



# A GUIDE FOR *reopening* YOUR WORKPLACE

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**ONPhA**

ONTARIO NON-PROFIT  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Guide is based on a document produced by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) and the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) and adapted to fit the provincial context in Ontario.

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# INTRODUCTION

Over the past several months, the Province and public health experts have been closely monitoring developments relating to COVID-19. Thanks to widespread and ongoing efforts to maintain public health measures, early signs of flattening the curve of the outbreak were observed. As a result of these developments, the Province released [“A Framework for Reopening our Province”](#) on April 27, 2020. The Framework lays out the principles and criteria the Province will use to loosen public health restrictions through various phases and stages over the coming months.

From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, housing providers have been quickly adapting to changing circumstances and the realities of operating as essential service providers. ONPHA has listened as you shared your best practices and ongoing challenges in providing housing services during the pandemic. Your insights have strengthened our collective understanding of the evolving measures needed to operate in a ‘new normal.’ Many of your contributions have been included in this guide.

As we prepare for and progress through the next phases of Ontario’s Framework, new challenges will likely emerge from the increasing mobility of the general population including your tenants, staff members and contractors. Deciding how to modify and restructure your operations over the coming months will depend on a multitude of factors. In responding to these factors, your planning must focus on the health and safety of staff, tenants, and business partners. The risk of a second wave looms over Ontario, and it is up to all of us to continue to do our part towards prevention and mitigation.

*In the context of Ontario’s Framework for Reopening our Province, this resource is intended to assist non-profit housing providers in reopening and modifying their workplaces to promote health and safety. It will provide a brief overview of the Province’s plan and guidelines, recommendations for preparing the workplace and best practices for engaging with tenants.*

# ONTARIO'S FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING OUR PROVINCE

The Framework is divided into three phases outlining Ontario's emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak and how it intends to loosen emergency conditions and reopen the economy. The three phases are as follows:

## PHASE 1: PROTECT & SUPPORT

On March 17, 2020, Ontario declared a state of emergency premised on protecting the health and well-being of individuals and families and providing funding and other supports for essential service providers and individuals affected by the pandemic. For more information on actions instituted during this phase, please refer to [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19](#).

## PHASE 2: RESTART

The government will take a gradual, three-stage approach to loosen public health measures and reopen businesses and public spaces. Each stage will last for approximately two-to-four-weeks. After each two-to-four-week period, the Province's next steps (i.e., to tighten measures, maintain the status quo or progress to the next stage) will be based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. On May 19, 2020, Ontario commenced Stage One of the Restart Phase. [Click here](#) to see a list of Stage One openings.

As of June 12, 2020, Ontario initiated a regional approach to Stage 2 of reopening the province. [Click here](#) for more information.

## PHASE 3: RECOVER

The focus of this phase will be on Ontario's economic recovery. In partnership with businesses and other sectors, the government will prioritize the creation of jobs and opportunities while ensuring long-term prosperity for all residents of Ontario.



# PROVIDER PLAN FOR RETURN TO WORK

## PANDEMIC RESPONSE TEAM

[ONPHA's COVID-19 Planning Check List](#) includes the need to identify a Pandemic Coordinator or better still, to create a Pandemic Response Team with defined roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response planning. If your organization created such a position or team at the outset of this crisis, it should remain in place as you evaluate and plan for reopening. If your organization does not yet have a Pandemic Coordinator or Response Team, now is the time to implement one.

The risk of continued spread and/or a second wave of COVID-19 requires a thoughtful, well-planned approach to re-opening. Plan for a gradual and staged return to regular activity. Your plan should be informed by and adapt to directives coming from public health officials and must be consistent with occupational health and safety standards.

Many of the actions implemented under your initial Pandemic Plan should continue as you move forward. A large part of the challenge will be the greater level of mobility of residents, visitors and staff as businesses reopen and restrictions are slowly lifted. It is possible that as restrictions are eased, people will practice less discipline in following physical distancing rules and observing strict personal hygiene. The return to 'normalcy' will require greater effort to mitigate risks posed by increased traffic in and around buildings and sites.

