

Communicable Disease K-12 Health & Safety Protocols

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 01, 2022





This Orientation aligns with the shift in the Provincial COVID-19 response to a sustainable, long-term Communicable Disease Management strategy focused on immunization, self-management, and specific actions to protect those most at risk of severe infection.

Communicable Disease K-12 Health & Safety Protocols



These Communicable Disease Health & Safety Protocols are developed using the standards, guidelines and direction from WorkSafeBC the BCCDC and Northern Health.

These requirements and control measures ensure the safety of staff and students as they work and learn in our schools and buildings.

The purpose of this Health & Safety document is to provide you with the necessary information to meet these requirements and be safe as you work and interact throughout your day in SD91.

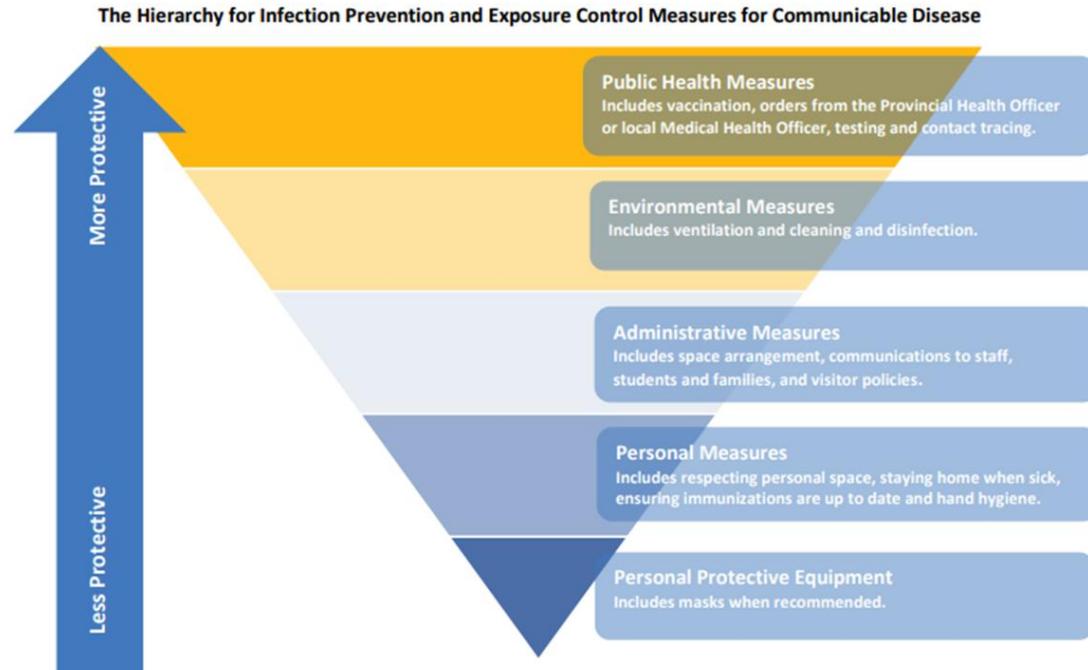
This orientation replaces the previous COVID-19 Health & Safety Protocols provided March 10, 2022.

Exposure Control Measures

Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures (also called communicable disease measures or Health & Safety Measures) help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. These are more effective in settings such as schools where there is a relatively consistent grouping of people and multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely implemented.

The Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Diseases describes the measures that should be taken to reduce transmission in SD91 buildings. The Control Measures at the top are more effective and protective than those at the bottom.

By implementing a combination of measures at each level the risk of infection and transmission is substantially reduced.



Trauma Informed Practice



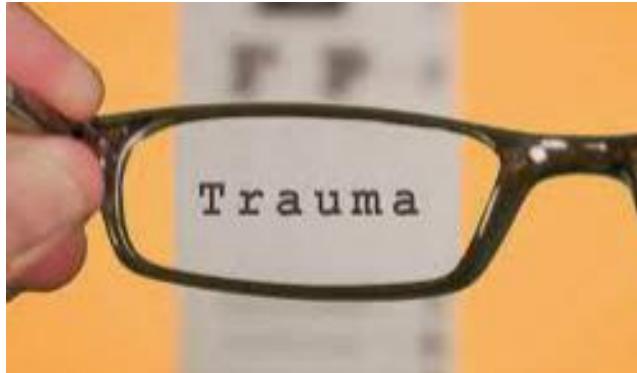
Implementing a Trauma Informed Practice into our Communicable Disease Plan is essential to ensuring we are working together as a team to recognize and support the different ways people cope with Communicable Disease management in their workplace and lives.

What is it?

