

March 24, 2020 Questions and Answers*

- 1. We still don't know what the protocol is for offices where a coworker has been reporting to work who are ill but has not been tested and directed to self-isolate. What will happen to that office?**

If an employee is sick they should be directed to go home as per the [FAQ's](#) on PSA site (see #9). Requests for additional cleaning can be made through a Work Order through the Operations Centre (1-877-222-3112).

- 2. Team leaders are telling us that the practice guidelines state that people should consult with team leaders about what should be done virtually but team leaders don't feel comfortable giving direction because they don't know what direction to give. Should they go to their DO on everything?**

TL's should continue to use the management structure in place and continue to direct questions to the Director of Operations or the Director of Practice. In order to support the TL's on the [New Interim Practice Guidelines](#) livemeetings are being scheduled for this week.

- 3. With respect to the front-line workers, they feel that the direction that they are being given from team leaders is subjective. Some team leaders are more willing to give direction that they feel risks the workers or clients personal safety in order to ensure the work is being done. This leads to a lot of angst.**

The [New Interim Practice Guidelines](#) articulate what tasks can be done virtually and what tasks are done face-to-face. In order to support the TL's on the [New Interim Practice Guidelines](#) livemeetings are being scheduled for this week. Safety continues to be paramount and based on feedback from the staff and the continually changing landscape the [Safety Protocols](#) have been updated and will continue to be updated as necessary.

- 4. Is everybody that can work from home, working from home? When will that be done?**

ADM has shared with the Union a document that identifies by Division the percentages of staff that can work from home.

- 5. When will the practice standards for admin be released?**

The document is currently being drafted and we anticipate that it will be available March 25th.

- 6. What is the plan for centralized screening. Why can they not work at home?**

Significant numbers are working from home, offices will continue to have staff onsite to support technical issues to ensure continuity of service (phone lines).

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March 25, 2020 Questions and Answers*

- 1. What is being done to ensure enough VPNs available so that staff who can work from home are able to?**

There is a lot of work being done to support VPN government-wide by Ministry of Citizen Services including increasing capacity, giving employees the ability to access VPN or VPN2 using Summer.

- 2. Allison mentioned in her video that practice guidelines for admin being worked on, any ETA on that?**

Those are complete and will be forwarded today.

- 3. What is happening with the 7 on 7 off work schedule with the flights being cancelled.**

If employees cannot reach a community by flying or driving, they have the option to work from home.

- 4. Have we had any confirmed cases of COVID among staff who were working? (PSA Response)**

If a worksite had an exposure due to a COVID positive employee or client, the local Health Region's Health Officer would review the case and trace contacts including the workplace. If there was risk of the ill person being symptomatic while in close contact with other people, the Local Health Officer would contact the workplace. The ministry and PSA are not aware of any contact traces in any Public Service Workplaces at this time.

- 5. Can you walk us through the protocol when a staff member reports that they are ill and that they think they may have COVID symptoms? What does that look like for the office and for the staff who are still working. (PSA Response)**

If an employee is sick they should be directed to go home as per the [FAQ's](#) on PSA site (see #9). Requests for additional cleaning can be made through a Work Order through the Operations Centre (1-877-222-3112) if there is a concern the person was symptomatic in the workplace.

There is more information on cleaning in PSA's FAQs (see below)
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/about-the-bc-public-service/bc_public_service_covid19_response_faqs.pdf

What is being done to address workplace cleanliness and hygiene?

The Ministry of Citizens' Services is working with Facilities Management Units in each ministry to support requests for increased cleaning services and hygiene supplies.

Janitorial service increases will focus on high-touchpoint areas (i.e. door handles, counters, elevator buttons, etc.), using approved procedures and disinfectants. Programs that deliver services directly to the public (e.g., social services and child support services) and buildings with high public access

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(e.g., courthouses) will be given priority for increased cleaning services. The Ministry of Citizens' Services is working with suppliers to provide additional cleaning supplies where needed.

6. If someone cannot find childcare can they work from home, and what do they need to submit to their TL?

Where operationally feasible, MCFD is committed to provide flexibility to employees who cannot find childcare to work from home.