Your Pandemic Response Team/Coordinator must take all associated risks into account as they guide you through the process of reopening.



# SIX KEY STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL REOPENING

## 1. IDENTIFY RISKS

The first step in moving to reopen and/or expand operations is to assess your workplace to identify where there is risk of COVID-19 transmission. Seek input from as many different sources as possible including frontline workers, supervisors, joint health & safety committees and residents. Continue to assess the workplace to ensure all potential sources of transmission have been identified and managed once you have resumed operations.

Be mindful that the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, or from touching a contaminated surface before touching your face.

## 2. IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF TRANSMISSION

While it is not possible to totally eradicate the virus' spread, there are a number of steps you can take to significantly lower the risk of transmission including maintaining physical distancing measures, engineering controls and implementing administrative controls. We will examine this further in *Minimizing Risk* below.

## 3. DEVELOP AND UPDATE POLICIES

Develop and continuously review the policies to manage your workplace, including policies around who is permitted in the workplace, how to address illness as it arises and how to keep staff safe in adjusted working conditions.

Consider the following when developing policies and guidance materials:



- Public Health Ontario has developed a [fact sheet](#) on how to self-isolate. Your policies should reflect its recommendations.
- Enact policies encouraging tenants and staff to limit visitors and lay out protocols to be followed during and after visitations.
- Have a protocol to follow when staff start to feel ill while at work, including who they should notify and how they will travel from the workplace to their home. A chart of COVID-19 related symptoms compared to the flu, common cold and seasonal allergies can be found [here](#).
- Develop procedures to ensure the safety of any staff who work alone to reduce the risk of transmission.
- Enact procedures to ensure any staff working from home are doing so safely. This may include providing adequate ergonomic and audio-based equipment.
- If you provide congregate living it is especially important to review your services and operations to identify ways to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Suggestions on how to do this is available in the Ministry of Health publication, [COVID-19 Guidance: Congregate Living for Vulnerable Populations](#).

#### 4. ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION PLANS AND TRAINING PROTOCOL

You must ensure that everyone entering your buildings, including staff, residents, visitors and outside workers know how to keep themselves and others safe while on your premises.

Communication best practices include:

- Training all staff on the measures you have put in place to reduce the risk of transmission and the policies around staying home when sick.
- Posting signage, including occupancy limits, distancing and effective hand washing practices. Signage indicating who is restricted from entering the premises (including visitors and



workers with symptoms) should be posted at the main entrance. Signage posters created by the Province can be found [here](#).

- Training supervisors on monitoring workers and the workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.

## 5. MONITOR YOUR WORKPLACE AND FACILITATE STAFF INPUT

- Circumstances may change as you restart your operations. Take immediate steps to update your policies or procedures if you identify a new area of concern or if something isn't working. Involve staff in this process, where possible.
- Ensure you have a process for staff to raise safety concerns. This may be through their health & safety representative or a joint health and safety committee. Employers with small workforces may need to develop alternate ways for staff to raise their safety concerns. Work with committees and staff to resolve any concerns that are raised.

## 6. ASSESS AND ADDRESS RISKS FROM RESUMING OPERATIONS

If you largely shut down your operations during the initial stages of the pandemic, there may be challenges to restarting your business that will be important for you to address. Consider the following:

- Have you had any staff turnover? Are workers being required to change or adapt job roles, or to use new equipment? Consider the need for training or new employee orientation.
- Will staff need time or training to refresh their skills after having been out of the workplace for a while?
- Have you changed anything about the way you operate, such as the equipment you use or the way you interact with tenants?

# CONDUCTING A COVID-19-SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

As you build your return to work plan, it is essential to conduct a COVID-19-specific risk assessment to help prevent future outbreaks and to ensure the overall health and wellbeing of staff, tenants and partners.

The assessment should outline levels of risk associated with the workplace, including work tasks for staff and partners. Risk levels vary depending on a wide range of factors. You must consider the number of contacts in a given setting, the length of contact and the type of contact (e.g., close or distant). Risk levels are also affected by the level of COVID-19 activity in your local community and the number of individuals (e.g., staff, contractors, guests, etc.) who visit your workplace from outside your community.