Trauma-informed practice is a compassionate lens of understanding that is helpful to all children, youth and adults, especially those who have experienced traumatic events and early hardships. We all manage challenges differently.

Some staff and students may have experienced elements of trauma during the pandemic. We should be aware of changes in student or co-worker behaviour, including trauma-related behaviours which may include fear, hyperactivity, aggression, body aches and pains, depression, self-harming behaviours, excessive shyness or withdrawal. There are many tools created to support educators in identifying and responding to the needs of those who have experienced trauma.

View your actions through
a *Trauma Informed Lens*
and remember that we all
react differently to stress,
uncertainty and change.



Why a trauma-informed practice matters

We are all unique and one-stop-shopping for the next phase of Communicable Disease management in our schools and buildings can be easy for some and nerve-wracking for others. Being cognizant, considerate and empathetic as we engage in the process will ensure that we are successful in moving everyone forward.

Potential causes of stress and anxiety - Things to remember:

- Hand Hygiene – perform as required
- Respiratory Etiquette – cough into your sleeve
- Personal Space – respect others space requirements
- Sharing of food, beverages and other items that touch the mouth
- Allergy symptoms can worry others – communicate if you have them
- Personal opinions on communicable diseases are not always welcome and do not have a place at work

Vaccines



Vaccination protects us from serious illness due to communicable diseases such as COVID-19 and its variants and is the most effective way to reduce its impact on our communities. The BCCDC strongly recommends adults interacting with children to be fully vaccinated. All COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in Canada protect against serious complications, including from the Omicron variant. See BCCDC for trusted information on COVID19 vaccines.

Vaccinated people aged 5 and older are far less likely to contract COVID-19 or its variants and have a low risk of serious outcomes if they do become infected.

The BCCDC strongly encourages everyone who is eligible to be fully vaccinated. This in combination with the established control measures will help to ensure that transmission is minimized.

Details on how and where to be vaccinated can be found at
<https://immunizebc.ca>

PERSONAL DAILY HEALTH CHECKS REMAIN IN PLACE AND SHOULD BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO COMING TO A SCHOOL OR AN SD91 WORKSITE



You are responsible to assess yourself daily for symptoms of a common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to reporting to work.



Should you have any symptoms you should stay at home and follow the directions of Public Health or your healthcare provider.



If you are not sure whether you should stay home, use the self-assessment tool at <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19>



Please contact your school to advise them of your illness, place a sick leave in eServe.



If you have questions, contact HR from home and they will work with you to ensure your safe return to work.



If you start to develop symptoms while at work, let your supervisor know and arrange to go home.

Daily Health Checks are no longer required to be submitted online via 'Teams' from home or when you arrive at your workplace prior to beginning work however, employees must self-assess before reporting to work.

01

You tested positive
For COVID-19

This requires isolation;
however, it depends on your
age and vaccination status.
Visit the BCCDC website for
further information.



02

COVID-19 testing is
not recommended
unless you develop
symptoms of COVID-19



Even if you aren't recommended
for testing, it's still important to
stay home until your symptoms
are gone to reduce any potential
spread of COVID-19.

Self-Isolation Requirements



Currently, there are **three scenarios** in
which you may need to self-isolate:

03

You travelled outside
Of Canada



Visit the Government of
Canada's website to find out
more. (search "arrivecan" for
the link)

When to get a COVID-19 Test

Similar to the approach to testing for other diseases, testing for COVID-19 is recommended when a positive or negative result will inform decisions about treatment or care. This includes people who have symptoms of COVID-19 and

01

Are currently hospitalized (any age)

02

Are pregnant

03

Are at risk of more severe disease and currently eligible for treatment

04

Live or work in settings with others who are high-risk for severe illness

NOTE

If you have mild symptoms of COVID-19, the BCCDC states that you do not need to contact a Health Care Provider for a test. You may use a Rapid Antigen Test from your kit. If you test positive or still have symptoms, stay home and away from others until you feel well enough to return to your regular activities, you no longer have a fever and test negative. Mild symptoms are symptoms that can be managed at home.

Returning to School

When a staff, student or other adult can return to school or work depends on if they have tested positive for COVID-19 and/or the improvement of their symptoms.

Visit <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19> and take the Self-Assessment to learn if you are able to return to work or contact your health care provider. In most cases, the absence of symptoms confirms that a return to work can be made.



SICKNESS AT SCHOOL

Students & Staff

Provide the student/staff with a mask if they don't have one (exceptions should be made for students and staff who cannot wear masks for health or behavioural reasons, or if the person is experiencing gastrointestinal symptoms and are at risk of vomiting).