There is more information on childcare in PSA's FAQs (see below)
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/careers/about-the-bc-public-service/bc_public_service_covid19_response_faqs.pdf

“(UPDATED) What is the BC Public Service doing to support employees who want to work from home and employees who have children at home due to the suspension of in-class learning in K-12 schools?”

More people working from home helps support the social/physical distancing practices recommended by public health officials. Where it is operationally feasible, ministries are expected to encourage and support employees who want to work from home and should be flexible in considering alternative work arrangements, including requests to work from home and look after children. Where an employee working from home is also the primary child care provider, supervisors will work to explore options to accommodate an employee's needs while maintaining operational requirements to the extent possible. Any decisions to deny working from home opportunities will be made at the ADM level. Where an employee is sick or taking any form of leave, they are expected to access their leave banks as per usual. No employee is required to work from home except those required to self-isolate due to travel or possible exposure to COVID-19. The government is actively working to ensure that as many daycare spaces as possible remain open and essential services employees have access to spaces for their children. Ministries are also working on operational plans to safely continue services during this challenging time, including ministry-specific approaches to maintaining essential service staffing levels. Resources on effective mobile working practices are available on the MyHR website.”

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March 26, 2020 Questions

1. Lack of wipes and cleaning supplies in the office. Where do they report this and get more?

There is a global BC procurement process in place, managed via EMBC, for sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer because they are very hard to procure. Local Offices also have the authority to purchase directly.

2. Why are home visits still being done?

As per the interim practice guidelines home visits are still required to ensure the safety of children and youth. this should be done only after consultation with a supervisor

3. Can people be assigned to one dedicated work station in offices?

Yes, staff should be able to have a dedicated work station whenever possible.

4. There are no physical barriers at the front of the offices. For open offices, what extra engineering controls are being put into play and when is this going to be done and communicated to workers. (plexiglass, physical distancing decals signage etc.)

Each office has been provided with signage for the front doors and inside the lobby to advise clients of distancing and not being in the office if ill and coughing. The Ministry is in the process of reviewing this issue.

5. Other Ministries have dropped the requirement for clients to sign for funds or receive papers. Can this be done?

This will still be required at this time.

6. Will clients be told to phone instead of coming into offices?

Yes, there is signage on the office door that directs clients to phone instead of coming into the office.

7. Are there equipment for workers to be able to work from home?

MCFD is working to get staff laptops and redeploy any unused laptops in SDD.

8. Are worksites being educated and participating in their exposure control plan, or with this just policy put out? Can the MCFD ensure excluded are reviewing and answering worksite concerns?

The Exposure Control Plan has been shared with supervisors and available on iConnect. MCFD OSH Managers are available to assist with any question or advice on this plan.

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9. Skype for business is mandated for youth but many youth do not have access to it. Are there alternatives?

Skype for Business is the only approved platform for video conferencing sessions delivering government services that will include personal information. Youth interacting with workers can use the browser-based version. ISD is currently preparing Skype instructions for workers and clients.

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March 27, 2020 Outstanding Questions

1. How are offices calculating the work from home rotations? If a staff member is only working from home for 1 day a week, how is that counted?

A document was provided to the Union that outlined the percentages of staff that were working from home. These staffing percentages are being adhered to and offices are scheduling employees based on operational needs.

2. If employee cannot find childcare, will they be required to come into work if called in.

Where operationally feasible, MCFD is committed to provide flexibility to employee's who cannot find childcare to remain working from home.

3. What about employees who are taking care of dependents or parents who may be vulnerable or at risk.

Where operationally feasible, MCFD is committed to provide flexibility and prioritize employee's working from home as outlined in [SDD Working from Home Policy and Guidelines](#) these include any staff who are at an increased risk of a more severe outcome, which include:

- Aged 65 and over*
- Those with compromised immune systems (*no medical note is required)*
- Those with underlying medical conditions (*no medical note is required)*
- Any staff who are living with someone in their household who is at increased risk.*

Employees who are living with or caring for vulnerable people should be vigilant in practicing hand washing/sanitizing prior to re-entering their home, regardless of where they were (work, grocery store) to minimize risk.