The following list contains other things to consider in your risk assessment:

- Places people congregate, such as break rooms, meeting rooms, amenity space, playgrounds, lunchrooms, reception areas, etc.
- Job tasks or processes that require people to come into proximity with one another.
- Materials and documents exchanged, tools, shared machinery and equipment and mail and package deliveries.
- Surfaces that are touched often, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, photocopy equipment, etc.
- Measures in place to ensure compliance with personal preventative practices, such as cleaning used tools and frequently touched surfaces.
- Staff who belong to higher risk groups for contracting severe COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., those aged 65 or older, with a compromised immune system or other underlying medical conditions).
- Efficacy of control measures in place in your workplace, such as physical barriers for screening, the number and location of alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers and appropriate selection and use of PPE.

Ultimately, your risk assessment should guide the development of your return to work plan during Phases 2 and 3 of Ontario's Framework. Keep in mind that it may be necessary to conduct risk assessments at regular intervals as circumstances of the pandemic change and as the mobility of the general population increases due to loosening restrictions.

# MINIMIZING RISK

Once you have completed the risk assessment for all your locations, determine the measures you will put in place to reduce the risk of infection. Ensure you have adequate supplies and equipment and a plan to replenish these over the course of the next several months. Risk mitigation measures can be categorized as follows:

1. Physical Distancing Measures
2. Engineering Controls
3. Administrative Controls
4. PPE & Other Protection

## 1. PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

Large numbers of people returning to a shared workplace represent a huge risk for virus transmission. Managing the number of workers is critical to protecting the health and safety of staff, tenants and visitors alike. The higher the number, the higher the risk. Here are some steps you can take:

a. Allow work-at-home arrangements	Wherever possible, allow staff (especially those who are at higher risk of experiencing severe COVID-19 symptoms) to work from home to reduce the number of people at the work location at any one time.
b. Remind people to avoid physical contact of any kind	Post signage and verbally remind people to avoid physical contact such as handshakes, pats on the back, hugging, etc.
c. Use floor markers for distance & direction	Affix position and directional markers on floors at reception, workstations and cash transaction areas to enforce physical distancing.
d. Limit number of passengers in a vehicle	Limit the number of passengers in a vehicle depending on size and seating. Deploy additional vehicles if necessary and require the use of masks and gloves while in a vehicle.
e. Set occupancy limits for elevators & common areas	Based on square footage and a standard of 2 metres (6 feet) distance, set a maximum occupancy level for common areas and post signage to impose the limits.
f. Secure amenity spaces	Lock and/or limit access to rooms and areas of a site where physical distancing is difficult to maintain. These might include supply rooms, children's playgrounds and cultural sites such as sweat lodges.  Consider: will all areas of the workplace be opened, or will some areas remain closed or restricted to prevent a gathering, such as kitchens, cafeterias, lunchrooms, cafes, photocopy or supply rooms, patios, etc.?

## 2. ENGINEERING CONTROLS

a. Install Plexiglas barriers	Install Plexiglas barriers at reception and service desks.
b. Install/increase ventilation	Open windows and use fans to increase airflow. If possible, make changes to HVAC systems to improve air circulation and ventilation.
c. Use temporary fencing or barricade tape to block access	Erect physical barriers to block access and/or use of restricted areas such as playgrounds, stairways, common areas, etc.
d. Reconfigure the layout of office workstations	Move workstations to ensure a minimum 2-metre separation if possible. If this is not possible, find ways to alternate occupied workstations with vacant ones throughout the workday. (Refer to <a href="#">Cushman and Wakefield's resource</a> for recommendations and guidance on configuring your workspace.)
e. Physical space between seating	Remove or post signage on seating to facilitate physical distancing between individuals.
f. Isolation areas for clients with COVID-19 symptoms	In congregate living settings, ensure there is an area/room where individuals who show signs of illness can self-isolate. For more info see: <a href="#">COVID-19 Guidance: Congregate Living for Vulnerable Populations.</a>

