



# Manager's Guide on Human Resources Issues During a COVID-19 Pandemic

October 15, 2021  
Version 1.27

Refer to the [Summary of Updates](#)

**This guide will be updated regularly as scenarios,  
information and guidance evolve.**

Visit [iService.prv/coronavirus](https://www.service.gc.ca/fr/coronavirus) for the latest updates.



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## 1.0 ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide contains information that is subject to change as the situation and guidance evolves.

For ease of reference, key revisions of the most recent version are noted in the table below.

Refer to the [Document Control](#) section of this document for version information and publishing dates.

Key Revisions in this Version
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Please note, the numbering of questions may have changed.</b></p> <p><b>New information:</b></p> <p><b>Updated Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New additions to existing questions are noted in <b>red</b> text</li><li>• Previous additions are noted in <b>green</b> text</li><li>• <a href="#">What type of leave applies for employees who are taking their child or someone they have a duty of care to get the COVID-19 vaccine?</a></li></ul>

## 2.0 PURPOSE

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is responsible for ensuring that the health and safety at work of every person employed by the employer is protected.

The *Manager's Guide on HR Issues During a COVID-19 Pandemic* provides managers with updated and readily accessible information on the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to better support their employees and to maintain a safe and healthy workplace environment. In addition to this guide, supplemental information, including questions and answers, may be posted to the [iService.prv/coronavirus](https://www.service-prv/coronavirus) page, as needed.

The information included in this guide applies to all work locations and all employees within the Department, including Service Canada, the Labour Program and all other service offerings managed within ESDC, as well as every person granted access to the workplace, as applicable.

This guide is a result of cooperative efforts between the Human Resources Services Branch (HRSB), Chief Financial Officer Branch (CFOB) and the Integrity Services Branch (ISB) with guidance provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Health Canada's Public Service Occupational Health Program (PSOHP), Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS), and Public Safety Canada. It provides practical guidelines, questions and answers and annexes.

## 3.0 PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

During a pandemic, employees are reminded to take the following precautionary measures:

- [Wash hands](#) thoroughly in warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer if water and soap are not immediately available;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Practice proper cough and sneeze etiquette. Cover your mouth and nose with your arm or a tissue to reduce the spread of germs. Remember if you use a tissue, to dispose of it as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards;
- Keep common surfaces clean;
- Stay home if you are sick;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Keep a distance of at least 2 arms-length (approximately 2 metres) from others;
- Consider alternative forms of greeting someone, other than shaking hands; and
- Clean and disinfect your workstation regularly.

## 4.0 KEEPING A SAFE DISTANCE AT WORK

Physical distancing is an important step in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

This means making changes in your everyday routine to minimize close contact with others. Here are some simple tips to maintaining your distance at work:

- Keep a distance of at least 2 arms-length (approximately 2 metres) from others.
- Avoid non-essential gatherings where possible.
  - If you must meet, consider virtual meetings or arrange the room to permit the recommended 2-metre distance between participants.
- Consider staggering breaks and lunches to avoid crowding at peak periods in lunchrooms or cafeterias.
- If two or more workstations do not have the recommended distance between them, you should consider using unoccupied workstations or other practical options.
- Avoid common greetings that involve touching, such as handshakes.

If an employee has concerns about maintaining distance at work, they should discuss them with you so that practical solutions can be taken. See the [infographic](#) for other physical distancing tips.

Refer to the [Workplace at a Glance: Quick Checks During a Pandemic](#) tool for practical tips.

## 5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1 Managerial Level

During a pandemic, managing the situation, keeping your employees informed and providing a healthy and safe work environment is key.

Refer to your ESDC [Regional and National contact and support team](#) for specific subject expertise.

### 5.2 Pandemic Related Questions

If you have case specific enquiries regarding an individual or a small group of employees with little to no broader implications for your region or the Department, please submit your request to the [Human Resources Service Centre](#) (HRSC) portal.

If you have region specific enquiries / issues requiring a standard regional approach, please contact your Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC):

Regional Emergency Operations Centres	
<b>Western and Territories</b>	<a href="#">W-T-REOC-CROU-GD</a>
<b>Ontario</b>	<a href="#">ON-REOC-CROU-GD</a>
<b>National Capital Region</b>	<a href="#">NC-NEOC-ESDC-CNOU-EDSC-GD</a>
<b>Quebec</b>	<a href="#">QC-REOC-CROU-GD</a>
<b>Atlantic</b>	<a href="#">ATL-DIST-REOC-CROU</a>

If you have an issue of national significance requiring a department-wide position or an issue of national significance, please contact the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC).

National Emergency Operations Centre				
<b>E-mail address:</b> <a href="#">NEOC-CNOU</a> <b>Phone number:</b> 1-888-567-6033				
If your request is of a <i>time-sensitive nature</i> , please call:				
<b>National Business Continuity Manager</b> <b>Phone:</b> 819-934-0171 <b>Mobile:</b> 613-277-1340	<b>Emergency Response Management</b> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">                     Jennifer Forsythe,                      A/Director  <b>Phone:</b> 819-654-4672  <b>Mobile:</b> 613-282-8745                 </td> <td style="width: 50%;">                     Sylvie Duhaime,                      Senior Manager, Project  <b>Phone:</b> 819-654-4702  <b>Mobile:</b> 819-360-4378                 </td> </tr> </table>		Jennifer Forsythe, A/Director <b>Phone:</b> 819-654-4672 <b>Mobile:</b> 613-282-8745	Sylvie Duhaime, Senior Manager, Project <b>Phone:</b> 819-654-4702 <b>Mobile:</b> 819-360-4378
Jennifer Forsythe, A/Director <b>Phone:</b> 819-654-4672 <b>Mobile:</b> 613-282-8745	Sylvie Duhaime, Senior Manager, Project <b>Phone:</b> 819-654-4702 <b>Mobile:</b> 819-360-4378			

Issues and responses will be tracked for possible use in internal communications such as updating the FAQs and the *Manager's Guide on Human Resources Issues During a COVID-19 Pandemic*.

## 6.0 PRIVACY / PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

During a COVID-19 pandemic, you must balance your responsibilities for the health and safety of your team with your responsibilities for the protection of an employee's personal and/or medical information. Therefore, if you are advised by an employee that they have contracted COVID-19, you must act.

### 6.1.1 As a manager, can I share information about the health of an employee?

There are some considerations that you will need to weigh regarding personal information.

Two possible scenarios exist where you are able to share information about the health of an employee:

- **With consent:** if the employee agrees that you can share information about their condition with others, then this information can be shared.
- **Public interest considerations:** In some very specific cases, if the diagnosed person has come in contact with a specific individual, there might be a cause to share the identity of the diagnosed individual. These cases would be rare and unique.

If the employee does not consent, sharing information in a more general way likely achieves the goal of passing important health information to employees who may have been exposed.

The most important information to share is that "employees may have come in contact with a co-worker with a positive diagnosis and they should be advised to follow the public health advice for their city or region.

If you are pressed on the issue of the identity of the individual, the following response is recommended.

- The person who has tested positive with COVID-19 has not consented to his/her name being released.
- What's most important is that you be informed that one of your co-workers has a positive diagnosis.
- Consequently, it is very important that you take steps to ensure you follow the public health advice for people in your situation.



**6.1.2 If an employee advises you that they believe that they may have been exposed to or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, what are my obligations as a manager to ensure their privacy, while balancing the well-being of the rest of my team?**

- Confirm with the employee if they would mind if the team knows about their diagnosis.
- If they agree to share this information with the team, there is no limitation on informing their colleagues.
- If the employee would like their diagnosis to remain private, proceed with the general lines as noted above.
- The most important thing is to take action to protect other employees. Knowing precisely who has received a diagnosis is not actually crucial to your response.
- In very specific circumstances, there hypothetically could be a situation that would require information about a diagnosis to be shared when the affected individual has not consented. However, these situations would be rare and unique.
- If you think you have a situation that falls into the **Public Interest** category, please consult Privacy Management Division for further advice.

**6.1.3 Can a manager ask an employee if they have a confirmed case of COVID-19?**

- If a manager has reason to believe that an employee may be ill and still is coming to work, it may be a reasonable question to ask given the current situation.
- As the employer, there is a lawful authority under the Public Service Employment Act, associated Treasury Board policies, as well as the Canada Labour Code, Part II to ensure the workplace is safe.
- If the employee indicates a positive diagnosis, then your response should be guided by the previous section.

For further guidance, refer to [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 – Quick Reference Chart](#).

