

# Infrastructure Health and Safety Association Guidance on truck drivers experiencing COVID-19 symptoms in other jurisdictions

## Overview

During the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, we all need to do our part to keep workers, customers and the public safe and healthy so we can stop the spread and prepare to reopen the province, when we are ready.

Below is a set of resources, tips and best practices to help employers and employees prevent the spread of COVID-19 and work together to reopen the province.

Employers and workers in Ontario have certain duties and rights under *the Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations. Employers should also review and follow any applicable directives and guidance coming from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Ministry of Health.

Learn more about:

- [workers' rights](#)
- [employers' responsibilities](#)

You should also regularly check for requirements applicable to your region, such as:

- the provincial COVID-19 Response Framework
- municipal bylaws
- orders from your local public health unit

To help prevent outbreaks, you are encouraged to develop a COVID-19 [workplace safety plan](#). All businesses operating in a region in lockdown are required to have one under provincial regulation.

[Report](#) COVID-19 case(s) in the workplace to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

## Best practices

**Recognize hazards and assess risks:** The first step to controlling risks in a workplace is to identify the risks. This applies to all workplace hazards, not just COVID-19. Identifying and controlling workplace hazards is required of all employers in Ontario under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) and its regulations. The key risk factors for COVID-19 transmission include:

- prolonged exposure – spending more time with potentially infected people
- close proximity – working close to others
- crowded places – having more people in a space
- closed spaces – indoor spaces with less fresh air exchange (working indoors is riskier than working outdoors)
- forceful exhalation – activities that cause people to breathe more deeply, such as exercise, speaking loudly and singing

It is possible for COVID-19 to be spread by people who do not have any symptoms. This makes effective control measures very important. We must act as if everyone is infected when setting up controls.

The risk of severe health outcomes is not the same for all workers. The risk increases with age and is higher for people with [certain medical conditions](#).

### **General precautions that should be followed by all drivers:**

Commercial vehicle drivers must monitor their health prior to starting a trip. If a driver is experiencing symptoms, even if they have a mild cough and fever, they should stay home, self-isolate, and advise their employer so steps can be taken to protect co-workers who may have been exposed.

For more detail click here for the [COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms](#) from the Ontario Ministry of Health.

Remember that proper hand hygiene, vehicle disinfecting, and physical distancing should also be followed at all times.

### **For those travelling out of Canada:**

Canadians have been advised to avoid all non-essential travel to help limit the spread of COVID-19. Any travelers returning to Canada must self-quarantine for 10 days upon returning. As an essential service to Canada's supply chain, truck drivers are exempt from the self-quarantine requirement however, when off-duty, they should abide by recommendations of local and national public health authorities, including recommendations relating to physical distancing.

**Driver masks:** All essential workers crossing the Canada/US border must wear non-medical masks or face coverings. In the event that a Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) agent

For more information, visit: [ihsa.ca/COVID-19](https://ihsa.ca/COVID-19)

requires a driver to remove their mask they will ensure that proper physical distancing is maintained by staying at least 2 metres apart at all times.

Learn more about [using masks in the workplace](#) including how to select, care for and use them to protect workers from COVID-19.

Drivers that do not have a mask will be provided with one at the border. Further details on non-medical masks or face coverings can be found in this Government of Canada resource: [Considerations related to the use of face coverings by commercial vehicle drivers and motor carrier, and intercommunity bus passengers](#).

### **Controls:**

Infection prevention and control measures prevent the spread of the virus by breaking the chain of transmission. For example, [public health guidance](#) includes staying at least 2 metres away from others which avoids close contact; washing hands removes the virus and prevents people from touching their faces with contaminated hands.

For COVID-19 in the workplace, it is recommended that employers and business owners conduct a risk assessment to determine the most appropriate controls and actions for a particular workplace/situation. Reference the [IHSA's guide](#) on the risk assessment process to help facilitate this and review [Sample 1](#) and [Sample 2](#) for examples.

Always start by considering the most effective controls first. It is best to begin by trying to eliminate the hazard – to remove it from the workplace altogether. Where that is not possible, use multiple engineering and administrative controls first to prevent the spread. Protective equipment (including personal protective equipment (PPE) and community protective equipment) should be relied on only where engineering and administrative controls do not sufficiently reduce the risk to workers

In addition to the above recommendations, employers should determine whether PPE\* needs to be part of their hazard control plan. The need for PPE should be based on a risk assessment taking into account environmental conditions and also take into consideration input from the local public health unit. Although proper use of PPE can help prevent some exposures, it should not take the place of other control measures. Note: If physical distance and separation cannot be maintained, workers should have PPE consisting of surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield).

- Workers must use PPE as required by their employer.
- Workers should be trained on the proper use, care and limitations of any required PPE.

\*NOTE: Please be reminded that most face coverings (non-medical masks) have not been tested to a known standard and do not constitute PPE. In some circumstances, face coverings may be used as an effective means of source control, but should not be viewed as an appropriate substitute for physical distancing in the workplace.

