



BCGEU BUILDING OFFICE SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19

Building access

- The BCGEU has increased the number of stations with hand sanitizer for people to use while in BCGEU buildings.
- Staff must limit the number of unnecessary personal items they bring into the offices.
- BCGEU buildings with a large number of staff may stagger start, end, and break times to minimize crowding at entry and exit locations and in break rooms.
- **(Update)** Staff, members, and visitors will not be permitted to come into BCGEU buildings if they have cold or flu-like symptoms.
- **(Update)** The BCGEU has developed controls to minimize the risk of exposure of COVID-19 by requiring all staff, members, and visitors not to enter BCGEU Offices if;

- they have COVID Symptoms within the past 10 days;

Symptoms of COVID-19 can vary from person to person. Symptoms may also vary in different age groups. Some of the more commonly reported symptoms include:

New or worsening cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, temperature equal to or over 38°C, feeling feverish, chills, fatigue or weakness, muscle or body aches, new loss of smell or taste, headache, gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting) and feeling very unwell.

- They have travelled internationally within the past 14 days; or
- They live with or have been in close contact to someone with COVID-19 (presumed or confirmed) within the past 14 days
- Staff who are not permitted to access a workplace will be advised to travel directly back home or to a preferred location for self-isolation. Assistance in travel may be available on request.
- Educational posters and up-to-date bulletins from resources such as the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) or Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) will be located throughout buildings, on the Skynet, and on the BCGEU website.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/awareness-resources.html>

We will require that all staff, members and visitors:

- Follow the guidelines on maintaining physical distancing (at least 2 m or 6 ft apart).
- Wear a face mask when arriving at and departing from the office.



BCGEU BUILDING OFFICE SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19

- Wear a face mask in all common areas in the buildings, including elevators, stairwells, hallways, washrooms, break rooms, meeting rooms, etc.
- Wear a face mask in all situations where physical distancing may not be possible.

Hygiene protocols

All staff, members and visitors are required to follow these hygiene protocols:

- Wash hands immediately upon entering any BCGEU office or building.
- Avoid face touching with unwashed hands. This is particularly important before and after breaks or meeting members or visitors, even in the absence of physical contact.
- Allow time for handwashing breaks throughout the day.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. [The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) has issued proper hand-washing guidance here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/hand-washing>].
- If hands are not visibly soiled and soap and water are unavailable, alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used.
- Use good respiratory etiquette by covering your mouth and nose with the crease of your elbow or with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Ensure used tissues, disinfectant wipes, and safety equipment are properly disposed of in a lined waste receptacle.

Workplace operations

- The number of staff working in the office at any one time will be guided by the workplace risk assessments done by the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (JOSHC). Where these assessments demonstrate the need, the BCGEU will have staff work alternate weeks, with one week working in the office and one week working from home. This will allow for reduced exposure and improved physical distancing.
- Staff who are not able to work at the offices at this time given their personal circumstances are required to work with Human Resources to determine if alternate arrangements are appropriate.
- No meetings or gatherings with more than-10 people will be scheduled or held. Meetings should be held virtually (video conference, phone). If an in-person meeting is required, only involve necessary individuals.
- **(Update)** An in-person meeting should be held only if the objectives of the meeting cannot be met through a virtual meeting. All in-person meetings require the approval of a director.
- The BCGEU has enhanced capacity of online business platforms, posted commonly-used forms to the website, and limited the exchange of paperwork using electronic means to avoid handling physical documents.
- Each Department and Area Office will continue to review workplace procedures throughout the reopening phase to ensure safe practices to carry out the work of the union.



BCGEU BUILDING OFFICE SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19

- Where required, one-way staircases have been established to minimize physical contact and have posted signage to indicate direction.
- The BCGEU has posted signs on doors and entry points of communal areas indicating occupancy restrictions at any one time.
- **(Update)** Staff should not be visiting or entering departments that are not their own. If it is necessary to enter another department, the visit must be pre-scheduled with the staff person you need to see.
- If any worker has concerns related to anyone not following the COVID Protocols, they should contact their Coordinator, SDC, JOSH Committee Representatives or Human Resources to address the concerns.

Work stations

- Staff should continue communications with other staff using email, video/teleconference, or other technology as much as possible.
- Where attendance at the office is required, workstations will be positioned at least 2 meters apart and away from communal pathways wherever possible.
- If necessary, the BCGEU will install barriers (e.g. Plexiglas shields) between workstations and reception areas.
- Where possible, meetings should be scheduled by teleconference, video conference, or other technology rather than in-person.
- Offices and workstations should not be shared. If sharing space is unavoidable, all frequently touched surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected before leaving the space, such as the computer keyboard and mouse, desk surface, arms rests on chairs and telephone.
- Staff are required to clear the surface of their desk at the end of each day so that a proper cleaning of the surface can be carried out.