## 7.0 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS)

As a manager, you have considerable responsibilities for ensuring the health and safety of employees. Under the *CLC-II*, you must comply with a list of specific duties. In the context of COVID-19, you are responsible for:

- ensuring that employees are **aware of [known or foreseeable hazards](#)** and what measures are in place to reduce or eliminate the hazard;
- familiarizing yourself with your responsibilities in dealing with the [Internal Complaint Resolution Process](#) and an [employee's Right to Refuse Dangerous Work](#); and
- ensuring that your employees are aware of their three basic rights under the Code: the **Right to Know**, the **Right to Participate** and the **Right to Refuse Dangerous Work**.

A suite of information, tools and guides is available on [iService.prv/ohs](#) to assist you in ensuring a healthy and safe workplace. You can also contact your [Regional Occupational Health and Safety Advisor](#) for advice and guidance.

### 7.1 General Prevention Measures

Preventing workplace accidents and illnesses is a shared responsibility. It is important that all employees stay current on COVID-19 by reviewing the latest departmental information on [iService](#), which also has direct links to the Government of Canada's primary novel coronavirus site on [Canada.ca/coronavirus](#).

Please refer to [EDSC's Guide on Returning to the Workplace](#) for additional information.

- [Personal Preventive Measures](#)
- [The Physical Workplace](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

### 7.2 In the Workplace

During a pandemic, you must exercise all reasonable preventive measures to ensure the health and safety of every employee while at work.

Refer to the [Workplace at a Glance: Quick Checks During a Pandemic](#) tool for practical tips.

In addition to the following questions and answers, please refer to [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 – Quick Reference Chart](#) for a list of workplace OHS scenarios that may require specific actions.

Please refer to the procedures for [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19](#), should COVID-19 present in the workplace.

### **7.2.1 What should an employee do if they are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing?**

If an employee is experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms at home, such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, or pneumonia in both lungs, they should generally not go to work. These employees must advise their team leader or manager of their absence.

Employees who experience these symptoms while at work, should immediately leave the workplace, contact their health care provider or local health authority, and follow-up with their team leader or manager as soon as possible. The manager should request enhanced cleaning services ([Annex F](#)).

However, in certain instances, the manager may use their discretion to allow an employee to continue to report to work (e.g. the employee had previously shared that they have a condition, such as allergies or bronchitis, that results in coughing). Management should be aware that by keeping the employee in the workplace this may increase other employees' anxieties. As such, while maintaining the employee's privacy is of importance, general messaging and reassurance are recommended.

You will advise the employee to keep in regular contact with you, during their absence, in accordance with established office practices.

Prior to returning, employees must contact their manager to discuss reintegration. Employees must not return to work until they are no longer exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, feel well enough to participate in all activities, and/or before a return date has been identified by a public health authority, if applicable.

### **7.2.2 What should an employee do if they observe COVID-19-like symptoms in a colleague?**

Anytime someone has COVID-19-like symptoms, they should generally not be in the workplace. If an employee observes COVID-19-like symptoms in a colleague, they are encouraged to approach their team leader or manager, who should contact the potentially ill employee to discuss their symptoms (i.e. are they feeling ill, are the symptoms related to allergies, asthma, etc.). Should it be determined that the symptoms could be linked to COVID-19, the employee should be directed to go home and to contact their health care provider and local health authority.

The manager should request enhanced cleaning services ([Annex F](#)).

### **7.2.3 Can an employee request to stay home due to a fear of being infected or exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace?**

It is important to note that PHAC and Health Canada are not recommending self-imposed isolation as a preventative measure to COVID-19. Employees are responsible for following their management's directions regarding reporting to work and workplace health procedures in the context of COVID-19. Employees may have

personal circumstances which make them more vulnerable to infection and which may need to be accommodated. Communication between employees and managers is essential.

#### **7.2.4 What if an employee is at work and is not exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, but has concerns for their health and safety?**

Employees who are not exhibiting signs of illness are expected to report to work and are encouraged to address any questions or concerns with their team lead or manager. Employees should also be reminded that the [Employee Assistance Program](#) is available to provide additional psychological support if required.

#### **7.2.5 Are employees expected to complete an injury report or workers' compensation form as a result of becoming ill with COVID-19?**

- A. Injury Report:** If an employee becomes ill with COVID-19 and has accessed the workplace in the 14 days prior to the COVID-19 test or the onset of symptoms, whichever is earlier, you must follow the established steps in the procedures for [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in the Workplace](#).

In such cases, you must complete a Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report (LAB 1070), as the presence of COVID-19 would constitute a hazard in the workplace. The investigation should focus on the hazard in the workplace and the corrective measures to prevent a reoccurrence.

If the employee did not access any workplace in the 14 days prior to the COVID-19 test or onset of symptoms, or if the employee's illness is not linked to, or reported as, a workplace incident, then you are not required to investigate the incident or complete the forms noted above.

- B. Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) Claims:** An employee may submit a claim to their [provincial WCB](#) according to the process in place if they believe they contracted the virus at work or during their work functions.

If the employee submits a claim, the manager must complete and submit an [employer's report](#). Any enquiries on this process can be sent via the [HRSC portal](#) through a General HR Enquiry Form, under Disability Management and Workers Compensation.

Provinces have varied approaches for assessing the COVID-19 claims and claims will be adjudicated on a case-by-case basis.

If employees are unable to work as a result of COVID-19 refer to the Practical Guide on the [Use of Leave With Pay for Other Reasons \(699\)](#), which provides the various scenarios available to manage the situation.

### 7.2.6 What should be done if an employee comes to work or is at work and is demonstrating COVID-19-like symptoms?

If the employee is in the workplace and exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms (i.e. fever, cough, difficulty breathing or pneumonia in both lungs), you should contact the potentially ill employee to discuss their symptoms (i.e. are they feeling ill, are the symptoms related to allergies, asthma, etc.). Should it be determined that the symptoms could be linked to COVID-19, the employee should be directed to go home and to contact their health care provider and local health authority.

You will advise the employee to keep in regular contact with you, during their absence, in accordance with established office practices. Employees must not return to work until they are no longer exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, feel well enough to participate in all activities, and/or before a return date has been identified by a public health authority (if applicable).

### 7.2.7 Is there a requirement to increase the cleaning of an employee's workstation during a pandemic?

Increased cleaning of individual workstations, or of workstations shared by people who are healthy, is not a regular practice. As such, encourage employees to continue to keep their workplaces clean as part of regular general office cleaning practices.

During a pandemic, the department has increased cleaning to equipment in high-touch zones in Service Canada Centres, such as Client Access Workstations and public telephones.

In the case of an employee becoming ill during the day, enhanced workstation cleaning is required and must be requested. Please refer to *Procedures for Requesting Enhanced Disinfecting and Cleaning for Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases* ([Annex F](#)).

### 7.2.8 What do I do if the employee who is exhibiting symptoms, consistent with COVID-19, refuses to leave the office?

The responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all employees is a **shared responsibility** and does not lie solely on the manager. Employees also have a responsibility to take reasonable and necessary precautions to safeguard other employees, in accordance with [CLC-II, subsection 126\(1\)](#).

Symptoms include fever, cough, difficulty breathing or pneumonia in both lungs.

In such a situation, you should explain your obligation and that of the employee to protect all employees and that leaving the workplace is the best approach given the possible risk of spreading the virus.

### 7.3 First-Aid and Transportation of an Employee who Becomes Sick

As a manager, you must ensure that a sufficient number of attendants are available to render first-aid, should an employee become injured or ill at work.

See the [Managing First Aid Attendants During a Pandemic](#) tool for more information.

#### 7.3.1 Should a workplace be closed if there are not enough First Aid Attendants to meet the requirements?

No. An insufficient number of First Aid Attendants is not a valid reason for closing a workplace.

If your work section or workplace is experiencing a shortage of available FAAs, please refer to [OHS Bulletin 20-001](#) for options to address the shortage during the pandemic.

#### 7.3.2 Is the manager/supervisor obligated to pay for transportation of an employee who becomes sick at work?

Yes. When immediate medical attention may be required, the employee must be promptly referred to a medical treatment facility, and the Department must ensure that [suitable transportation and escort](#), if required, is arranged. Any ambulance or other transportation costs will be covered by the department, in accordance with ESDC's [First-Aid Program Guide](#).

Note: The manager with appropriate financial authority delegation will have to complete a [Requisition for Payment form](#) (FIN2865) to arrange payment for all ambulance costs. The appropriate GL Coding to include in the form is 533521.

