

Guidance Document of General Public Health Measures During COVID-19 Recovery



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Introduction

As the Government of New Brunswick moves into recovery for COVID-19, it is critical that public health measures are followed to reduce the risk impact of further waves of COVID-19 to the public and to progress towards a 'new normal'. Some services will open sooner than others, depending on level of risk and potential negative impact. A gradual lifting of restrictions, while watching closely for any resurgence, is the best way to protect community health.

During the recovery phase, it is important to understand that this is **NOT** business as usual, and that the directives and advice outlined in this document will remain in place until the risk is effectively controlled (which may include availability of specific COVID-19 treatments or vaccine) depending upon how the situation of COVID-19 evolves. It is critical that everyone continues to adhere to these guidelines so that we maintain the excellent mitigation work that we have come to see in New Brunswick so far. This is keeping our communities and loved ones safe.

Purpose

The following document provides high-level guidance for businesses, organizations, and service-providers. This resource provides an overview of the minimum required public health measures that must be implemented by businesses/organizations as phased reopening progresses.

Businesses/organizations are responsible for developing and implementing a plan (details below) that will enable public health measures to be upheld effectively. This document will not prescribe business/organization-specific information as it is the responsibility of each operator to ensure an adequate plan is in place prior to opening.

This guideline does not replace requirements in any applicable legislation or requirements by licensing bodies.

For updated information on COVID-19 and guidance, visit the Government of New Brunswick website at www.gnb.ca/coronavirus. Workplaces should also visit the WorkSafeNB website at www.worksafenb.ca/.

Planning Assumptions

It will be at least 12-18 months before a vaccine is available, therefore life will not return to normal for some time. Physical distancing, health screenings, physical barriers (plexiglass), hand washing, surface cleaning, community face masks will be the new normal. Emergency measures, including border controls and means of enforcement, will likely be maintained throughout recovery. Remote working, virtual meetings, learning and delivery services will need to be expanded and sustained throughout recovery.

Requirements for Businesses, Education Institutions, Organizations, and Service Providers

Businesses and service providers (term used broadly to encompass all sectors that are permitted to open through phased reopening) can contribute to the transmission of COVID-19, therefore it is important for these settings to implement appropriate public health measures to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19 amongst employees, contractors, and the public.

New Brunswickers have done an excellent job of flattening the curve of COVID-19. For the recovery period to be successful, it is important that everyone (both the public and business community) continues to follow public health measures.

Your work place will experience operational changes – ‘business as usual’ will not be likely during the recovery period.

COVID-19 Operational Plan

Businesses/services must develop a *COVID-19 Operational Plan Guide* outlining how daily operations will meet requirements outlined in this document (e.g., physical distancing, cleaning and disinfecting, hand and respiratory hygiene, pre-screening for symptoms). The plan must explain procedures on how the operator will be able to adapt to these requirements in their unique environment.

It is the responsibility of each business to ensure they have an Operational Plan in place that outlines how they will manage the safe opening and operation of their business/service. **This plan must follow the recommendations and requirements of Public Health and WorkSafeNB and the business may be asked to share their plan upon request of the proper authorities.** This may occur during an unannounced visit or a pre-scheduled visit by a Public Health Inspector, WorkSafeNB or Department of Public Safety.

- Facilities that cannot adapt to all of the minimum requirements outlined below should not open during the recovery period. Refer to Appendix A for Role of Regulators. Deficiencies in plans or operational compliance may result in warnings, charges and or immediate closure. A reminder that businesses/services are still required to follow the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Refer to Appendix B.

Each business/service, venue or responsible entity must have a manager, or someone appointed by management, responsible for the COVID-19 Operational Plan for that business or entity.

Work through the list below to help guide you through the process of creating your own unique operational plan. **The overarching public health measures that the plan must accommodate include the following:**

- Facilitate physical distancing for staff and customers/patrons;
- Ensure adequate cleaning and disinfection;
- Facilitate hand and respiratory hygiene; and,
- Enable staff to stay home when ill.

