



1 Scope

This plan is intended to document the measures that are, or may be implemented, by the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine to prevent the spread of communicable diseases that may be introduced to the workplace as a result of circulation within the community. This plan does not cover pathogens required by WorkSafeBC to have an Exposure Control Plan (ECP) as those will be addressed in the pertinent ECP.

2 Introduction

A **communicable disease** is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted from one person to another in a workplace. Some common examples that may be encountered in the workplace are described below (*Source: www.cdc.gov*).

Norovirus Illness

Norovirus Illness may also be referred to as a “stomach bug” or “stomach flu” however if it not caused by influenza virus but rather many different types of noroviruses. It is easily transmitted in different ways including:

- Consuming food or drink that has been contaminated by the virus
- Touching a surface that has been contaminated then touching your mouth, or,
- Having direct contact with someone who is infected, such as caring for them or sharing food or eating utensils with them

Common symptoms include:

- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pain

Other symptoms include:

- Fever
- Headaches
- Body aches

Common cold

The cold is a very common infection caused predominantly by the rhinovirus. Viruses causing colds can be spread:

- through the air
- close personal contact, or,
- by touching a surface that has been contaminated with respiratory viruses then touching your eyes, mouth, or nose

Common symptoms include:

- sore throat
- runny nose
- coughing
- sneezing
- headaches
- body aches

Influenza

Influenza is a respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses and is often referred to as the “flu”. It is believed to be spread by droplets when infected people cough, sneeze, or talk, and to a lesser extent by touching a contaminated surface then the eyes, nose, or mouth. A yearly vaccine is available. Symptoms may be very similar to a cold but in general are worse and can lead to severe illness.

Common symptoms include:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

COVID-19:

COVID-19 is caused by the virus severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Since its identification in December of 2019, numerous variants of the virus have emerged resulting in ongoing research and developments. Vaccination against COVID-19 is available. COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

- Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
- Having these small droplets and particles that contain virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze.
- Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them.

Common symptoms include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Fever or chills○ Cough○ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ New loss of taste or smell○ Sore throat○ Congestion or runny nose○ Nausea or vomiting |
|---|--|

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fatigue ○ Muscle or body aches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diarrhea ○ Headache
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3 Roles and Responsibilities

Employer/Managers

- Implement recommendations made by a Provincial Health Officer or medical health officer as required and communicate any changes made to the employees
- Monitor and review communicable disease-related information from public agencies or authority and update as required

Supervisors

- Ensure workers understand and follow control measures

Workers

- Adhere to the prevention measures identified in the prevention plan and related policies and procedures

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- Review and provide recommendations for improving this plan and controls to aid in the prevention of communicable diseases. To be reviewed annually.
- include adherence to measures identified within this plan during workplace inspections at times of elevated risk

4 Risk Assessment and Controls

General prevention measures for communicable diseases include:

- Ensuring building ventilation systems are operating properly
- Staying home when sick
- frequent hand washing
- Routine cleaning of surfaces
- Vaccines
- Covering mouth & nose when sneezing or coughing
- Avoid close contact with others such as hugging or shaking hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Wipe down touch points in vehicles before and after each use

Specific controls the RDKS main office and the dog control centre has implemented are plexi glass at front counters and enhanced cleaning measures.

The risk of an individual communicable disease may increase for time to time or seasonally. When warranted, a Provincial Health Officer or a medical health officer may indicate

communicable diseases of concern to B.C. workplaces and provide additional guidance on control measures. These measures may include:

- A safety plan specific to that communicable disease
- Suspending public access to the workplace
- Physical distancing
- Plexiglass
- Wearing masks
- Using virtual meetings
- Working remotely
- Limiting travel
- Limiting room/floor/building capacity
- Increasing surface disinfection
- Other measures as recommended or ordered by the provincial health officer

5 Communication

Information about communicable diseases controls, policies, and practices will be communicated to workers in the following ways:

- Signage
- Safety meetings
- Staff meetings
- Emails

6 Related Policies, Procedures, and Additional Resources

- RDKS-HS-13-i COVID-19 Safety Plan
- Covid 19 Temporary Leave Policy
- COVID Prevention, Self and Family Illness & Return to Work
- Working From Home Policy
- RDKS Cleaning Vehicle Policy
- [BC CDC Communicable Diseases](#)