### 7.4 Isolation, Self-Isolation, Quarantine and Self-Monitoring

#### 7.4.1 What is the difference between isolation, self-isolation, quarantine and self-monitoring?

**Isolation** is recommended for a [symptomatic](#) individual that is suspected of having, or known to have, COVID-19. They are [directed to isolate](#) themselves, by a public health authority, in the home-setting and avoid contact with others until advised.

**Self-isolation** is recommended for an [asymptomatic](#) person when they have a higher risk of exposure to COVID-19, through close contact with a symptomatic person or their body fluids. They are [asked to self-isolate](#) in the home-setting to avoid contact with others.

**Quarantine** is the [imposed](#) separation or restriction of movement of individuals, groups or communities, for a defined period of time and in a location determined by

the public health authority.

**Self-monitoring** means monitoring yourself for fever, cough and difficulty breathing and avoiding places where you cannot easily separate yourself from others if you become ill.

Source: [Community-based measures to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) in Canada](#)

#### **7.4.2 When would an employee be expected to isolate, self-isolate, be quarantined or self-monitor?**

An employee would normally be asked to isolate, self-isolate or self-monitor when recommended to do so by a public health authority, whereas a quarantine would be imposed.

**All travellers returning to Canada should isolate, self-isolate or self-monitor for 14 days upon their return.**

**Refer to the [travel advice](#) section on [Canada.ca/coronavirus](#) for the current restrictions and advisories, or follow the advice of your public health authority.**

Please refer to [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 – Quick Reference Chart](#) for a list of workplace OHS scenarios that may apply.

#### **7.4.3 What steps should one take to limit contact with others?**

- Do not leave home unless absolutely necessary, such as to seek medical care.
- Do not go to work or other public areas and do not use public transportation (e.g., buses, taxis).
- Arrange to have groceries and supplies dropped off at your door to minimize contact.
- If possible, stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom from others in your home.
- If you have to be in contact with others, keep at least 2 metres between yourself and the other person. Keep interactions brief and wear a mask.
- Avoid contact with older adults and with individuals with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.
- Avoid contact with pets if you live with other people who may also touch the pet.

## 7.5 Serving Clients

During a pandemic, ESDC must ensure a safe working environment for employees who provide in-person services to Canadians.

### 7.5.1 What can employees who deliver in person services do to protect themselves?

When engaging with clients at in-person points of service, employees should continue to follow established [general precautionary measures](#). Additional services are in place for Service Canada Centre employees.

### 7.5.2 How can employees keep Client Access Work Stations (CAWS) and biometric equipment safe for clients and employees?

Service Canada Centres will supply disinfectant wipes for clients with instructions in regards to CAWS and biometrics equipment.

### 7.5.3 During a pandemic, what additional steps should managers take to prepare employees to screen incoming clients?

During a pandemic, managers and team leaders of Service Canada Centres must refer to the [Procedures for Triaging Service Canada Centre Clients](#) (shared March 13, 2020) to inform their employees of the enhanced procedures to follow when serving in-person clients.

### 7.5.4 Can an employee refuse to serve a client whom they believe is sick?

Normally, we do not refuse service to clients. During a COVID-19 pandemic, however, as a manager, you must provide your employees with direction on appropriate measures to protect their health and safety and to stop the spread of disease in accordance with the advice from PHAC.

[Posters](#) have been distributed and posted in Service Canada Centres directing clients to access other service channels, such as online or by phone. If clients are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms, or were asked to isolate or self-isolate, they can be directed to return home.

You must continue to remind employees that they should approach you at any time they feel that their health and safety is at risk.



## 7.6 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Please refer to [ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace](#) for additional information.

- [Personal Protective Equipment](#)

## 7.7 Resolving Health and Safety Matters

Resolving health and safety matters is equally important during a pandemic to ensure a healthy and safe workplace. Learn more about [responding to OHS matters](#) on iService.

### 7.7.1 What do I do if an employee who is at work and is not exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, expresses concern for their health and safety?

Employees who are not exhibiting signs of COVID-19 are expected to report to work. Reiterate that ESDC is keeping informed of measures to ensure that the workplace is healthy and safe and that the following simple steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, recommended by PHAC, have been shared with all employees:

- [Wash hands](#) thoroughly in warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer if water and soap are not immediately available;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Practice proper cough and sneeze etiquette. Cover your mouth and nose with your arm or a tissue to reduce the spread of germs. Remember if you use a tissue, to dispose of it as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards;
- Keep common surfaces clean;
- Stay home if you are sick;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Keep a distance of at least 2 arms-length (approximately 2 metres) from others;
- Consider alternative forms of greeting someone, other than shaking hands; and,
- Clean and disinfect your workstation regularly.

If you have COVID-19-like symptoms and are pregnant, have underlying health problems, or if your symptoms get worse, contact your health care provider.

You should remind employees of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselling services available, if required, at 1-800-268-7708 (24/7) or 1-800-567-5803 (TDD).

### 7.7.2 What do I do if I receive an OHS Complaint related to COVID-19?

An employee who believes that there has been a contravention of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II or that there is likely to be an accident or injury to their health arising out of, linked with or occurring in the course of employment, has the right to make a complaint to their supervisor.

You should attempt to resolve the matter by speaking with the employee. You must also consult your [Regional OHS Advisor](#) for guidance.

If you and the employee are not able to resolve the matter, an investigation involving a health and safety committee member or health and safety representative is required, in accordance with the [Internal Complaint Resolution Process](#).

If the parties are unable to resolve the complaint internally, a Labour Program Health and Safety Officer may need to be contacted to investigate the complaint.

## 7.8 Right to Refuse Dangerous Work

While at work, an employee may invoke their right to refuse dangerous work because they have reasonable cause to believe that there is a condition at work that is an imminent danger.

### 7.8.1 Do employees have the right to refuse work if they believe it to be a danger?

Yes. Under the [Canada Labour Code Part II](#) an employee may refuse to use or operate a machine, to work in a place or to perform an activity if the employee, while at work, has reasonable cause to believe that:

- a) the use or operation of a machine or thing constitutes an imminent danger to the employee or another employee; or
- b) a condition exists at work that constitutes an imminent danger to the employee; or
- c) the performance of an activity by the employee constitutes an imminent danger to the employee or to another employee.

### 7.8.2 What steps must be followed if an employee refuses dangerous work?

- a) **Notification:** The Employee must notify you, as the manager, without delay, of the refusal to work and explain the circumstances.

**You must immediately contact your [Regional OHS Advisor](#) for guidance and notify your REOC.**

- b) **Investigation by Employer:** You must investigate the matter in the presence of the employee.
  - (1) If you agree that a danger exists, you shall take immediate action to protect employees from the danger.
  - (2) You must inform the workplace committee (or representative) of the matter and the action taken to resolve it.
- c) **Continued Refusal:** If the employee still feels that the matter is not resolved, they may continue the refusal and report the circumstances, without delay, to you and the workplace health and safety committee or representative.

- d) **Investigation by Committee / Rep:** On being informed, the workplace committee must appoint two of its members (or the representative) to further investigate the matter in the presence of the employee.
- e) **Decision of Employer:** Upon receiving the report of the committee's investigation, you must decide if a danger exists or not and whether it is safe for the employee to return to work.
  - (1) If you agree that a danger exists, you shall take immediate action to protect employees from the danger.
  - (2) You must inform the workplace committee of the matter and the action taken to resolve it.
- f) **Decision of Employee:** If the employee agrees that the matter has been resolved, they must return to work. However, if the employee disagrees, they must inform you and you must contact a [Health and Safety Officer](#) to investigate the matter, by calling **1-800-641-4049** (24 hours, seven days a week).
- g) **Investigation by Labour Program:** A Health and Safety Officer will investigate and inform you of their decision and any necessary follow up actions.
- h) **Further action:** You must inform the committee and the Regional OHS Advisor of the results of the investigation and complete and submit the [Workplace Investigation Report on Refusal to Work](#) (LAB-1184)

*During a pandemic, National or Regional OHS Advisors may be able to carry out the functions of a manager in the investigation or handling of a refusal to work, as needed.*

**For more information, consult:**

- [Regional OHS Advisor](#)
- [ESDC Work Refusal Process During a COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [OHS Procedures on the Right to Refuse Dangerous Work](#)

## 7.9 Vaccinations

For more information, refer to the [COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements in the Federal Public Service](#) section of ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace.

### 7.9.1 Is there a vaccination for COVID-19?

Health Canada has approved certain vaccines for use in Canada. In most cases, provinces and territories are responsible for the detailed vaccination rollout plans for their residents, based on priority high-risk population groups. Vaccination has started and will be expanded to the entire population, free of charge, throughout 2021 as vaccine supply increases.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines, consult [Overview: Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) vaccines - Canada.ca](#).