The following will help to guide your thinking as you begin to develop your Operational Plan:

- A review of the [risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) from the Public Health Agency of Canada to help guide thinking.
- Consideration of the demographics of workplace employees and customers/patrons (consider how to accommodate those who have **self-identified** as being vulnerable to COVID-19, but do not discriminate against anyone with potential vulnerabilities and do not force divulgence of personal health information).
- Consideration of how staff, customers/patrons interface and interact within your unique setting. Reflect on questions such as (this list is not exhaustive, but will help to guide thinking):
 - Are there areas where people tend to congregate in your setting? If so, how will you mitigate this?
 - What surfaces are the most ‘high touched’ in your setting? How will you ensure proper, frequent cleaning?

- Are there aspects of your service/business that you may not be able to continue with due to changes such as physical distancing? If so, how can you adapt while keeping the community safe?
- Can your work, or aspects of your work, be moved online?
- Are there design changes to your setting that could be made to better facilitate physical distancing?

The plan must include details on what actions will be taken for the business/service to achieve and accommodate the required public health measures. This is required in order to remain open.

Please determine actions needed to mitigate risks and incorporate findings into the operational plan. **Minimum required components are listed below** and must be expanded upon to provide context-specific detail on how each measure will be achieved. This will constitute the basis of the Operational Plan.

- Identification and documentation of unique risks (including a focus on people and setting).
- A plan for active screening for staff. Refer to Appendix C for a sample of a screening questionnaire for COVID-19.
- Enable staff to stay home when ill (e.g., unpaid sick leave will likely encourage staff to show up for work when they are ill).
- Practice and facilitate physical distancing, ensuring 2 metres (6 feet) between yourself and others and staying home when possible. Physical distancing will likely require design or structural changes (e.g., limiting the number of people in a store, using signage cues to encourage one-way flow throughout a facility, having cues at checkout points to demonstrate physical spacing requirements, etc.). Consider enabling staff to work from home where possible.
- Practice and facilitate [personal hand hygiene](#) etiquette.
- Ensure adequate [cleaning and disinfection](#) of high-touch surfaces.
- Practice and facilitate [respiratory etiquette](#).
- Follow guidelines on [community masks](#).
- Develop a plan for additional employee protection where warranted based on risk assessment (e.g., plexiglass barriers).
- Develop a plan for communicating COVID-19 public health measures to staff and the public. Signage must be posted on proper hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and physical distancing throughout the facility and outdoor settings as applicable. Click [here](#) for sample resources.
- Incorporate guidance on accountability and monitoring into your Plan, tailored to your unique business/service.

Please refer to Appendix D for sample checklist and list of resources to support your operational plan. For guidance from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety click [here](#).

It is important to reiterate that the Operational Plan will look different for many businesses/services. The public health measures as outlined above may feel basic, but they are essential. To further guide your thinking as you begin to develop your Operational Plan, please see Figure 1 for reference below.

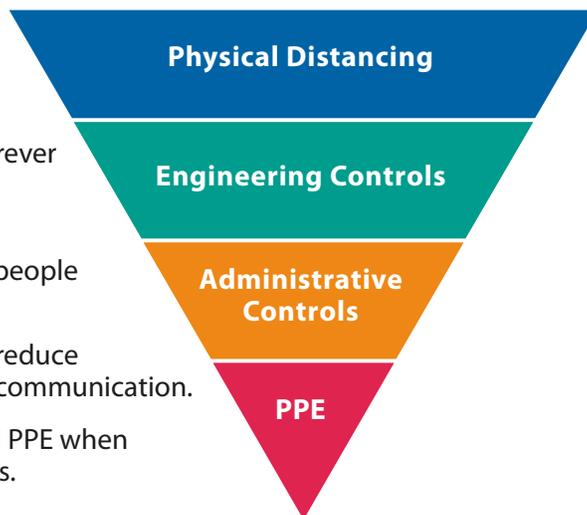
Figure 1. Overview of general themes for approaching action on public health measures for COVID-19 as New Brunswick moves into the Recovery Phase.

Physical distancing – Employers/operators should restructure physical settings and responsibilities to adhere to the distance needed between people (e.g. increasing space between people and/or reducing the number of employees within a space at a given time). In addition, wherever possible people should have the option to work or access businesses, schools and other settings from home.

Engineering controls – creating physical barriers between people when distancing is not possible; increasing ventilation.

Administrative controls – redistributing responsibilities to reduce contact between individuals, using technology to facilitate communication.

PPE and non-medical masks – having people wear medical PPE when required (in health care settings) and community face masks.



