Overview
This is not a legal document and employers are advised to seek legal advice.

Employers and constructors have obligations to protect workers from hazards in the workplace as set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations and the directives coming from the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Workers should raise any concerns to their:
• Supervisor
• Joint health and safety committee
• Health and safety representative

This will help ensure the employer has taken all reasonable precautions.

Ontario is currently in the midst of a global pandemic. While the COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly, the legislation and regulations used to govern Ontario’s workplaces are not.

Under Ontario law, employers have the duty to keep workers and work sites safe and free of hazards. Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work. If health and safety concerns are not resolved internally, a worker can seek enforcement by filing a complaint with the ministry’s Health and Safety Contact Centre at 1-877-202-0008. Failure of the employer or constructor to comply with the OHSA and its regulations could result in a stop-work order upon inspection by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

Recognize hazards and assess risks
The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) typically spreads through coughing and sneezing, personal contact with an infected person, or touching an infected surface and then the mouth, nose, or eyes.

Knowing how communicable diseases spread in the workplace is a key for prevention and control. The spread of infectious diseases can occur when:
• An infected person coughs or sneezes within 2 metres (6 feet): Many viruses transfer from person-to-person when droplets are inhaled into the lungs or land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby.
• Sharing objects such as work tools: Many viruses are spread when an infected person touches a surface or an object, which is then used by another person. The virus is transferred to the second worker when they touch their mouth, nose, or eyes.
• Personal hygiene supplies are inadequate: This can include the lack of soap, water, and tissues in the workplace.
• Sanitary conditions are poor: This can include inadequate or poorly maintained washroom facilities.
• Individuals have a compromised health status: People are most contagious when they are symptomatic (i.e., experiencing a fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). However, some spread might be possible before people show symptoms.

For more information visit ihsa.ca/COVID-19
Guidance on on-site sanitation during COVID-19 con’t

Controls
Clean and sanitize the jobsite. Continuous cleaning and disinfecting of workplace surfaces and providing adequate cleaning facilities are critical for reducing the spreading of infectious diseases.

Cleaning surfaces or objects with detergent, soap, and water is the first step. Cleaning does not necessarily kill germs but it can remove them and it lowers their numbers.

Sanitizing reduces germs on surfaces through a chemical process. Cleaning the surfaces or objects should occur before sanitizing.

Disinfecting destroys most germs on surfaces or objects by using chemicals. Disinfecting is recommended for spills of blood or bodily fluids. A simple disinfectant agent is a bleach solution, which is made by adding 1 cup (240 ml) of bleach to 5 gallons (18.9 l) of water.

How to clean surfaces and objects
To clean hard surfaces (such as stainless steel, floors, railings, light-switch plates, and doorknobs):
1. Follow the instructions on the label of the container and the safety data sheet (SDS) for any hazardous cleaning products.
2. Use chemicals in a well-ventilated area and NEVER mix cleaning chemicals.
3. Clean surfaces with soap and water to remove all visible debris and stains.
4. Rinse surfaces with clean water and wipe with a clean towel.
5. Sanitize surfaces or objects with sanitizing spray. You can make your own by mixing 5 ml of bleach with 750 ml of water.
6. Apply the disinfectant. To kill the virus, make sure the surface stays wet with the disinfectant for at least 10 minutes before wiping with a clean towel.
7. Rinse with water and allow surface to air dry.
8. Remove gloves, place in a trash bag, and discard.
9. Wash hands after removing gloves.

Evaluate
Follow-up and evaluation are essential to ensure the effectiveness of controls and solutions implemented. Review your process and identify any opportunities for improvement.

Evaluate your health
Stay home if you are feeling ill. If you detect symptoms, you should immediately distance yourself from others and go home. If possible, avoid using public transit. Ensure that you notify your supervisor so they are aware of the situation and can also notify others who may have been exposed.

Monitor your cleaning
• Monitor your supplies
• As you increase your frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, monitor your supply of disinfectant wipes, cleaning products, and PPE (i.e., gloves) to ensure that you have enough.
• Monitor the frequency and location of cleaning. This will ensure that all areas get cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. Look for any overlooked areas.

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Resources
Stay updated with daily government updates on COVID-19:
Government of Ontario
Government of Canada
Public Health Ontario

Anyone who is concerned they may have been exposed to, or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, should start by visiting the Ministry of Health website and take their self-assessment.

They should contact their primary care provider or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000. Please do not visit a COVID-19 assessment centre unless symptoms are present. Do not call 911 unless it is an emergency.