## 8.0 LABOUR RELATIONS

### 8.1 Change of Duties and Workplace

#### 8.1.1 In the event of an emergency, can managers require employees to perform tasks outside of their regular duties or work outside of their headquarters area?

Management has the right to assign duties, as deemed necessary, including tasks outside of the employee's regular duties and outside of their headquarters area. Every step should be taken to ensure that, where employees are being asked to perform a task, they are:

- properly trained to perform the assigned duties;
- delegated appropriate authority;
- informed of hazards and measures in place to reduce or eliminate the hazard;
- provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment (if applicable);
- not being put at undue risk;
- maintaining their current salary level if the reassigned duties are at a lower classification level; and
- adequately compensated if the reassigned duties are at a higher classification.

If the employee has a Duty to Accommodate measure in place, this must be considered for the tasks they are required to perform.

#### 8.1.2 If an employee is asked to report to another work location within their headquarters area (within 16 KM of workplace), will the department pay for parking?

The [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#) applies when traveling within the employee's headquarters area (within 16 KM of workplace).

Prior to traveling, the manager must authorize the mode of transportation (e.g. bus, taxi, private vehicle) based on cost, duration, convenience, safety and practicality.

When an employee is authorized to use their private vehicle, parking will be reimbursed as follows:

- If temporary change in work location is **less than 30 consecutive calendar days**, parking will be reimbursed.
- If temporary change in work location **is 30 calendar days or more:**
  - a) parking is not reimbursed if the employee received 30 days prior notice of the change in workplace; otherwise;
  - b) parking is reimbursed for a maximum of 60 calendar days.
- If the temporary change is for an **unknown period** and no notice has been provided, parking is reimbursed for a maximum of 60 calendar days.

Note: Receipts are only required for expenses in excess of \$12.

For additional information, managers and employees may refer to Sections [1.9](#) and [3.1.11 and Appendix B and C](#) of the [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#). It is also suggested to liaise with the Departmental Travel Coordinator through the [IDTC Request Gateway](#) before making any arrangements.

For reimbursement of such costs, please refer to the [Travel](#) section on iService.

### **8.1.3 If an employee is asked to report to their work location, will the department reimburse transportation costs?**

Employees are responsible for the costs and means of transportation to and from their permanent place of work, as per the Terms and Conditions of employment. As such, employees can choose the mode of transportation that best suits their needs.

At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, due to reduced availability of public transportation and safety concerns, a temporary exception was made where under specific circumstances, employees providing a critical function/service could be reimbursed for some transportation costs. The manager was responsible to preauthorize the mode of transportation (e.g. bus, taxi, private vehicle) based on reasonability of costs, duration, convenience, safety and practicality. As services resume with public health and safety measures in place, reimbursements for these transportation costs will cease effective September 1, 2020. Managers can determine if these reimbursements should cease prior to that date, based on operational and geographic circumstances.

### **8.1.4 If an employee is asked to report to another building, within their headquarters area (within 16 KM of workplace), will the department provide the transportation or pay for travel to this new location?**

The duration of the workplace change and the advance notification will determine the travel expenses that will be reimbursed in accordance with the [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#):

*[1.9.1](#) When an employee is asked to report from a permanent workplace to a temporary workplace for a period of less than 30 consecutive calendar days, the provisions of this directive shall apply.*

*[1.9.2](#) When an employee is asked to report from a permanent workplace to a temporary workplace, for a period of 30 consecutive calendar days or more, the provisions of this directive shall apply unless the employee is notified, in writing, 30 calendar days in advance of the change in workplace. In situations where the employee is not notified of a change of workplace in writing, the provisions of the directive shall apply for the duration of the workplace change up to a maximum of 60 calendar days.*

If the conditions of 1.9.2 are not met, transportation shall be provided to the temporary workplace, or the kilometric rate paid for the distance between the home

and the temporary workplace, or between the permanent workplace and the temporary workplace, whichever is less.

It is also suggested to liaise with the Departmental Travel Coordinator before making any arrangements.

For reimbursement of such costs, please refer to the [Travel](#) section on iService.

### **8.1.5 Due to the use of the departmental fleet of vehicles being suspended, can critical employees be reimbursed for the use of a personal vehicle or a rental car to perform critical duties?**

Should an employee who provides a critical function/service require the use of a vehicle to perform governmental critical duties, the cost will be reimbursed. The use of a personal vehicle should be considered over other options, including rental cars.

Prior to traveling, the manager must authorize the mode of transportation based on reasonability of costs, duration, convenience, safety and practicality.

For additional information, managers and employees may refer to Section 3.1.11 and Appendix B of the National Joint Council Travel Directive for eligible expenses and kilometric rates. For additional questions, please contact the Gateway for Travel Support or call the ESDC Travel Helpline 1-855-684-7827 (option 1).

## **8.2 Acting Pay**

### **8.2.1 When should acting pay be provided to employees?**

Most job descriptions expect a certain percentage of work to be performed under other related duties and as such would be considered to be at level to the employee's substantive level. Managers are encouraged to discuss this with their employees and to seek advice from their HR Advisor should the need arise.

Acting pay should be provided to employees who are requested to perform duties at a higher level than their substantive position, for the duration of the acting period, in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate collective agreement and/or terms and conditions of employment.

### **8.2.2 Can employees be required to perform duties at a lower level?**

Yes, employees can be required to perform duties at a lower level than their substantive position. However, they will continue to receive their regular salary for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 8.3 Hours of Work

### 8.3.1 Are managers authorized to change their employees' hours of work?

Managers have the right to assign hours of work as per the provisions of the appropriate collective agreement and/or terms and conditions of employment. In addition, as a precautionary measure, management may stagger the hours of work of their employees. Managers should discuss any changes to the hours of work with their employees.

Managers are also responsible for ensuring that employees are not put at any additional risk as a result of a change in their work schedule.

## 8.4 Overtime

### 8.4.1 Can managers require employees to work overtime?

Managers have the authority to request employees to work overtime due to operational requirements. In such circumstances, options such as voluntary overtime or standby status should first be considered. Should an employee be required or volunteer to work overtime, the appropriate provisions of their collective agreement and/or their terms and conditions of employment, would apply.

### 8.4.2 Can overtime be assigned to an employee during the same day on which Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) has been granted?

An employee could be authorized to work in excess of their scheduled hours if they have not been granted Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) on the same day.

## 8.5 Office Closures

### 8.5.1 Who decides if an office should be closed?

The decision to close offices during a pandemic rests with the Chief Operating Officer of Service Canada in consultation with ADMs and on the advice of HRSB, CFOB, PHAC, TBS, PSPC and other stakeholders. Office closure scenarios for COVID-19 are outlined in [procedures for Responding to Suspected and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in the Workplace](#).

### 8.5.2 What happens to employees, casuals, students, and terms of less than three months, in case of an office closure?

In the event of a temporary office closure, you are strongly encouraged to consider alternative work arrangements. Employees who have remote access (e.g. Virtual Private Network) should work remotely. For those who do not have remote access,

training through Saba and/or GC Campus should be considered.

If remote work is not possible, all affected employees (including casuals, students, terms of less than three months and part-time workers) should continue to be paid for their regularly scheduled hours of work during the period of these office closures. Employees in acting situations at the time of the office closures continue to be paid at their acting level.

### **8.5.3 What happens to temporary agency personnel and contractors in case of an office closure?**

In the event of an office closure, temporary agency personnel and contractors should contact their employer to obtain further information and clarification on their individual situation. The obligations of the department to the temporary agency or the contractor, if any, must be determined in accordance with the contract for services.

### **8.5.4 As a manager, if I instruct an employee not to report to work due to an office closure, does the employee have to submit a leave form?**

No. Employees are not required to submit leave forms for periods where management has suspended normal business operations. This is not limited to indeterminate employees, but also includes employees hired on a term basis, casual employees and students.

This does not apply to temporary agency personnel and contractors. They should contact their agency for further information and clarification of their situation.

### **8.5.5 If employees use the daycare that is in a government building that is presently closed, will the department reimburse daycare costs?**

No. Daycare costs would not be reimbursed. The employer is not responsible for any costs associated with daycare. In addition, employees are responsible to make alternative day care arrangements during a COVID-19 pandemic.

## **8.6 Critical Services**

### **8.6.1 What is a critical service?**

A critical service is a service, which if compromised in terms of availability or integrity, would result in a high degree of injury to the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Canadians, or to the effective functioning of the Government of Canada and must be continuously delivered (has no or very limited downtime). Source: Public Safety Canada



### **8.6.2 Is ESDC still focused on only delivering critical services?**

No. While ESDC has reactivated most of its services, the department continues to prioritize activities focused on delivering critical services to Canadians.