Appendix A

Public Health for Citizens	WorkSafeNB for Employees
<p>The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health’s mission is to improve, promote and protect the health of citizens of New Brunswick.</p> <p>The Public Health Act provides wide ranging powers to prevent and control the spread of diseases such as COVID-19.</p> <p>Requirements can be placed on individuals (i.e. self-isolation) or on businesses with orders to address a health hazard.</p> <p>Public health guidance documents in support of these goals are made available on the COVID-19 website: GNB COVID-19</p>	<p>WorkSafeNB is committed to promoting healthy and safe workplaces for New Brunswick’s workers and employers.</p> <p>WorkSafeNB supports the direction provided by public agencies necessary to slow the progression of COVID-19 and provides guidance to workplaces on implementing appropriate preventative measures.</p> <p>To support this effort we’ve provided the following information about COVID-19 and the workplace: Workplace health and safety, and the coronavirus</p>

Appendix B

Occupational Health and Safety Act

The requirements of the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i> remain unchanged – even during a pandemic.	
Employers	Employees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of employees. – Provide employees with instruction, supervision and training. – Comply with this Act, the regulations and any order made in accordance with this Act or the regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure their own health and safety and that of other persons at, in or near the place of employment. – Report any hazards to the employer or supervisor. – Wear or use such protective equipment as necessary.

Appendix C

Screening Questionnaire for COVID-19

YOU SHOULD NOT GO TO WORK IF YOU FEEL SICK

If you have 2 or more of the following symptoms, stay home, self-isolate, and call 811:

- fever or signs of a fever (such as chills)
- new cough or worsening of a chronic cough
- sore throat
- headache
- runny nose
- new onset of fatigue
- new onset of muscle pain
- diarrhea
- loss of taste or smell.

If you answer YES to any of the following, then you must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days. If you develop symptoms, please refer to the self-assessment link on the Government of New Brunswick webpage.

- Have you had close contact within the last 14 days with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
- Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?
- Have you returned from travel outside of New Brunswick within the last 14 days?
- Have you been told by public health that you may have been exposed to COVID-19?
- Follow public health advice if you are waiting for testing results for COVID-19

Appendix D

Check List and Resources for Businesses/Organizations:

Operational Plan

- I have created a *COVID-19 Operational Plan Guide* for my business.
- My plan has input from my staff.
- My plan is available and readily accessible should a Public Health Inspector, WorkSafe NB or Public Safety request to see it.
- I have communicated my plan with my staff.

Public Health Measures

- Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance/exit for public, customer, patient and staff use.
- Practice and facilitate respiratory etiquette.
- Follow guidelines on community masks.
- Practice and facilitate physical distancing.
- Physical barriers such as partitions or plexiglass may be used in high traffic areas.
- Ensure adequate cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.

Signage

- COVID-19 Screening Tool is visible prior to entry into my business.
- Clear physical distancing guidance.
- Post external signs indicating COVID-19 physical distancing protocols.
- Floor markings may be used where service is provided or lines form.
- Wearing a non-medical mask, also referred to as a community face mask, is required when unable to maintain physical distancing in the community (i.e. grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.). Business are required to have signage on the door is clear and visible.
- Handwashing etiquette are posted clearly in all washroom facilities.
- Public awareness surrounding COVID-19 include symptoms and health hygiene and etiquette is visible.

Human Resources / Staffing

- Staff are encouraged to stay home when ill and I have an established protocol when staff call in ill or become ill during their shift.
- I have a dedicated team member to regulate entry into buildings and public spaces to prevent congestion.
- I have a dedicated team member to ensure daily, adequate cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.

Facility Management

- Our business has a house cleaning and disinfecting Log.
- I have cleaning supplies – soap, cleaners, disinfectants, cloths, sanitizer, towels, toilet paper, disposable gloves.
- Ensure work/service areas have frequent sanitization.
- Ensure washrooms have frequent sanitization.
- Cashless or no-contact payment should be used to the greatest extent possible.
- Congregation of people should be actively discouraged.
- Sites can use outdoor space to allow for physical distancing.

Resources:

All resources can be found on the [GNB COVID-19](#) website.

[Self-Monitor Poster](#)

[Self-Isolation Poster](#)

[Hand Washing Poster](#)

[Hand Sanitizer Poster](#)

[Protect Yourself and Others from Getting Sick Poster](#)

[Non-Medical Masks or Face Coverings](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfection Info Sheet](#)

[COVID-19 Screening Tool](#)