Communal spaces

- In areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. corridors, small offices, etc.), single person access procedures may be implemented.
- Staggered break times will be implemented to reduce large gatherings in common areas and all staff are encouraged to take breaks at their own desk or outside.
- **(Update)** In situations where physical distancing is not possible, all staff should plan the work task to ensure that time spent in close proximity is minimized. Staff, in such situations, must all wear a face mask.
- High risk areas will be prioritized for cleaning and monitored for physical distancing.
- Communal foods, such as buffet style catering and office/departmental pot lucks, are prohibited.
- Communal doors (such as those at department entrances) will remain open throughout the workday to reduce contact with door handles. This does not apply to doors which must remain closed to comply with fire regulations.
- Paper towels will be available near high-touch points to allow users to avoid skin contact.



BCGEU BUILDING OFFICE SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19

- All staff are required to use only their own equipment, such as pens, staplers, headsets, and computers.
- Shared office equipment or other items (e.g. photocopiers, microwave ovens, etc.) will be periodically cleaned and disinfected throughout the workday.
- The BCGEU will not be providing coffee or communal dishes or cutlery. Staff should plan to bring their own reusable water bottles, coffee, and dishes they require.
- **(Update)** Showers will not be available for use.
- Posted occupancy limits in communal areas must be adhered to and will be monitored.

Members/Visitors

- The BCGEU will be limiting the number of members/visitors in our offices. The total number of members/visitors permitted in each office will be dependent on the size of the office.
- All members will be able to attend BCGEU offices by appointment only, and relevant safety information will be communicated to them in advance of their appointment and displayed at building entrances.
- When booking appointments, visitors and members will be reminded to reschedule their appointment if they experience symptoms typical of COVID-19 or are placed on self-isolation.
- Waiting areas will be arranged to maintain physical distancing requirements. Barriers have been installed between reception areas and visitors (e.g. Plexiglas). Markers have been placed on floors directing visitors where to stand when approaching the front desk.
- Members will be asked to attend appointments alone and will be asked to arrive on-time to avoid unnecessary waiting periods.
- Members and visitors will be required to wear face masks in all common areas. Each office will have a supply of disposable, non-medical face masks readily available upon entering offices.
- Communal pens will not be available and all members/visitors will refrain from exchanging physical documents as much as possible.
- Hot beverages (coffee & tea) will not be available in the members' areas at this time.
- Visitors and members will be required to dispose of used sanitizing wipes, used disposable masks, and other personal protective equipment in appropriate bins.

Deliveries

- As much as possible, contactless delivery should be requested to maintain physical distancing requirements (e.g. delivery person leaves packages in a pre-arranged location). This option may be limited if signing or proof of receipt is required.
- Once a package is received, staff will be required to clean and disinfect surfaces that the package contacted (e.g. table tops, counters, etc.). All packaging shall be disposed of quickly and appropriately.

Transportation

- Non-essential transportation or business travel should be avoided, and should proceed on an exceptional basis only. All travel must be approved by your Coordinator or Director.
- Travel between offices or departments is restricted to critical business functions only.



BCGEU BUILDING OFFICE SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19

Ventilation

- Ventilation systems at the office will be reviewed and adjusted where possible to increase ventilation rates (increasing the fresh air intake) while maintaining comfortable indoor air temperature and humidity for occupants.
- The use of portable fans, air conditioners, and heaters is prohibited.

Elevator use

- At buildings with elevators, the maximum occupancy of any elevator will be limited to one person.
- **(Update)** At the Norland building the maximum occupancy will be limited to two.
- A face mask must be worn in the elevator.
- Tape and markings have been placed on the ground to indicate where people should stand while lining up to enter the elevator.
- Stand behind the floor markings while waiting for elevator doors to open and the occupant has cleared the elevator.
- Signs have been posted near elevators promoting their safe use
- Routine disinfection of elevator panels will occur throughout the day.
- *LMAO will follow the Quadreal Protocols for Elevator use*

Facilities and cleaning staff

- All common areas and high touch surfaces will be disinfected at least daily. This includes doorknobs and handles, elevator panels and buttons, light switches, tables, chairs, and work surfaces in break rooms, and washrooms.
- Pressurized sprayers that may aerosolize contaminants upon application to the surface will not be used in any area of the building.
- Only vacuum cleaners equipped with exhaust filters-will be used for carpeted areas.
- Cleaning staff will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to the risk level when performing cleaning tasks.
- A single, sturdy, leak-resistant garbage bag is sufficient for containing waste. A punctured or contaminated garbage bag should be placed into a second bag.
- The BCGEU will clean and disinfect all work areas accessed by person(s) confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 and will restrict entry into the areas accessed and post hazard signs until cleaning and disinfection is complete.