This means that some employees will need to be in the workplace while others will continue to work remotely. At this time, **access to our workplaces will continue to be restricted to employees providing critical services** who are not able to carry out their work remotely and are approved to be in the physical workplace.

Please note that employees who are providing non-critical services may be reallocated to assist with critical services as required.

### **8.6.3 What direction should be given to employees who are providing non-critical services?**

Employees who are performing non-critical functions/services are not expected to report to the workplace, and managers must consider flexible work arrangements (e.g. remote work; training through Saba and/or GC Campus; other work that can be performed off network) for these employees.

In the event that an employee providing non-critical services is not able to work remotely as per the above guidelines, Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) may apply, following consultation with Labour Relations. However, the employee must remain available as they may be reallocated to assist with critical services or in the event that their work duties change from non-critical to critical.

### **8.6.4 If an employee is asked to use their personal phone, will the department reimburse long distance costs?**

For more information on supplies and expenses for employees working remotely, please refer to [Furniture, Equipment, and Ergonomics -FAQs](#) and [ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace](#).

### **8.6.5 If an employee is asked to work from home, will the department reimburse the internet costs?**

For more information on supplies and expenses for employees working remotely, please refer to [Furniture, Equipment, and Ergonomics -FAQs](#) and [ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace](#).

### **8.6.6 If an employee is asked to work from home, will the department reimburse the cost for supplies (e.g. paper, pens, etc.)?**

For more information on supplies and expenses for employees working remotely, please refer to [Furniture, Equipment, and Ergonomics -FAQs](#) and [ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace](#).

## **8.7 Alternative Work Arrangements / Telework / Remote Work / Hoteling**

Refer to the [Ergonomic Tips for Working from Home](#) tool for practical tips.

### **8.7.1 What is the difference between telework and remote work?**

Telework is a flexible work arrangement that adheres to the Treasury Board Directive on Telework and subject to specific standards that must be included in a telework agreement. Telework is a voluntary arrangement where employees have pre-approval to carry out some or all of their work duties from a telework location on a full-time basis, part-time basis or on an ad-hoc basis.

Remote work is a term used to describe work being accomplished in a remote location, which may be used as a temporary measure during unforeseeable circumstances, such as pandemics, states of emergencies and inclement weather. The current unique and unprecedented situation is best described as working remotely.

### **8.7.2 Should variable hours (i.e. compressed schedule) be approved or continued if the employee is using Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699)?**

Ongoing discussions should occur between managers and their employees to determine if flexible working arrangements (i.e. compressed schedule) can be facilitated. Managers should take in consideration a number of factors such the employee's individual circumstances, past practices and operational requirements.

Both managers and employees share the responsibility of minimizing absences from work in order to minimize the need for Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699). Employees must make sincere efforts to mitigate the negative and unintended consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and routinely communicate these efforts to their managers. For more information, please consult the infographic on [Variable Hours and Leave with Pay for Other Reasons \(699\)](#).

### **8.7.3 Can a manager approve an employee's request for hoteling?**

Yes. Hoteling situations, or allowing an employee to work from another ESDC office, should be permitted where it is deemed as an appropriate measure during a pandemic. Hoteling allows direct access to the departmental network and reduces demand on the use of the Department's IT network infrastructure capacity.

#### **8.7.4 Can I approve an employee's request to telework?**

As employees are returning to the workplace, they may request to telework. As such, normal business practices are to be followed and managers must review and approve, where appropriate, any request to telework.

#### **8.7.5 During a pandemic, could a telework situation under a Duty to Accommodate (DTA) be affected due to ESDC's IT network infrastructure?**

Yes. To ensure the continued service delivery, priority is given to employees who perform a critical function. As such, you would be required to review the Duty to Accommodate situation and determine what, if any, duties the employee could continue to perform without a VPN access (e.g. Saba and GC Campus are accessible outside of the departmental network).

If management determines that all duties of the telework employee require remote access and no other alternative solutions to address the Accommodation are available, Leave With Pay for Other Reasons (699) may apply, following consultations with Labour Relations, until the restrictions are lifted.

#### **8.7.6 Can employees work on sensitive / protected / classified information while teleworking?**

Employees who telework can only work on information up to Protected B and cannot work with Protected C or Classified information at their telework location.

Managers must refer to the [Departmental Telework Directive](#) regarding employees who handle personal citizen information and who wish to telework.

Any Protected B information (electronic or paper) must be handled at the telework site in accordance with the [Information Classification Tool](#).

Teleworking employees must also complete the [Telework Security Attestation Form](#) prior to entering into a telework agreement with their Manager.

Managers should assist employees on the aspects of safe custody and control of sensitive information, and make the necessary arrangements for employees to meet their obligations, when working away from the designated workplace.

For more information, refer to [Security Measures and Personal Safety while Teleworking](#) or contact your [Regional Security Officer](#).

#### **8.7.7 How do I Equip Employees to Work from Home?**

For more information on supplies and expenses for employees working remotely, please refer to [Furniture, Equipment, and Ergonomics -FAQs](#) and [ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace](#).

### **8.7.8 What if an employee working from home is unable to connect remotely via VPN or AppGate?**

#### **a) What steps should employees working from home take to connect remotely?**

If an employee who has the necessary tools to connect is unable to access the network via VPN or AppGate:

- The employee should try to reboot the computer and try to reconnect to VPN or AppGate.
- If the employee is unable to connect, the employee should visit the [external web page](#) for self-service support. If the problem persists, they should call the National Service Desk (NSD) at 1-800-268-0408. Hours of operation for the NSD have been extended (6 a.m. to 11 p.m. EDT Monday to Friday and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EDT Saturdays and Sundays). If the employee cannot reach the NSD by phone they can submit the request by email at [NSD-ESDC-COVID19-ISON-EDSC-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:NSD-ESDC-COVID19-ISON-EDSC-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca).

#### **b) How can an employee access the departmental network through AppGate or AppGate SDP if their office computer is shut down?**

For an employee to connect to the departmental network using AppGate or AppGate SDP from their home computer, their office computer must be powered on.

If an employee's office computer is shut down, the fastest solution is to ask someone in the office to start the computer. The employee should speak with their manager to identify someone who is at the office location or can go there to start the computer manually.

If no one is available, a National Service Desk (NSD) technician may be able to start the computer remotely or manually. The quickest way to get NSD help is for the manager to [submit a request online](#) (the employee or a delegate may open the ticket). Alternatively, NSD can be reached at 1-800-268-0408. Please include the following information in the request:

- employee's work email address;
- employee's office computer number; and
- employee's contact telephone number.

If the NSD cannot start the work computer, a technician will notify the person who

opened the ticket.

### **8.7.9 What direction should be provided to employees working from home when they are unable to connect remotely via VPN or AppGate?**

#### **For employees providing critical services:**

If the employee is unable to connect after following the instructions from [What steps should employees working from home take to connect remotely?](#) and [How can an employee access the departmental network through AppGate if their office computer is shut down?](#), the employee must contact their manager to advise them that they are unable to connect and the manager will issue instructions to the employee as to whether:

- They should continue trying to connect and for how long;
- They should be reporting to work in person; and/or,
- They should remain at home and do training on SABA, or perform other work which does not require access to the network.

In making this determination, the manager should take into account the following considerations:

- Whether the connection issue is limited to remote connections or if network connection issues are present in the office as well.
- The time of day the connection issues occurred with respect to the employee's hours of work (i.e. if towards the end of the employee's workday, the employee may not be able to present themselves to the office before the end of their workday).
- Whether there are Duty to Accommodate elements with respect to the employee (i.e. if the employee requires accommodations, are the measures in place in the office).
- Whether appropriate training is available for the employee to follow.

The manager must ensure the continuing health and safety of employees (e.g. compliance with the working alone guidelines, ensuring social distancing in the office, etc.). If the employee does not want to report to the office, they can request annual leave. The manager will need to decide whether operational requirements permit for the employee to be on annual leave that day.

The delay between the lost connection and the connection at the office or resume connection at home may be covered by Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699), following consultation with Labour Relations.

#### **For employees providing non-critical services:**

The employee must stay at home and try to work on projects offline or work on training via SABA. Otherwise, Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) may apply, following consultation with Labour Relations.

If the employee is reassigned to critical functions at any point, they must follow the steps identified for critical employees.

