe work practices and how to report any work-related incidents or injuries
- Communication protocols and procedures for check-ins if a worker is working alone or in isolation
- Requirements for education and training
- Ergonomic considerations



Reduce risks while working from home

Setting up a safe workspace at home will be different for everyone, but there are some common risks. As an employer, ensure that you and your workers adequately identify and control unsafe conditions and activities

that may cause injury or illness. Some factors to consider include the following:

- Environment (e.g., asbestos, mould, tobacco smoke)
- Electrical safety
- Ergonomics
- Slips, trips, and falls
- Violence
- Working alone

For more information on these topics and related resources, visit [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com).

Find more information

- **Setting up, organizing, and working comfortably in your home workspace** (WorkSafeBC publication)
- **How to Make Your Computer Workstation Fit You** (WorkSafeBC publication)
- **Ergonomics** (WorkSafeBC webpage)
- OHS Guidelines on the **Definition of working alone or in isolation (G 4.20.1)** and **Procedures for checking the well-being of workers (G.4.21)**