

# WORKING REMOTELY

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## OVERVIEW

Now that you have identified working remotely as an exposure control for your organization, here is a document that you can use to craft your working remotely policy and safe work procedure.

### Purpose

To provide instruction on how employers can protect workers while working remotely during a viral outbreak or pandemic.

### Scope

Applies to anyone required to work remotely anytime, whether employee or contractor.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### For the Employer

#### Awareness

The Employer will ensure that everyone has access to a copy of this document.

#### Planning

The Employer will ensure workers are complying with company policies e.g. fatigue management, mental wellness, and substance use.

The Employer will consult with the worker to identify any location-specific hazards.

#### Training

The Employer will ensure that workers are trained to use any required PPE properly.

#### Review

This procedure should be reviewed annually by the Employer with the workers to ensure that it continues to protect the workers.

The Employer will keep informed regarding public health best practices and orders when a pandemic has been declared and will modify this procedure as necessary.

### For the Worker

#### Reporting

Complete a 'Health Declaration' as required by the employer.

Report any illness or symptoms to their supervisor immediately.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment needs to be conducted for the remote locations of your workers. Yes, even YOUR home would need to be considered! Have your workers conduct an assessment of their space and assist them with finding controls to mitigate those risks.

Consider doing a video walkthrough of the workspace by simply having the worker walk you through the workspace using a digital device while remembering to be respectful of their personal space as it is their home as well. This would be voluntary.

For more information on risk assessments, see our 'Risk Assessment' guide document [here](#) or contact Actsafe directly at [info@actsafe.ca](mailto:info@actsafe.ca).

**Below are some common examples of hazards that come with working remotely.**

### Emergency Procedures

Employers need to ensure that there are emergency plans in place such as:

- Does the worker have access to a first aid kit?

This procedure is a recommended guideline only. Consult all applicable rules and regulations.

## Pandemic Operating Procedure

- Where is the location of the nearest hospital and walk-in clinic?
- Fire plan?
- Is there a fire extinguisher?

## Close Contact with Others

While working from home or an isolated location there will still likely be times you have to interact with individuals.

### Controls

- Elimination: Postpone non-essential meetings, deliveries, and outings.
- Admin – Personal hygiene: Hand washing should follow public health guidelines.
- Admin – Screening of people: Do not schedule meetings with people who've been sick or have travelled outside of your region.
- PPE: Wear PPE required by the Employer or health authority such as masks, face shields, gloves.

## Working Alone

Employers are required to create a working alone policy and procedure which should include:

- A clear plan for work hours.
- Check-in system. This can be done in a number of different ways such as by text, app, or communication platform e.g. Slack.

## Mental Wellness

Separating work and home life may be a challenge while both are in the same physical location. Promote mental health resources available to your workers, visitors, and contractors. This may include employee assistance programs, industry resources, and medical resources.

## Ergonomics

Any ergonomic measures you have in place in the workplace should be considered for remote work.

### Controls

- Admin - Allow workers to bring their ergonomic tools home to use (chairs, desks, monitors, etc.).
- Admin - Consider purchasing or renting equipment.

Actsafe's Ergonomic Tips for Working from Home Info Sheet

## EQUIPMENT

Any equipment used in the workplace should be sanitized on a regular basis. Follow the health authority guidelines on the BCCDC website [here](#).

### Suggested:

- Hand soap and paper towels.
- Hand sanitizer.
- Disinfectant spray or wipes.

## SAFE WORK PROCEDURE

Employers will give access to this procedure to the workers and post it where appropriate.

Workers will:

- check-in when they start work.
- notify the employer if they are stepping away for an extended period of time e.g. one hour.
- notify when they have finished their day.
- notify their supervisor or employer of any concerns or workplace incidents.

## SUPERVISION

Employers and supervisors need to follow-up and ensure workers are following the procedure.

## REPORTING

Any concerns or exposure to infected workers should be reported to the supervisor and Joint Health and Safety Committee immediately.

## SUGGESTIONS

Working remotely is a great way to limit workers' exposure. Here are a few other things to consider as we move toward relaunching:

- Conduct virtual team meetings via teleconference to keep workers socially connected.
- Digital communication platforms such as 'Slack' or 'Basecamp' give you a digital record of communications for follow-up.
- Stagger work schedules to reduce the number of workers in the facility. For example, Monday admin, Tuesday technicians, Wednesday box office, etc.