#### **8.7.10 What provisions are in place to address the reimbursement of parking fees while employees work from home due to emergency situations, such as the current pandemic?**

In accordance with the Custodial Parking Policy and Procedure, PSPC provides parking to meet client departments' minimum operational requirements as well as any additional operational requirements in order to support clients' mandated program requirements. The policy and the procedure do not provide direction on how contracted parking operators should offer services to employees. Please note that PSPC is consulting with TB on this subject and there is no timeline for a response. In the meantime the following information is applicable. Employees will be advised of any developments.

The Custodial Parking Policy and Procedures do not address the provision of reimbursements in general or due to emergency situations. As each circumstance is unique to individual agreements with multiple parking operators across the country, PSPC is advising that employees who have concerns regarding their monthly parking fees discuss the matter directly with their parking operator. In leased buildings, employees who contract parking directly with the Landlord (or the Landlord's parking operator) must contact the building parking operator for information. For those employees working in NCR and who utilize parking managed by Impark, ESDC has confirmed with Impark that at this time employees cannot suspend their parking but can only cancel and should they cancel, they could be placed at the bottom of the wait list for a parking spot in the future.

#### **8.7.11 What documents are required for employees working remotely?**

Employees working remotely are expected to maintain a secure work environment which includes ensuring that security and health and safety requirements are met. They must ensure the safeguarding of government information and follow proper security practices when using IT equipment and departmental network.

As such, employees who are working remotely must complete the following:

1. The new PeopleSoft Telework Agreement Module: Employees are asked to capture information regarding the remote work arrangement using this module and to attest to the Remote Work / Telework Security Attestation Form and the Health & Safety Checklist that is part of the module. This also applies to employees who already have completed or renewed the paper and/or electronic version of these forms. A [guide](#) is available to help managers and employees enter the necessary information and effectively navigate through the steps.

**Note:** Considering that the definition of remote work differs from that of telework, employees who are completing the module in PeopleSoft, in the

context of working remotely due to the pandemic, are asked to select the "Working Remotely-Employer Rqst" option as the reason for teleworking and to disregard any references made to teleworking.

It is important to note that data and addresses that are included in the teleworking module remain exclusively within that module. The data contained in the telework module is not transferred externally to the Government Electronic Directory Services (GEDS) site or any other databases and as such remains protected within the telework module.

Employees who do not have access to PeopleSoft can complete the following electronic version of these forms. These forms must be completed, signed and kept by both the employee and manager. You might receive an error message when clicking on the links. If so, please be sure to [clear your cookies via your web browser](#).

- [Remote Work / Telework Security Attestation Form](#);
- [Remote Work / Telework Occupational Health and Safety Attestation Form](#); and,
- [Loan of Departmental Equipment Form \(PDF, 96 KB\) \(opens new window\)](#): This form must be completed to identify all departmental assets that are provided for use while performing their duties at a remote location. This includes all departmental equipment and assets that have been borrowed from the department (e.g. monitors, laptops, cell phones, office chairs, etc.). This form must be updated each time there is a change of equipment used remotely or a change in the remote work location. A copy of the completed form is to be kept by both the employee and the manager.

#### **8.7.12 If an employee is currently working from home, can a manager approve a request to work from a secondary telework location?**

In the current context, since employees' homes have become their primary work locations, secondary locations **within Canada** can be considered in the same way as conventional ad-hoc telework requests – voluntary in nature and at the employee's request. Employees wishing to telework from a secondary location are responsible to cover any costs associated with it.

Prior to approving the request, managers should take the following into consideration:

- The secondary telework location must be suitable from an ergonomic perspective. The manager should take into account whether the employee currently has any ergonomic equipment adjustments at their primary working location (their home) and whether the employee can achieve the same set up at the secondary telework location.

- The employee must be able to ensure the safeguarding of government information and follow proper security practices when using IT equipment and the departmental network.
- The manager and employee should discuss any potential and foreseeable network connectivity issues and discuss the proper protocol to follow should connection issues arise.
- If applicable, management and employees must be aware of and discuss any restrictions/conditions for interprovincial travel that may require the employee to place themselves in quarantine upon return from their secondary telework location. It is not recommended to approve the telework request in situations where this would prevent the employee from reporting to work upon their return.
- The manager and employee must discuss what equipment the employee will be permitted to take to the secondary telework location. While this may depend on the type of work to be done, in general, this should be limited to the laptop issued to the employee (if applicable). The employee remains responsible for safely transporting the equipment to the secondary telework location.

To limit the administrative burden and given the current context, a telework agreement form is not necessary at this time. However, employees must complete the following forms for the secondary telework location:

- a new [Remote Work / Telework Occupational Health and Safety Attestation Form](#);
- a new [Remote Work / Telework Security Attestation form](#); and
- a new [Loan of Departmental Equipment Form \(PDF, 96 KB\)](#) (if applicable).

Furthermore, the request and approval must be captured in an email between the employee and the manager, which should also include the address of the second telework location for health and safety purposes. These type of arrangements are subject to regular review and can be discontinued at management's or employee's request.

### **8.7.13 Can employees claim a deduction for their home office expenses and what is required from managers?**

Employees may be able to claim a deduction for home office expenses. This deduction is claimed on the personal income tax return and reduces the amount of income tax paid.

Canada Revenue Agency

Due to the complexity of the Income Tax Act, and the fact that each telework situation is unique, employees should contact the [Canada Revenue Agency \(CRA\)](#) if they have



questions. Employees can also find relevant information on the Canada Revenue Agency website, [Home office expenses for employees](#).

Employees who meet the CRA eligibility criteria have the choice between two methods to calculate their deduction for home office expenses:

1. The new temporary flat rate method which does not require receipts nor a signed form from the employer.

or

2. The detailed method which requires a signed [Form T2200S](#) from their manager. This form is a simplified version of Form T2200 if employees worked from home in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and choose to use the detailed method to calculate their home office expenses.

In this situation, a Manager is considered as someone that approves leave and has knowledge of the employee's work situation. This situation does not require the Manager to have financial or human resources delegation. **Of note:**

- The employee must complete Part A - Employee Information
- The Manager must complete and signed Part B - Conditions on Employment
  1. *Did this employee work from home due to COVID-19?*  
Answer **Yes** if the employee worked from home in 2020.
  2. *Did you or will you reimburse this employee for any of their home office expenses?*  
Answer **No** if the employee was reimbursed for a chair and/or desk as these are not considered home office expenses. Or **Yes**, if the employee was reimbursed by the employer for other home office expenses such as internet.
  3. *Was the amount included on this employee's T4 slip?*  
Answer **No** in most cases but may vary depending on the answer to the previous question.
- The Manager must complete and sign the Employer Declaration section. The procedure on how to add a digital signature on a PDF file can be found at the following link: [Digital Signatures — How to Guide](#).

Revenu Quebec

Due to the complexity of the Income Tax Act, and the fact that each telework situation is unique, employees residing in the province of Quebec are invited to consult the Revenu Quebec website, [COVID-19: FAQ for individuals](#).

Employees who meet the Revenue Quebec's eligibility criteria have the choice between two methods for calculating the home office deduction:

1. The **new temporary fixed rate method** which does not require receipts or a form signed by the employer. Employees only need to complete Parts 1 and 2 of the Expenses Related to Working Remotely Because of the COVID-19 ([TP-59.S-V](#)) form and attach it to their tax return.

Or

2. The **detailed method** which requires employees to complete Parts 1 and 3 of the Expenses Related to Working Remotely Because of the COVID-19 ([TP-59.S-V](#)) form along with the General Employment Conditions ([TP-64.3-V](#)) form completed and signed by their manager.

In this situation, a manager is considered as someone who approves leave and has knowledge of the employee's work situation. This situation does not require the Manager to have financial or human resources delegation. Please note that for the [TP-64.3-V](#) form:

- a. The employee must complete Part 1 – Identification of the employee
- b. The manager must complete:
  1. Section 2- (please note that the identification number and file fields should be left blank)
  2. Section 3.1 by answering the following question:

**Did the employee's duties and employment contract require the employee to incur expenses to earn employment income or to incur expenses related to working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Answer **Yes** if the employee worked from home in 2020 and then indicate :

- The employee's period of employment which is the period of time the employee was employed by the employer in 2020 (including the period of working from home).
- The employee's job title.

Sections 3.2 to 3.5 do not need to be completed, go directly to section 3.6 and sign section 4.

3. Section 3.6 by answering the following questions:

- I. **Was the employee required to maintain a home office due to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Answer **Yes** if the employee worked from home in 2020 due to COVID-19.

