

# COVID-19 & Communicable Disease Prevention

Updated June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021

On June 17<sup>th</sup> the Provincial Health Officer issued a [statement](#) to employers on transitioning from COVID-19 Safety Plans to **Communicable Disease Prevention**.

The Encompass Leadership Team is working closely with our programs and sites to ensure that we are ready for stage 3 of BC's Restart Plan set for July 1st, 2021.

## Step 1: Understanding the Risk

**Preventing communicable disease** involves taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk of transmission in our workplace.

We will be maintaining some of our current COVID-19 Protocols, specifically those that do not impact our operations or services. Each of our Programs will be adapting their protocols while reflecting the changes outlined in the Government of BC's recent Restart Plan, as appropriate throughout September. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

Encompass and its programs will also be prepared to implement additional measures at times when the risk of communicable disease in our region or workplace is elevated, as per the direction of Public Health.

## Step 2: Implement Measures, practices and policies to reduce the risk

### Ongoing Precautionary measures – to be maintained at all times

We will continue to ensure that communicable disease prevention measures are in place including:

- All staff, participants and visitors are to complete and sign off on **a Personal Health Check**, when entering and exiting Encompass spaces.
- Within our spaces, **masks will continue to be mandatory** through the end of August. This will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to become comfortable with being in closer, face-to-face spaces with one another, attending smaller, indoor in-person meetings & groups, and throughout the continued return to the workplace. When working in a space on your own, masks will not be required. This will allow for a safe transitional period from our COVID19 Safety Plans to Communicable Disease Plans.
- All staff will continue to exercise enhanced universal precautions, including proper handwashing, using personal protective equipment when needed and available (e.g. gloves, hand sanitizer and masks), and following proper sneezing and coughing etiquette. Personal hygiene practices and signage will continue to be posted, and appropriate supplies will be maintained.
- Stay home when you are sick and getting tested immediately
- Maintaining barriers already provided.

- Maintain clean environments, ensuring that all surfaces (e.g. handles, counters, faucets, phones, keyboards, equipment, etc.) are thoroughly cleaned and disinfecting. If an Encompass space is used by staff to support individuals or families the space will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by staff between uses. This includes agency and staff vehicles if transporting clients (please refer to the COVID-19 Transportation of Clients Guidelines for further details). We ask that all staff please be thoughtful in the potential impact to others utilizing these spaces.
- We will ensure ventilation is adequate and maintained.
- Signage throughout the workplace will continue to be posted to reduce points of congestion.
- We will also continue to support employees in receiving vaccinations for COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable conditions.

### Additional measures – Implement as advised by Public Health

During periods of elevated risk the MHO or PHO will provide information and guidance about the risk and how we can work to reduce it.

- We will follow all directions from MHO and or our Public Health Authority.
- We will follow all orders, guidance, recommendations, and notices issued by the PHO that are relevant to our health authority
- Depending on the guidance that public health officials provide, we may need to assess the workplace to identify areas, activities, and processes that may pose a risk to staff. We may also then need to implement appropriate control measures to reduce the risk.

### Step 3: Communicate measures, practices and policies

Encompass will continue to communicate and ensure everyone entering the workplace are aware of the measures, practices and policies for managing communicable diseases.

Leadership is to ensure:

- all workers understand the measures put in place;
- all workers are provided with information on policies for staying home when sick and working from home;
- signage is posted in our sites that support the measures;
- ensure access to proper PPE is available to participants and ESS representatives;
- supervisors are knowledgeable about measures, practices and policies and incorporate these into supervision practices;
- supervisors seek advice on any privacy or confidentiality issues that may arise when managing communicable disease in the workplace.

### Step 4: Monitor our workplace and update our plans as necessary

Encompass will continue to evaluate and update our plans to reflect the changing levels of risk and work practices by:

- using workplace inspections and ongoing supervision to ensure measures are functioning properly, followed and maintained;
- monitoring the guidance, notices, orders and recommendations from Public Health as necessary and adjust any plans;
- monitoring workplace risk level, changing practices and policies as necessary;
- updating our plans to reflect changes;
- making sure workers know how to raise health and safety concerns; and
- involving our Joint Health & Safety Committee in resolving and identifying any safety issues.

### Program Services & Activities

Services are transitioning back to face-to-face, with increased capacity at both indoor and outdoor programming. Communicable disease prevention measures will be in place in all instances.

- Indoor meetings with participants are transitioning back to in-person while wearing masks. We will ensure all safety protocols/communicable disease measures are followed. When needed for engagement and, where appropriate, virtual or tele-based service can be used.
- Outdoor and indoor programming will have set measures in place as appropriate and directed by the PHO and programs. (For example, some of our 0-6 programming will continue with mandatory mask wearing even when gathering outside.)
- Waiting room areas in offices will be available for a set amount of individuals.
- Ensure social distancing wherever possible (two meters from others) and avoiding any unnecessary contact.
- Transportation for participants/clients will be provided ensuring all safety protocols are followed.
- We will take special precautions for those with compromised immune systems.
- Any other precautions outlined in Encompass Support Services Health & Safety Manuals or Program Specific COVID Safety Plans & Communicable Disease Prevention Measures will be followed.

### Self-Isolation/Quarantine

- Employees are asked not to attend work when they are sick.
- As an agency, we are following health guidelines. If you have been directed by the Public Health to self-isolate due to being a confirmed case COVID-19, or having close contact with a confirmed person with COVID-19, please follow the directions given to you by Public Health.
- All self-isolating employees are to keep their direct supervisor / manager updated regarding the status of any direction or updates they receive from a qualified medical professional.