Provide the student/staff with a space where they can wait comfortably that is separated from others. Younger children must be supervised when separated. Supervising staff should wear a non-medical mask and face shield if they are unable to maintain physical distance, avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible, and practice diligent hand hygiene. – Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible (e.g., Admin to contact student's parent/caregiver for pick-up).



SICKNESS AT SCHOOL

Cleaning Requirements

Staff responsible for facility cleaning will clean and disinfect the designated Health Room that was used. If the room requires cleaning prior to the end of the school day (more than one user), an Administrator is responsible for disinfecting any surfaces which the person's bodily fluids may have been in contact with while they were ill.

Supervising staff can choose to wear a mask and/or face shield and should avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible and practice diligent hand hygiene.

This orientation provides you with an overview of the District Protocols that apply to all our schools and worksites. The full Communicable Disease Plan for SD91 is available online or in printed form at your school office.





Physical Distancing

Maximizing space between people is a best practice.

Utilize the space in rooms by spreading desks, tables, chairs out as much as possible.



Masks



The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and respected. Refer to "Supportive School Environments" for more information.



Schools will continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who become ill at school.



Visitors to the School



Appointments are encouraged. Pre-COVID policies requiring visitors to report to the office upon arrival are now in place.



If a visitor has any symptoms of a cold, flu, or COVID-19 they must not enter the building and must reschedule their visit via phone or email.



Visitors must adhere to hand-washing / or sanitizing practices.



School Gatherings & Events

All school gatherings and events can return to 100% capacity after Apr 07, 2022.

Organizers should apply a trauma-informed lens to their planning, including consideration of:

- respecting student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space;
- using space available to spread people out as much as possible, respecting room occupancy limits, and ensuring enough space is available to prevent involuntarily physical contact between attendees (ie. overcrowding); and
- gradual transitions to larger gatherings (eg. school-wide assemblies), including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person sessions, etc.



Sharing Personal Items

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (eg. food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices, wind instruments).

Mental Health and Employee Benefits

Change and uncertainty can have a big impact on mental health and studies have shown that the past 2 years have significantly impacted the mental health of many. Taking care of ourselves is especially important when stress levels are so high. SD91 has partnered with Starling Minds to provide staff members with Wellbeing support and mental fitness programs. This is a free service to our employees.

Please visit their website at <https://www.starlingminds.com/> to sign-up and take advantage of the online programs at your own pace.



Every SD91 employee (and family members who live in their household) can access the Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP). This free confidential benefit provides counselling support for those who need it. Brown Crawshaw (BCI) is our provider.

Please visit their website at <http://www.brownrcshaw.com> or call 1-800-668-2055. In addition to the services listed on the next slide, BCI also provides grief counselling if needed.



<http://www.brownrcshaw.com>



1-800-668-2055

BCI Consulting Inc. provides EFAP short-term solution focused counselling services (Client-oriented, directive, cognitive behavioural) for relationship, psychological/emotional, crisis, work-related, abuse & dependency:

- Calls/emails are returned within 24 hours.
- Counsellors contact clients directly to arrange appointments.
- Appointments are available within 2-3 days.
- Conveniently located counsellor offices or virtual appointments available.
- Counsellors are minimum Masters-level, with at least 5 years experience.



<http://www.brownshawcrawshaw.com>



1-800-668-2055

Custodial Support in Schools



Regular cleaning is part of preventing the transmission of communicable diseases. Custodial support is allocated in our schools and buildings to comply with BCCDC and Northern Health Protocols.

Your custodians are working hard to maintain our schools during this period. Kindly support them in their efforts by being mindful of when-where you use objects/rooms etc.

Custodial support in SD91 buildings is compliant with the newest Ministry and BCCDC cleaning requirements and protocols.

The cleaning products used in schools are approved through Health Canada. DO NOT bring cleaning products from home as they may adversely interact with the chemicals being used. Please speak with your principal to confirm use of any outside products and they will contact a Custodial Supervisor for direction.



JOHSC

Role of site Joint Occupational Health and Safety (JOHSC) Committees

- How does your site JOHSC fit into the communicable disease plan for your school?
- This orientation provides you with the District Protocols that apply to all schools and worksites.
- The role of individual JOHSC is to work with the Administrators in their respective buildings to ensure implementation at their specific site. Staff who have questions regarding the communicable disease plan should approach a JOHSC member with their question and they will work with their Administrator and/or District JOHSC to provide the answer.
- JOHSC fulfill an important role in communication and in ensuring the application of protocols in our buildings.



Support and Further Information

BCCDC Resources

<http://www.bccdc.ca/schools>

Ministry-developed trauma-informed practice resources
<https://mytrainingbc.ca/traumainformedpractice/>