### 3. ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

<p>a. Temporary policies that emphasize stay at home if sick or returning from outside of the province</p>	<p>Consider amending current sick leave policy to encourage employees to stay home if they are sick or have returned from travelling outside of Ontario. This may mean offering additional leave deemed ‘COVID-19 Sick Leave’ and/or expanding the leave to allow for the use of vacation credits or special leave days. Adding more leniency to your sick leave policy can help protect others from being exposed to an infected worker who might otherwise feel compelled to come to work. Medical notes should not be required.</p>
<p>b. Considerations for events and cultural gatherings</p>	<p>Establish and widely communicate policies to inform about the need to comply with the <a href="#">Province’s Public Health Directives</a> related to public gatherings. This would apply to all use of grounds, common amenity space and facilities under the employer’s management.</p>
<p>c. Eliminate ‘wait’ areas, book appointments</p>	<p>If your agency typically offers walk-in services or has suppliers, deliveries and other unscheduled visitors, you must impose greater control on traffic throughout your sites. Post signage and send out notices that all visitors will require an appointment before being permitted to enter your office(s) or worksite(s). Visitors may be asked to phone-in and wait outside until permitted to enter.</p>
<p>d. Visitor screening</p>	<p>Screen all visitors prior to arrival by asking the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you travelled out of the country in the past 14 days?</li> <li>• Have you experienced symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath?</li> <li>• Have you recently had contact with any person(s) that is/are confirmed or suspected of having a fever or flu-like symptoms?</li> <li>• If they answer ‘yes’ to any of the above, they would not be permitted entry.</li> </ul> <p>You may post these criteria at entrances, as well.</p>
<p>e. Worksite visitor logs</p>	<p>You must have the ability to identify and track visitors to your office and worksites in case a visitor is in contact with someone who is later confirmed to have the virus. Establish a visitor log that records the visitor’s name, time of (date and time in and out) and purpose of visit, who they are visiting and a contact email or phone number. If you use a physical logbook, keep in mind that you will need to disinfect the sign-in book, pens and counter after each use. <i>Note: This does not apply to people visiting tenants.</i></p>

f. Staff pods	Consider creating staff ‘pods’, or groups of staff members who work together exclusively, to minimize the risk of broad transmission throughout the workplace
g. Designate ‘drop’ zones	Designate specific areas in your workplace for third parties to deliver mail, packages and supplies to limit traffic through the workplace to employees and pre-screened visitors only. Direct staff to avoid handling packages for at least 24 hours (up to 72 hours when the packaging is plastic). Remind staff to wash/sanitize hands after handling mail and packages.
h. Virtual meetings and electronic communications	Use technology as much as possible to stay in contact with your employees and business contacts and avoid in-person meetings. Use online platforms to conduct meetings and interviews.
i. Flexible policies & work arrangements	<p>There are many possible work arrangements that offer employees flexibility in where, when and how they work. During the pandemic, such arrangements have served to reduce the number of staff in a work location at any one time, allowed for commuting at off-peak hours, assisted employees to meet personal &amp; family obligations, extended service to clients, helped save on office costs and helped keep employees engaged by supporting a balance of work and home life. Consider the following options or a combination thereof:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Work from home or telework arrangements</li> <li>ii) Compressed workweek with flex day off</li> <li>iii) Staggered shifts/hours of work</li> <li>iv) Extended business hours</li> <li>v) Mobile work locations</li> </ul> <p>It should be noted that such arrangements must be voluntary on the part of the employee, of mutual benefit to both employer and employee, have written policy to support them, protect privacy and employee safety and offer a viable means of evaluating performance. There should be start and end dates associated with specific work arrangements over the course of the pandemic.</p>
j. Limit unnecessary travel	Authorize travel for short day trips only, if at all. Prohibit travel that involves spending time in large groups of people (e.g., air travel, conferences, etc.) where possible.

