

## Check back frequently for updates. Updated - March 13, 2020 COVID-19: What Workers and Employers Need to Know

Coronaviruses are a large family of common viruses that are typically associated with illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases, such as pneumonia. COVID-19, a new coronavirus, is a disease that has not been previously identified in humans.

As information about COVID-19 develops, the Workers Compensation Board of PEI will continue to refer to the [PEI Chief Public Health Office](#) and the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) for guidance.

### How does COVID-19 spread?

Human coronaviruses cause infections of the nose, throat, and lungs. They are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets that are spread through coughing or sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching something with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.



### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

People with COVID-19 may have little to no symptoms, and may not realize they have been infected, as the symptoms resemble those from a cold or flu.

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19 and may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty Breathing

### What should I do if I develop symptoms?

Employers and workers experiencing symptoms (cough, fever, or difficulty breathing), should call 8-1-1 to be screened and, if necessary, directed for testing.

Employees and workers experiencing symptoms at work should go home immediately.

**Anyone who has travelled outside of Canada (whether experiencing symptoms or not) are required to self-isolate for 14 days following their return.**

## What can a workplace do?

Workplaces can help by having an infection control plan, which may include such details as:

- Providing clean hand washing facilities.
- Offering alcohol-based hand sanitizers when regular facilities are not available (or to workers working on the road).
- Cleaning objects that are touched frequently, such as workstations, doorknobs, handles, railings, kettles, etc. more often with regular disinfectants or soap and water.
- Providing boxes of tissues and encourage their use.
- Removing magazines and papers from waiting areas or common rooms (staff break rooms).
- Making sure ventilation systems are working properly.

## As a worker what can I do to protect myself from getting COVID-19?

You can stay healthy and prevent the spread of infections by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Coughing or sneezing into your sleeve and not your hands.
- Staying home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.



***For more information on COVID-19, including public health alerts and current information, visit the following websites:***

- [Government of Prince Edward Island](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)
  - [Hand Washing Poster](#)
  - [Prevent the Spread Poster](#)

***If you have questions on this, or any workplace safety topic, contact WCB Occupational Health & Safety at 902-368-5680 or toll free 1-800-237-5049, or visit our website at [wcb.pe.ca](http://wcb.pe.ca).***