

MANITOBA CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY COVID SAFETY AND PREVENTION MEASURES



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Introduction

During the course of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the following special measures are in place to protect workers, their families and the community from possible infection and illness. This document is prepared to help Manitoba's contractors and workers keep their worksites as safe as possible. The document is a joint initiative of:

- Manitoba Building Trades (MBT)
- Construction Labour Relations Association of Manitoba (CLRAM)

Effective Dates

These special procedures are in effect as of March 31, 2020 and will remain in effect until further notice. This document should be posted at all job sites and explained fully to workers at each job site.

Section 1: Attending Work

If you are feeling ill and have cold or flu like symptoms such as fever, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches, coughing or congestion:

- do not come to work;
- call your site superintendent, foreman and your Human Resources department to let them know that you are exhibiting the symptoms;
- call your doctor or call [Manitoba Health Links at 204-788-8200](#); and
- do not return to work until you are medically cleared to return.

Section 2: Personal Hygiene

- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash;
- do not share personal items or supplies such as phones, pens, notebooks, PPE, etc.;
- refrain from shaking hands with others;
- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

The following handwashing best practices should be used:

- wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) turn off the tap and apply soap;
- lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails;

- scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. To keep time, you can count steamboats to 20;
- rinse hands well under clean, running water;
- dry hands using a clean towel or air drying them.

Section 3: Safe Workplaces

Keeping worksites safe will require significant measures to provide facilities and amenities that facilitate good personal hygiene and prevent transmission of contagions. Proper washroom facilities must be maintained. There must be adequate supplies of soap, water, toilet paper and paper towels at all times. Washroom facilities must be properly cleaned and disinfected throughout the workday. Each worksite should provide the following as a minimum.

- hand sanitizer should be available at or near entry points to the project and at various high-traffic locations throughout the project such as doorways, field plan tables, tool cribs, hoists, water containers, etc.;
- prominent signage should indicate location of sanitizer stations;
- hot and cold running water, and hand soap should be available at bathroom facilities, lunchrooms and kitchen areas;
- where portable toilets are in use, they should be cleaned and or replaced with greater frequency to maintain sanitary and safe condition.
- if hot and cold running water are not available, hand sanitizer will be made available;
- hand-washing stations must have instructions posted at each location;
- paper towel dispensers and barrier-free garbage cans should be available at every handwashing location.

Section 4: Meetings at Work

Work should be organized so that, to the maximum extent possible, social and physical distancing can be maintained. Meetings of employees on site, including health and safety meetings, should ensure appropriate social distancing. Similarly, work breaks and lunch periods should be scheduled to avoid close contact.

Necessary work site meetings such as toolbox talks and safety briefings should observe physical distance recommendations and guidelines issued by Manitoba's Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO). These include:

- Maintaining at least 1-2 meters separation between each person.
- Avoiding prolonged close contact or proximity between people working or gathering in the same space.

Additional recommended measures include:

- e-mail, video or teleconference meetings are the preferred methods of communication;
- make all reasonable efforts to avoid in-person meetings and events wherever possible;
- meetings and events of more than six people should not be held in person and if absolutely necessary, physical separation should be maintained as recommended by Manitoba's CPHO;
- necessary meetings should be held in smaller groups and where possible, hold more smaller group discussions rather than gathering larger groups of people in a single space;
- meetings should be held in the area where an individual works, instead of in a large gathering point such as a conference or break room;
- meeting spaces should be cleaned and sanitized after meetings.

Section 5: Worksite Protocols

Construction worksites often require one or more person to work in close proximity and maintaining recommended physical distance may not be possible. To minimize risks, the following practices should be maintained:

- unless the nature of the work requires, workers should avoid being within 1-2 meters of others for prolonged periods of time;
- where working closer than recommended is essential, please follow protocols in Section 6 below;
- in person meetings and toolbox talks etc. should be limited to ten (10) or fewer persons unless groups of up to 20 can be assembled while maintaining recommended physical separation of 1-2 meters;
- If needed, conduct multiple meetings with smaller groups to avoid gathering everyone at the same place at the same time;
- where possible and safe, use technology and electronic communication such as email, text and teleconferencing to minimize direct contact with others;
- stagger breaks and lunch times to reduce the number of people gathering at the same time;
- while using lunch room amenities such as fridges and microwaves or while waiting to use toilets and washrooms, please line up and keep 1-2 meters distance from the person in front of you.