<p>k. Schedule shifts to allow for public transportation use at off-peak times</p>	<p>Where possible, schedule shifts to start and end at off-peak hours so staff can maintain physical distance from others while commuting to work.</p>
<p>l. Case-by-case accommodation for higher risk employees</p>	<p>COVID-19 affects people in differing ways. While there is much unknown about the virus, in general it affects older people and those with compromised immune systems or underlying health conditions more severely than others.</p> <p>For this reason, it is important to consider each employee’s unique circumstances when determining work arrangements during the pandemic. An employer may not know if there are vulnerable employees in the workplace.</p> <p>As part of workplace communications about COVID-19, employers should prompt staff with individual risk concerns to come forward. Employees have an obligation to disclose, and you, as an employer, have an obligation to protect their health and safety while on the job.</p>
<p>m. Coordinate tenant to staff interactions</p>	<p>Establish an appointment booking system that allows tenants and staff to coordinate in-person engagements, such as cash transactions or in-unit maintenance work. It is essential to plan the logistics of the engagement (i.e., the communication of the procedure and accommodations by which a tenant can safely isolate themselves during maintenance work) to ensure the health and safety of the parties involved.</p>
<p>n. Return-to-work questionnaires</p>	<p>Employers may use return-to-work questionnaires to determine whether an employee who has been on COVID-19 related leave is cleared to return to the workplace. The questions will be similar to those asked when screening visitors (see above). Answering ‘yes’ to any of the questions posed may require the employee to work from home or remain off work until they are fully cleared to return.</p> <p>The employee may also complete Ontario’s <a href="#">self-assessment</a> as an added precaution.</p>

## 4. PPE & OTHER PROTECTIONS

<p>a. Personal protective equipment (PPE)</p>	<p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the purposes of providing housing and support services includes masks, gloves, face shields, goggles and, in some cases, protective clothing.</p> <p>Improper use and/or care of PPE poses an additional risk that is avoidable if workers are properly trained. Employers should have a reliable supply of PPE available to staff and ensure they are properly trained on how and when to use it.</p> <p>Under <i>Occupational and Health Safety Act</i> <a href="#">requirements</a>, employers are responsible for supplying the PPE that workers need to do their jobs. You must secure an adequate supply of face masks, gloves and other essential PPE in order to resume operations.</p> <p>Public Health Ontario (PHO) has provided a helpful <a href="#">resource</a> for putting on and taking off PPE.</p>
<p>b. Signage &amp; bulletins</p>	<p>Signage is critical to convey information about your COVID-19 protocols to those who work, live in or visit your sites. Use signage to instruct on practices (e.g., handwashing), occupancy limits, distancing precautions, etc. Similarly, bulletins are useful tools in educating staff and residents on the measures you are taking and how they can prevent infection.</p>
<p>c. Sanitization of “high-touch” areas and commonly used conveniences</p>	<p>Sanitize frequently used items and surfaces like doors, elevator buttons, light switches, pens, keyboards, computer peripherals and laundry rooms on a regular basis.</p> <p>Consider the use of communal appliances such as drinking fountains, coffee machines, kettles, microwaves, fridges, vending machines, water coolers, office dishware, and communal food items such as coffee, tea, milk, cream and sugar and whether to remove or restrict their use temporarily. For more information, Public Health Ontario’s <a href="#">guidance</a> on cleaning and disinfection for public settings can be helpful.</p>

