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# Communicable Diseases Safety Plan

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## Safety Plan – Communicable Diseases

The purpose of this document is to provide you with the appropriate information and procedures to prevent and reduce the spread of communicable diseases in the workplace. We have put these measures into place to create a safe workplace for our team members and our customers. This is intended to be a guide to assist you and your fellow team members in following policies and standard operating procedures (SOP) designed to minimize the risks associated with communicable diseases.

WorksafeBC defines communicable diseases as illnesses, “caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from person to person. Examples of communicable diseases that may circulate in a workplace include Covid-19, norovirus, seasonal influenza and others.”

Please speak with your Store Manager if you have any questions or concerns.

## Spread of Communicable Diseases

As an employer, we have a responsibility to implement and maintain certain measures, practices and policies to reduce the risk of communicable diseases in the workplace.

We are required to:

- Monitor and review communicable disease-related information issued by regional health officers or the Provincial Health Officer.
- Implement policies to support staff who have symptoms of communicable disease.
- Provide hand-hygiene facilities with appropriate supplies and use policies and signage to remind workers to wash their hands regularly and to cover coughs and sneezes.
- Maintain a clean environment through routine cleaning processes appropriate for the workplace.
- Ensure that building ventilation is adequate, and systems are properly maintained.
- Support employees in receiving vaccinations for vaccine-preventable conditions.

In addition, when advised by Public Health and during a period of elevated risk, we must:

- Follow the directions from medical health officers and the regional health authority.
- Follow all orders, guidance, recommendations and notices issued by the Provincial Health Officer.
- Reassess policies and practices based on updated guidance from regional or provincial health authorities.

Communicable Diseases are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets when you cough or sneeze.
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
- Touching something with a virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.
- Contact with blood or other bodily fluids which may transfer disease through cuts or other openings in the skin, transfer to the eyes, nose or mouth.

## Prevention of Communicable Diseases

The best way to prevent the spread of infection is to:

- Stay home if you are sick (i.e. fever or chills, coughing, diarrhea) to avoid spreading illness to others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people displaying symptoms of respiratory illnesses.
- When coughing or sneezing:
  - Cover your mouth and nose with your arm or tissues to reduce the spread of germs.
  - Immediately dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as electronic devices and doorknobs.

## Communications

When appropriate, communications to team members with respect to the prevention of communicable diseases are posted on the Occupational Health and Safety communications board in each store location and at Head Office. Team members are responsible to read and understand such communications.

From time to time, through daily huddles and department meetings, supervisors and managers are to communicate to team members and remind them of the safety protocols put in place to prevent the transmission of communicable diseases. Primary focus should be on the need to not come to work when sick.

In the event that the company is notified of an exposure to a communicable diseases in the workplace, all team members potentially affected by that notification will be provided with appropriate information and directions according to the guidance of the local health authority. In all cases, the company will comply with all privacy laws and will provide information to the best of its ability, in compliance with the directions of the local health authority and respecting all applicable privacy laws.

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee has a responsibility to review and advise Choices management and team members on safety plans, protocols and measures relating to the safety of the workplace and is consulted on and contributes to the Communicable Diseases Safety Plan, which may be revised or updated from time to time as necessary.

## Hand Hygiene

Team members must wash or sanitize their hands on a regular basis. It is recommended that team members wash their hands at least every 20 minutes, for a minimum of 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer stations have been placed around the store for team member and customer use.

Hand washing signs must be displayed in washrooms and lunchrooms for team member and customer reference.

## Sick Policy

Team members are required to stay home if they are feeling ill. All team members, including part-time team members, are entitled to three paid sick days per year under the BC Employment Standards Act when sick with Covid-19. All full-time employees are entitled to sick pay for other illness or injury absences in accordance with the general sick pay policy (speak with your manager for full details).

## Training

Team members are provided with communication and training surrounding safe work practices generally, including this Communicable Disease Safety Plan and are encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback to managers.

## First Aid

Occupational first aid attendants (OFAAs) provide treatment to team members as necessary. Due to the possibility of infection, we have modified our standard protocols for first aid treatment to reduce potential for transmission. Whenever appropriate (i.e. when symptoms of communicable diseases are apparent or bodily

fluids are present) the OFAA will don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to assisting the patient.

## Physical Distancing

### **Plexiglass Barriers**

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, plexiglass was installed in cash areas, deli counters and other areas within the workplace. Currently, it is our intent to retain the plexiglass barriers. This decision is subject to ongoing review.

### **Directional Arrows & Signage**

Directional arrows and signage will remain in place to reduce congestion and remind customers to observe physical distancing of 2 metres or greater.

### **Floor Decals**

Floor decals will remain in place to remind customers to observe physical distancing of 2 metres or greater.