**II. Did the employee have to pay for supplies used directly in carrying out his or her duties?**

Answer **No** if the employee was reimbursed for a chair and/or desk as these are not considered home office expenses or **Yes** if the employee paid for office supplies (paper, pencils, ink cartridges, etc.)

**III. Did you or will you reimburse the employee for home office expenses or supplies?**

Answer **No** in most cases unless reimbursement was made for internet or supplies as an example.

**If yes, are the amounts reimbursed to the employee included in box A of the RL-1 slip?**

Answer **No**.

4. Sign Section 4.

**8.7.14 Can a manager approve an employee's request to telework outside of Canada?**

The decision to allow or not to allow an employee to telework out of the country will be at the discretion of the employee's **Assistant Deputy Minister** after considering all of the risks, and/or recommendations provided by Security, Labor Relations and Occupational Health and Safety in the overall assessment of the request.

Refer to [Foreign Telework Requests - Procedures](#) for more information.

**8.8 Leave Provisions**

For assistance in applying leave provisions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to prepare for possible sensitive discussions with employees, managers are encouraged to refer to the [Practical Guide for Managers - Use of Leave with Pay for Other Reasons \(699\)](#).

Prior to approving or denying a request for Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699), and to review any ongoing situations requiring this type of leave, the manager must consult Labour Relations through the [Human Resources Service Centre](#).

### 8.8.1 How should leave requests be managed during a COVID-19 pandemic?

Leave situations must be managed on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the individual circumstances of the employee. Where employees are unable to report to work due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they must inform their manager of their inability to work and seek approval of the appropriate leave. Please review the [Practical Guide for Managers - Use of Leave with Pay for Other Reasons \(699\)](#) and consult Labour Relations through the [Human Resources Service Centre](#).

### 8.8.2 In situations where Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) has been granted, should the leave be entered into myEMS (PeopleSoft)?

Once it has been determined that Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) applies, managers are asked to track it for all employees by identifying the number of hours of leave taken daily by each employee in each of the following sub categories Please refer to the new [PSGuide topic](#) for detailed steps on how to input this leave:

- **COVID Illness:**
  - The employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 or displays COVID-19 symptoms. All options should have been considered and relevant paid leave used.
  - Testing for public health purposes (not by personal choice).
  - Period of infection/isolation due to public health request (not related to personal travel).
- **COVID Family care:**
  - The employee is caring for a child or dependant as a result of school, daycare or daycare centre and camp closures including: lack of space, exposure to COVID-19; or the need for the child or dependant to be isolated and no alternatives are available;
  - The employee is caring for a child or family member who is ill from COVID-19.

In all cases, all options should have been considered and appropriate leave with pay used.
- **COVID Technology:** The employee is unable to work due to a lack of access to the required technology. This includes a lack of VPN access or lack of work equipment/tools required to perform the duties from home.
- **COVID Work Limitation:** The employee is unable to work due to limitations related to network access relative to an organization's Business Continuity Plan, or access restrictions for employees performing non-critical functions.
- **COVID High Risk:** The employee is at high risk for severe illness or living with someone who is at high risk for severe illness should they contract COVID-19, as [described](#) by the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the employee is unable to work remotely.

**8.8.3 My employee's remote work location is located in a different province than their office location, what provincial/civic holiday are they entitled to?**

Designated paid holidays are outlined in an employee's collective agreement. Entitlements should not change even though some employees are working remotely. As such, employees remain entitled to a provincial/civic holiday recognized in the province where their position is located in a normal work situation and not during remote work.

**8.8.4 Are casual employees, students, and term employees of less than three months entitled to Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699)?**

While students, casual employees and term employees of less than three months are not eligible for Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699), they may be eligible for the [Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit](#) or [Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit](#).

**8.8.5 Should a medical certificate be requested to substantiate a request for leave due to illness?**

Although managers may require a medical certificate, consideration must be given to the fact that during the COVID-19 pandemic, physicians may not be readily available to provide medical certificates to justify absences or returns to work. In the absence of a medical certificate, you should consult your employee to determine a time frame for returning to work.

For long term sick absences, where the employee is currently receiving disability benefits through an Insurance provider, there is no need for the employee to provide a medical certificate to justify their absences. Being in receipt of disability benefits is sufficient for a justification. In terms of an employee returning from the workplace after a long term sick leave, managers must obtain medical information either from the treating physician or the disability insurance provider to confirm that the employee is fit to return to the workplace and to indicate the date of the return to work.

**8.8.6 Can an employee experiencing stress or anxiety as a direct consequence of COVID-19 and unable to perform their duties for those reasons be granted Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699)?**

An employee experiencing stress or anxiety as a direct consequence of COVID-19 and, unable to perform their duties for those reasons, should request sick leave (with or without pay).

### **8.8.7 In the absence of a medical certificate confirming a return to work, when can an employee who has been absent due to a COVID-19 related illness return to work?**

According to current PHAC information, it is believed that the contagious period is for fourteen days before the onset of symptoms and continues for approximately seven days after symptoms have started. The time it takes between being infected and experiencing symptoms is between two and fourteen days. More research is being done on how long a person can be infectious (i.e. be able to spread the virus to others).

If the absence is due to COVID-19, you will advise the employee to keep in regular contact with you, during their absence, in accordance with established office practices.

Prior to returning, employees must contact their manager to discuss reintegration. Employees must not return to work until they are no longer exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, feel well enough to participate in all activities, and/or before a return date has been identified by a public health authority, if applicable.

### **8.8.8 What is the difference between a family status obligation and a preference?**

When employees are requesting accommodation involving their family members, it is important to distinguish between a need that arises due to an obligation and one that arises due to a preference. Jurisprudence has established a test ([Johnstone test](#)) that must be met for a circumstance to be considered a family status obligation, which includes the following criteria:

1. a child is under the employee's care and supervision;
2. a childcare obligation engages the employee's legal responsibility for that child, as opposed to a personal choice;
3. reasonable efforts were made to meet those childcare obligations through reasonable alternative solutions, and that no such alternative solution is reasonably accessible; and
4. the impugned workplace rule interferes in a manner that is more than trivial or insubstantial with the fulfillment of a childcare obligation.

If the above criteria is met, the Duty to Accommodate is triggered and managers are encouraged to discuss the situation with their Human Resources Advisors in order to identify appropriate accommodation measures.

Should the above criteria not be met, then the circumstance will be considered to be the employee's preference and would fall outside of the Duty to Accommodate

process. Nevertheless, managers are encouraged to discuss appropriate options with the employee.

#### **8.8.9 Can an employee currently on LWOP for care of immediate family return to work sooner than initially agreed upon?**

Most collective agreements contain a provision for early return from leave without pay for care of family. The leave may end early so as long as it does not end in additional cost to the employer. Given that ESDC is looking to bring on additional resources, management should consider this option.

However, prior to agreeing to an early return to work, management must discuss the employee's situation and examine the reasons motivating the employee request. Should the intent be for the employee to come back early from LWOP and receive other paid leave to care for immediate family, this would result in additional cost to the department. Furthermore, the update provided by OCHRO regarding [employee illness and leave](#) is clear, in all circumstances, other paid leave **should only be used in cases where an employee would be available for work if not for COVID-19**. Employees who are unavailable because they are on vacation or other leave must continue to claim the appropriate leave credits.

#### **8.8.10 What type of leave applies for employees who are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine during working hours?**

Employees, **including students**, who wish or need to be vaccinated should do so outside working hours. If they must be absent during working hours to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine (for first and second dose), Time off Work with Pay for Medical Appointment (698) should be granted **given the exceptional circumstances linked to the pandemic and** since this is considered as an appointment of a preventative nature. Employees are granted up to half a day, proportionate to the number of hours worked in their regular workday. The time reporting code for this type of appointment is 698 - Other Paid Leave – Medical Dental Appt.

This absence should not be taken under code 699 leave.

#### **8.8.11 What type of leave applies for employees who are experiencing side effects due to the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Employees who are experiencing side effects due to the COVID-19 vaccine and are unable to work should be granted sick leave.

#### **8.8.12 What type of leave applies for employees who are taking their child or someone they have a duty of care to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Employees should first try to attend the appointment outside of working hours or consider using flexible hours to make up the time taken. If they must be absent during

working hours to take their child or someone they have a duty of care to get the COVID-19 vaccine (for first and second dose), they should use Leave with Pay for Family-Related Responsibilities.

Once all options have been considered and the employee does not have any Leave with Pay for Family-Related Responsibilities credits left, Leave With Pay for Other Reasons (699) may be granted for a reasonable time period.

## 8.9 Vacation Leave

### 8.9.1 I approved vacation leave for an employee and the office was subsequently closed (or operations were suspended). Does the employee still have to use vacation days?