<p>d. Disinfectants, hand sanitizer &amp; soap</p>	<p>Coronaviruses are enveloped viruses. This means they are one of the easiest types of viruses to kill with the <a href="#">appropriate disinfectant</a> (approved by the Government of Canada) when used according to the label directions. Use regular household cleaners or diluted bleach to clean hard surfaces.</p> <p>One of the best practices to prevent spreading COVID-19 is to wash hands frequently with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Promoting frequent handwashing is key in stopping the spread of COVID-19. If soap is unavailable, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.</p> <p>Training on the handling and technique for using cleaning products, soaps and sanitizers is important to effectively contain the virus' spread.</p>
<p>e. Use of non-medical masks &amp; eye protection</p>	<p>Lower-risk jobs only require a non-medical face mask. There is a need to preserve the supply of medical N95 masks for workers in higher-risk jobs (e.g., healthcare workers).</p> <p>Face shields or goggles can be used as extra protection from contracting the virus through the eyes. The <a href="#">Government of Canada</a> has more information on the appropriate use of non-medical face masks and its limitations.</p>
<p>f. Temperature screening</p>	<p>As one of the main symptoms of COVID-19 is a fever, some employers have started screening staff using touchless temperature scanners before they are permitted to enter the workplace. This type of thermal testing is non-invasive. As such, it could be considered a reasonable precaution, especially if there is evidence of exposure to infection at a work location, residential building or program site.</p> <p>Temperature screening carries with it privacy concerns. Osler, Hoskin &amp; Harcourt LLP has provided a <a href="#">checklist</a> of some considerations to make if you choose to take employees temperatures as a screening mechanism.</p>
<p>g. Dollies</p>	<p>Consider supplying workers with dollies or other aids for tasks that would typically be done by more than one person</p>



## WORK REFUSALS

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) specifies that, in Ontario, workers can refuse to work if they believe the workplace, including any equipment or machine they are required to operate, is likely to endanger them. This supports the expectation that employers have a duty to provide a safe working environment relative to the expected duties of the employee and the risks in the workplace. The basic principle behind work refusal rights is that no employer should be able to direct an employee to perform unsafe work.

When an employee exercises their right to refuse unsafe work, they and their employer must follow the procedures outlined in the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#). Stage One of this process starts with the employee reporting their refusal to their supervisor or employer. The employer must then investigate in the presence of the worker and the worker safety representative. At this point, the issue is either resolved and the worker returns to work, or it is not resolved, and the complaint moves on to Stage Two. At this stage, the Ministry of Labour (MOL) is called in to investigate (either the employee or employer can initiate this).

A MOL Inspector investigates in the company of the worker, safety representative and employer. The MOL Inspector then provides a decision in writing to all parties, which will indicate whether the workplace is safe. In the event it is found to be safe, the worker is expected to return to work. If it is found to be unsafe, the report will usually include changes required to make it safe. Once the employer has made the required changes, the employee returns to work. While the MOL is conducting its investigation and preparing its report, the employee in question may continue to refuse to work. However, the employer may assign other work if it does not conflict with a collective agreement. If the employer asks another staff person to take over the job of the refusing worker, they must inform the new staff person that the work is the subject of a work refusal.

Where COVID-19 is concerned, the issue of unsafe work is a little more complicated.

If you are doing everything you can in accordance with the guidelines of Public Health Ontario ([COVID-19 Public Resources](#)), which advises preventative measures such as hand, respiratory and environmental hygiene and physical distancing, the work will likely be deemed to be safe. However, even in this scenario, an employee may still perceive a threat to their personal health and safety.

Employers can expect to see work refusals from employees based on their fear that they may still be at risk despite the fact that recommended procedures are being followed. This could be based on things like the fear that there is a confirmed or presumptive case of COVID-19 in the workplace or because the employee(s) feels they are in a high-risk category (over age 65, compromised immune system or underlying medical condition).

It will be necessary to determine a course of action on a case-by-case basis and with the advice of public health and/or medical officials. It is generally recommended that you err on the side of caution. Accommodating an employee by permitting them to work from home, if possible, or re-assigning them to a location and duties that pose a lower risk, are responsible measures an employer may take in these instances.

As noted earlier, you may not know which employees are vulnerable. As part of workplace communications about COVID-19, employers should encourage employees with individual risk concerns to raise them directly with them. Ask for the minimum information required to make an informed decision in order to protect their privacy rights.

## COMMUNICATIONS & HR BEST PRACTICES

The biggest weapon in your arsenal against COVID-19 is frequent and informative communications with your employees, residents and program clients.

### KEEP PEOPLE UP TO DATE

The COVID-19 hazard is ever-evolving as medical experts learn more each day. Take steps to regularly inform people of the most current, fact-based information about how to stay safe and protect others' health and wellbeing.