For more information, visit: [ihsa.ca/COVID-19](https://ihsa.ca/COVID-19)

**What to do if a driver exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#) while in the US:** In the event that a driver exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 while travelling in the US they should:

1. Contact their supervisor, manager, or dispatch immediately.
2. Contact the [Canada Border Services Agency \(CBSA\)](#) at 1-800-461-9999:
  - Advise the CBSA agent that they are symptomatic and travelling as an essential worker in the United States.
  - Drivers will be requested to provide their estimated time of arrival at the border and the location they will be crossing.
  - Instructions of where to proceed upon arrival at the border will be provided to the driver.
  - The driver will be instructed to return home and follow mandatory quarantine procedures. Drivers should follow standard protocols for all persons returning to Canada as outlined in current Travel Restrictions.
  - Drivers will be asked to confirm that they are able to quarantine at a location where they will have no contact with vulnerable people, such as:
    - people 65 years or older,
    - people with underlying medical conditions.
  - Drivers must wear a non-medical mask or face covering while travelling to their quarantine location.
3. In the event that the driver cannot quarantine at a location where they will not have contact with vulnerable people:
  - They will be directed by the Chief Medical Health Officer of Canada to a federally approved facility where they will quarantine for 14 days.
  - The Public Health Officer on duty will provide instructions and details regarding the closest facility for the driver to quarantine.

**What to do if a driver exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#) while travelling in Canada but outside of Ontario:** Drivers transporting essential goods and services throughout Canada should continually monitor their health and if they experience any symptoms of COVID-19 while travelling outside of Ontario, they should:

1. Contact their supervisor, manager or dispatch immediately.
2. Complete the online [COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool](#) and select the province they are currently located in. The online tool will provide links to other jurisdictional resources to support the driver and access to public health authorities who will provide further instructions.
3. Drivers can also check the following provincial sites for additional resources:
  - Alberta: [Alberta Health Services Website](#)
  - British Columbia: [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)
  - Manitoba: [Shared Health Manitoba Website](#)
  - New Brunswick: [Government of New Brunswick Website](#)
  - Newfoundland and Labrador: [Healthline Website](#)

- Nova Scotia: [Government of Nova Scotia Website](#)
- Prince Edward Island: [Government of Prince Edward Island Website](#)
- Quebec: [Refer to the Government of Canada COVID-19 Website](#)
- Saskatchewan: [Government of Saskatchewan Website](#)
- Northwest Territories: [Refer to the Government of Canada COVID-19 Website](#)
- Nunavut: [Refer to the Government of Canada COVID-19 Website](#)
- Yukon: [Government of Yukon Website](#)

### **Screen for COVID-19:**

[Screening for COVID-19: guidance for employers | Ontario.ca](#)

This document provides employers with an overview of workplace screening for COVID-19 and information to help them make decisions about the use of rapid antigen screening.

Screening helps keep infected workers and others from entering the workplace thereby reducing possible workplace transmission.

- Question-based screening uses information about symptoms and exposures to identify people who may be infectious.
- Rapid antigen screening is used to help identify people who are infectious before they develop symptoms.

To further protect workers and help reduce transmission, workers who have passed screening must continue to follow all public health and workplace control measures including masking and maintaining physical distance.

### **Vaccines:**

[COVID-19 vaccines and workplace health and safety | Ontario.ca](#)

This guidance document explains how vaccines work to protect you when you are vaccinated, why COVID-19 workplace control measures need to be maintained even after workers are vaccinated, and some considerations for employers about workplace policies and supporting their workers to get vaccinated.

Workplace controls are measures that employers use to help prevent workers from being exposed to hazards like those posed by COVID-19. Vaccines are a good complement to workplace controls, but cannot replace them. They have different purposes:

- Workplace controls help prevent workers from being exposed to COVID-19.
- Vaccines help protect workers from getting sick if they are exposed.

To protect workers and help reduce the chance of COVID-19 transmission at the workplace, it is important to maintain workplace control measures even after vaccination.

### **Evaluate:**

Changes to work procedures or practices related to COVID-19 may affect the way you have routinely managed other risks in the workplace. Thus, it is recommended that you consider the

various preventative measures on an ongoing basis, and review and adjust accordingly if they are not working as intended or have created new risks or challenges.

Commercial vehicle drivers should monitor their health prior to starting a trip. If a driver is experiencing symptoms, even if they have mild cough and fever, they should stay home, self-isolate, and advise their employer so steps can be taken to protect co-workers. Proper hand hygiene, vehicle disinfecting, and physical distancing should also be followed.

**Self-monitor for symptoms for 10 days after exposure.**

## Resources

Stay updated with daily government updates:

- **Government of Ontario**
- **Government of Canada**
- **Public Health Ontario**

### **Ontario government and agency-issued resources about COVID-19**

Develop your COVID-19 workplace safety plan: Learn how you can create a plan to help protect your workers and others from novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

**Workplace Safety Plan**

The **Ontario Ministry of Health** is providing consistent updates on the provincial government's response to the outbreak, including:

- status of cases in Ontario
- current affected areas
- symptoms and treatments
- how to protect yourself and self-isolate
- updated Ontario news on the virus

**Public Health Ontario** is providing up-to-date resources on COVID-19, including:

- links to evolving public health guidelines, position statements and situational updates
- synopsis of key articles updating on the latest findings related to the virus
- recommendations for use of personal protective equipment
- information on infection prevention and control
- testing information
- other public resources

## Other COVID-19 resources

[Health Canada](#) outlines the actions being taken by the Government of Canada to limit spread of the virus, as well as what is happening in provinces and communities across the country. It also maintains a live update of the number of cases by province.

The [World Health Organization](#) is updating the latest guidance and information related to the global outbreak and spread beyond Canadian borders.

It also provides the most up-to-date information on:

- current research and development around the virus
- a COVID-19 situation “dashboard”
- emergency preparedness measures
- live media updates on the spread of the virus

This resource does not replace the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations, and should not be used as or considered legal advice. Health and safety inspectors apply the law based on the facts in the workplace.