Section 6: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- In addition to normally required PPE, workers who are in close proximity of others for prolonged periods (less than 1-2 meters apart for five (5) minutes or

more) are required to use N95 or other masks that adequately protect against COVID-19 infection.;

- glove use is mandatory on all jobsites;
- storage of personal gear such as jackets, vests and rain gear are not permitted on-site unless stored in a location where contact with individuals is not possible (an infected individual may have left respiratory droplets on their clothing, which could expose others if they touch the clothing).
- additional face washing and hand sanitizing stations should be located closer to work areas for cleansing if there is contact between workers such that perspiration or respiratory droplets come into contact with exposed skin.

Section 7: Hand Tools, Powered Mobile Equipment and Other Equipment on Jobsites

- Hand tools such as hammers, snips, pliers, etc. must not be shared person-to-person without a thorough cleaning with a disinfectant containing more than 70% alcohol;
- mobile and desktop phones must not be shared with others;
- two-way radios should be cleaned at the end of each shift, or between users;
- door and ladder handles, hand holds and rails, steering wheels, switches, buttons, knobs and fueling caps on powered mobile equipment should be cleaned at the end of each shift, or between users/operators.

Section 8: Additional Cleaning Protocols

All offices and jobsites should implement additional cleaning measures as outlined below:

- before commencing work each day or shift, high traffic surfaces (in terms of hand contact) within offices, meeting rooms, orientation rooms, coffee and kitchen areas, work stations, portable and permanent washrooms, and common work spaces should be cleaned;
- before commencing work, individuals working in an office setting are responsible for cleaning their workstation area. The focus is on reducing the risk of transmission through an individual touching an infected surface. Therefore, priority should be given to the high traffic surfaces (in terms of hand contact).

Cleaning Protocols After Each Use:

- hard surfaces and buttons your hands may meet on frequently touched items such as refrigerators, microwaves, water cooler handles, taps and faucets, light switches and other high traffic objects should be cleaned after each use;
- first-aid treatment rooms, reusable treatment equipment and instruments.

Cleaning Solutions and Supplies:

- if available, household or commercial disinfectant solutions and wipes containing more than 70% alcohol should be used to clean surfaces. However, some of these products are currently in short supply or are simply unavailable; if these household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not readily available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of one-part bleach and nine parts water. The solution must contact the surface for one minute to disinfect;
- items that cannot withstand liquid disinfectants such as tablets, smartboards and cellphones may be disinfected with 70% alcohol wipes ensuring the solution contacts the surface for one minute to disinfect;
- use paper towels or single-use rags.

Section 9: Personal Laptops and Electronics

At the end of each workday. Please take your laptop, other personal electronics and related power supplies home each night. This will prevent others from using them and if required, be available for you if working from home is implemented.

Section 10: After Work Protocols

The measures take at work are designed to keep you safe at work. But safety protocols continue after you finish work. The additional measures detailed below will help keep you and your family safe. After you finish work, make the following steps a daily habit:

- Remove your washable PPE items and place them in a bag. These should be washed as soon as you get home;
- non-washable PPE equipment such as boots, hardhats and safety glasses should be sanitized and placed in a bag or away from other items that may be contaminated;
- any single use PPE items such as masks must be discarded safely and not reused or left where others may handle them or have to discard them;
- once you have removed and packed your PPE, sanitize your hands one last time before leaving work;
- upon arriving home, leave your safety boots outside the home or in your vehicle;
- any items you packed for washing along with your clothing worn during the day should go straight in to the washing machine;
- finish your day with a shower before settling in to spend time with other occupants of your home;
- wear clean clothes each day and repeat the same procedure after work; and
- if you drive your personal vehicle to work, take a moment to wipe down commonly touched surfaces at least once a day.

Unsafe Workplaces

Worksites that do not provide these amenities where appropriate or do not follow applicable protocols are deemed unsafe and workers may exercise their right to refuse work in accordance with Part 43 of the Workplace Safety and Health Act.

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