### CHECK YOUR CONNECTIONS

Make sure that your communications and technology infrastructure are secure and operational. Use web-based platforms and secure networks to share information.

### ENGAGE YOUR EMPLOYEES

Involve your employees in processes that are part of the solution. Work with them to identify and find ways to reduce risks. Encourage them to share what they have learned with others.

## STAY CONNECTED

Keep in touch with staff who are on COVID-19 related leave. They need to feel they are doing the right thing by avoiding contact with others or being home to care for others.

## SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION

Recognize and thank those who are working the front lines. If you can, consider offering hazard pay. Have your board and senior leadership express their appreciation in ways that are meaningful to the staff.

## EMBED YOUR LEARNING

Take what you have learned and document what works. Use it to develop your emergency response plan for future pandemics.

# CONCLUSION

It will likely be many months before life returns to some form of normalcy.

Pandemics involving respiratory viruses such as COVID-19 can be declared ‘over’ only when the proportion of the population that is immune is large enough that transmission between people is no longer sustained. That can happen in two ways: 1) after enough people have been infected and have recovered and/or, 2) when enough people have been immunized with a vaccine, which is likely many months away.

In the meantime, and as we progress through this next phase of Ontario’s Framework for Reopening our Province, there are a number of steps that your organization, as an employer and landlord, should take to continue to ensure safe and responsible delivery of services to the people you support:

- Assess the risks at your workplace, service centres and residential sites, and develop a plan to reduce or eliminate those risks.
- Adopt and implement measures as outlined in this guide to address increased risk.
- Understand your obligations as an employer to ensure the rights of your workers to a safe, virus-free workplace.
- Build and sustain trust. Adopt a management style that considers the unique circumstances that each of your employees faces and make informed decisions from a place of concern and understanding.

**Thank you for all your efforts thus far! Let’s continue to push forward and work together to identify the best practices to address the emerging challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

# RESOURCES AND LINKS

## ONTARIO'S PLANS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

[Ontario's Workplace Safety Plan](#)

[Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19](#)

[Ontario's List of Stage 1 Openings](#)

[Ontario's Stage 2 Announcement](#)

[Ontario's Emergency Alerts Information Page](#)

## CLEANING, PPE, AND OTHER PROTECTIONS RESOURCES

[Public Health Ontario: Recommended Steps in Putting on and Taking off PPE](#)

[Public Health Ontario: Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings Guide](#)

[Government of Canada's Non-Medical Mask and Face Coverings About Page](#)

[Government of Canada: Hard-surface Disinfectants and Hand Sanitizers Resource](#)

[Osler's Key Considerations for taking Employees' Temperatures as a Screening Mechanism](#)

[York Region Safe Use of PPE for Housing Services PowerPoint](#)



## **WORKPLACE SAFETY GUIDES AND RESOURCES**

[Ontario's Congregate Living Guidance Document](#)

[Ontario's Resource to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#)

[Ontario's COVID-19 Workplace Health and Safety Page](#)

[Ontario's Essential Workplaces COVID-19 Guidance Document](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Cushman & Wakefield Reopening your Workplace Guide](#)

## **COVID-19 MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES**

[ONPHA's COVID-19 Planning Checklist](#)

[Public Health Ontario: How to Self-Isolate](#)

[World Health Organization COVID-19 Symptoms Chart](#)

[Ontario's Reference Document for COVID-19 Symptoms](#)

[Ontario's COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)

[Public Health Ontario's COVID-19 Resource Page](#)

[Public Health Ontario: Congregate Living Settings Webinar Slides](#)

[Victoria Park Community Homes Entry of Units Process – COVID-19](#)

[Ottawa Community Housing Corporation COVID-19 Pre-Screening Questionnaire](#)

[Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation Working from Home Guidelines](#)



# ONP<sup>h</sup>A

ONTARIO NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION

[www.onpha.on.ca](http://www.onpha.on.ca) | [member.support@onpha.org](mailto:member.support@onpha.org)