## Masks

It has become common practice for individuals to wear a face mask or other face covering during outbreaks or even individual presentations of communicable disease. Effective July 1, 2021 the wearing of face masks is no longer mandatory, though it remains recommended for those that have not been fully vaccinated. No team member or customer should be challenged for not wearing a face mask. Requests by team members or customers to wear a mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained should be respected. Team members can choose wear a face mask at their own discretion.

## Importance of proper mask use:

If a team member chooses to wear a face mask it is important that the wearing of the mask is done correctly. Improper donning and removal of a face mask creates greater risk of infection. Always follow product instructions on use and storage of a mask and procedures for how to put on and remove a mask.

Disposable face masks should be used once and then thrown in the trash. You should also remove and replace masks when they become moist.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting Policy

Part of our role in keeping our customers and team members healthy and safe means that routine cleaning and disinfecting is of great importance. This recommendation document is intended to provide guidance for our routine cleaning and disinfecting, highlight the difference between the meaning of cleaning and the meaning of disinfecting, and reinforce the need for appropriate protective wear while cleaning and disinfecting.

Communicable disease safety measures that need to be in place include:

- Cleaning and disinfection of highly touched surfaces.
- Frequent hand-washing.
- Providing hand hygiene options for customers.

**Frequency of Cleaning and Disinfecting Required:**

Cleaning and Disinfecting of all high contact areas is **required at least once per hour**.

A High Touch Cleaning and Disinfecting checklist has been created for documenting and tracking that cleaning and disinfecting is performed hourly. It is laminated and posted for daily completion and reuse the next day. Please refer to Physical Distancing & Sanitization policy for specific protocol at checkouts.

**High contact areas on the checklist include:**

- All door handles, including all entrance, exit, cooler, freezer and container handles, throughout the premises, as well as swing door surfaces.
- Deli surfaces, including the service counter, tables and prep areas.
- PIN pads, cheque stands, tops of cash lanes, scanners, till keyboards, and all surfaces at checkouts.
- All shopping cart and basket handles.
- Computer keyboards, mice, and areas surrounding workstation surfaces.
- Phones.
- All time clocks and Avanti touch terminals.
- Communication book areas.
- All washroom surfaces and ensuring adequate supply of hand soap is available.
- All team room surfaces.
- Trash receptacle touch points.

Some premises may have additional areas not considered in the list above. These areas will be included in our cleaning and disinfecting processes.

In addition to hourly cleaning, deep cleaning is conducted by team members before every store opening and after every store closing.

**Cleaning Products:**

Cleaning products are products that remove germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces by using soap (or detergent) and water. Cleaning does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. Hard surfaces should be cleaned using regular surface cleaning products or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for safe use of cleaning products. It is mandatory to wear gloves while cleaning and to wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds immediately on glove removal.

## Disinfecting Products:

Disinfecting products (store-bought disinfectant solutions and/or sprays) kill germs on surfaces using chemicals. Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for safe use of disinfection products (e.g. use in well-ventilated area, allow enough contact time for disinfectant to kill germs based on the product being used). It is mandatory to wear gloves while disinfecting and to wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds immediately on glove removal.

Use Oxivir RTU (Ready to Use). This product can be used on carts, handles, conveyors, and any hard surface where contact is prevalent.



## Sanitization of Carts & Baskets:

1. All used baskets are to be taken to a designated area in store to be sanitized prior to future use.
2. Once sanitized, baskets can be returned to stands.
3. Carts are to be sanitized at minimum, every 30 minutes, including handles and baskets.

## Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

If a team member has reasonable cause to believe that to carry out any work process would create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person, they have the right to refuse such action.

The team member must immediately report the circumstances of the unsafe condition or matter to their supervisor. The supervisor receiving the report must investigate the concern and:

- a. Ensure that any unsafe condition is remedied, or;
- b. If in the supervisor's reasonable opinion it is determined that the report of unsafe conditions is not valid, inform the team member that made the report.

If this does not resolve the matter and the team member continues to refuse to carry out a work process, the supervisor must further investigate the matter. The investigation must be carried out in the presence of the team member that made the report and:

- a. A team member representative of the JOHSC, or;
- b. Any other reasonably available team member selected by the team member whom made the report.

If this does not resolve the matter, and the team member continues to refuse to carry out the work process, both the supervisor and team member should contact the Health & Safety Advisor, who will investigate the matter and take whatever actions are necessary. If the issue is still not resolved, WorkSafeBC will be contacted.

No team member is to be disciplined for acting in compliance with these steps. Temporary assignment to alternative work at no loss in pay to the team member until the matter is resolved is not considered to be disciplinary action.