Yes. Although employees are generally permitted to cancel or shorten their approved vacation leave and work instead, this should not be done for the sole purpose of obtaining other paid leave due to office closures. If an employee's annual leave was previously approved before the building closed down, they had already planned on not reporting to work during that time. Therefore, the employee would not be affected by the office closure. This also applies to any other type of pre-approved leave.

## 8.10 Volunteerism

### 8.10.1 How should management address leave requests to volunteer?

There are significant numbers of people who provide services to the public on a voluntary basis, through community-based service organizations outside the federal public service. During a COVID-19 pandemic, employees may ask for time off to provide volunteer services. In these cases, employees should be on an authorized leave, either with or without pay, in accordance with their collective agreement and/or terms and conditions of employment.

You must ensure that employees are:

- excused from their regular work;
- on an authorized leave; and
- aware that they are not performing their volunteer functions on behalf of ESDC.

## 8.11 Cancellation of Leave

### 8.11.1 If leave has already been approved, can it be withdrawn?



Yes. Management has the authority to cancel leave due to operational requirements.

During a COVID-19 pandemic, your decision to cancel annual leave is to be taken after all other options have been given due consideration. There are provisions in most collective agreements and/or terms and conditions of employment that the employer may be liable for expenses incurred if annual leave is cancelled. In such a case, the employee must make every reasonable attempt to mitigate losses. Any portion of annual leave not taken is returned to the employee's leave bank.

### **8.11.2 Should employees be permitted to cancel upcoming annual leave that has been approved?**

Yes. Due to the present circumstances, if an employee has submitted a vacation leave request but has not yet started their vacation, or has requested to shorten their vacation, the employee may request to cancel it and work instead. If the employee is unable to report to the office (e.g. they do not provide a critical function/service, office is closed, etc.) and working from home or other suitable arrangements (e.g. training through Saba and/or GCcampus) are not possible, other paid leave may be used. The same principle applies for requests to cancel other types of upcoming leave that have been approved.

Although employees are generally permitted to request to cancel or shorten their approved vacation leave and work instead, this should not be done for the sole purpose of obtaining other paid leave such as due to office closures. As such, requests to cancel or modify leave that has already been approved will be considered on a case by case basis and are subject to management's approval.

Also, where collective agreements include a deadline for submission of annual leave requests, any requests to replace cancelled leave received after the deadline will be dealt with on a first come first serve basis.

In all circumstances, other paid leave should only be used in cases where an employee would be available for work if not for the current COVID-19 pandemic. Employees who are unavailable because they are on vacation or other types of leave must continue to claim the appropriate leave credits.

### **8.11.3 Should employees be permitted to amend or cancel upcoming leave with income averaging (LIA) that has been approved?**

Yes, **only in rare and unforeseen circumstances**. Cancellation requests should not be done for the sole purpose of obtaining other paid leave such as due to office closures. As such, requests to cancel or modify leave that has already been approved will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are subject to management's approval.

Since there are significant financial impacts for employees and ongoing issues associated with the Pay Centre to implement a cancellation of LIA, managers are highly encouraged to consider the possibility and feasibility to modify the dates of the LIA as opposed to cancelling it.

It is recommended that managers consult [Compensation](#) for any amendment or cancellation request to determine if there are any impacts to the employer and/or employee.

## 8.12 Probation

### 8.12.1 Can an employee's probation period be suspended for the duration of the pandemic if they are assigned to different duties than those comprised in their substantive position?

Although these are exceptional circumstances, the probation period cannot be interrupted regardless of the duties they are assigned. Under the [TBS Regulations establishing periods of probation and periods of notice of termination of employment during probation](#), it can only be interrupted for specific reasons, including if an employee requires accommodation, until the accommodations measures are in place.

However, the regulations also establish that leave with pay of more than 30 days consecutive day are not included in the probation period. Should an employee be granted other paid leave for more than 30 consecutive days during the duration of the pandemic measures, the probation period would be extended by the same number of days.

## 9.0 VALUES AND ETHICS

### 9.1.1 Are there limitations on how ESDC employees should use social media, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, information is constantly evolving. Social media platforms can be a good way to help employees to stay connected and keep informed of the latest COVID-19 updates.

#### a) What obligations do employees have when using personal social media platforms?

ESDC employees have the right to create personal blogs or post comments or pictures on social media platforms, provided they respect their obligations as federal public servants.

Employees are bound by the following guidelines:

- [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](#);
- [ESDC's Handbook for the Personal and Official Use of the Internet and IntraWeb](#); and
- [ESDC's Code of Conduct](#).

These guidelines apply to an employee's personal and work-related use of the web, whether using departmental equipment or a personal device.

**b) Can ESDC employees express their own opinions on social media, including negative ones, about the department or the Government of Canada?**

In keeping with the guidelines mentioned above, ESDC employees must remember that certain actions or behaviours could be considered serious misconduct that may lead to the application of corrective measures.

Such actions may include publicly displaying opinions or pictures that are adverse to the interests of the employer or the government, or those that could be perceived as denigrating by employees or the public.

**c) When using personal social media platforms, can employees identify themselves as ESDC employees or speak on behalf of the department?**

No. Only designated departmental spokespersons are authorized to identify themselves as departmental employees and speak on behalf of the department.

## 10.0 TRAVEL

Please refer to [ESDC's Guide to Returning to the Workplace](#) for additional information

## 11.0 EVENTS & LARGE GATHERINGS

### 11.1.1 Should events and large gatherings continue during a pandemic?

Management should exercise judgement and discretion when organizing, or participating in, events or large gatherings, to determine if such events are operationally necessary. Other forms of participation, such as virtual meeting arrangements, should be considered.

You may refer to [Risk-informed decision-making for mass gatherings during COVID-19 global outbreak](#) for further information and considerations.

You should invite employees to share any concerns with you.

## 12.0 TRAINING

### 12.1.1 Should training requests be denied or cancelled?

Under the *Canada Labour Code*, management has an obligation to ensure employees receive training and are made aware of the hazards and preventive measures related to the workplace, including those related to a COVID-19 pandemic.

Management may deny or cancel discretionary or ongoing training during a COVID-19 pandemic where it is deemed no longer operationally feasible.

However, management must consider whether the training is mandatory for the duties that must be performed, meets an operational need or may be necessary to cover anticipated absences.

### 12.1.2 How can one access Saba from home?

- 1) Send the following link to your personal email address:  
<https://esdc.sabacloud.com/>
- 2) Be sure to have your Saba username and password handy; these cannot be reset if you are using Saba outside of the departmental network.
- 3) Access Saba and start your ESDC learning\*.

\*Important: some links that are contained within Saba's eLearning content refer to internal government websites and are not accessible outside of the departmental network.

## 13.0 DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE

### 13.1 Accommodation When Working Remotely

As the majority of employees continue to work remotely, there is an obligation from management to see that employees are able to fully participate and work from their current work location without any barriers. While an accommodation may already be in place for employees at the worksite (i.e. pre-COVID), some employees may require new or different accommodation while working remotely. As a manager, you should consult with your [Duty to Accommodate Advisor](#) for any circumstances not covered in the following information.

#### 13.1.1 If an employee was accommodated in the office and is now working from home, does the accommodation measure need to be implemented at their home?

Yes, if an accommodation measure was in place, it is also required if they are working from home.

### **13.1.2 An employee has requested to retrieve equipment from their office, is this a duty to accommodate?**

If the request relates to equipment that has been provided as part of a current accommodation, yes. However, if the equipment being requested is not part of a current accommodation, please refer to [How do I equip employees to work from home?](#) for additional information on providing equipment to employees.

### **13.1.3 Since working from home an employee has been experiencing discomfort (e.g. wrist, neck, shoulders) what should I do?**

Managers should first have a conversation with their employee to gain a full understanding of the issue. If they have not already done so, employees should review the [ergonomic self-adjustment tools](#) and implement general ergonomic principles to the best extent possible given their available furniture and workspace layouts. In most cases, employees working from home will be able to achieve a good ergonomic set up with furniture, equipment and supplies available to them in their home. General [ergonomic tips for working from home](#) are available to help employees appropriately set up their home work space.

Where discomfort persists after the employee has reviewed and implemented general ergonomic principles, refer to the [Road Map for Managing Ergonomic Enquiries](#) for additional information.

Managers may require documents to support an accommodation request and understand the employee's functional abilities and needs, however, it will depend on the type of accommodation requested. Ultimately, it is up to management to make a decision as to whether an accommodation is required and purchase the appropriate equipment.

If managers have specific Duty to Accommodate questions or require guidance with regard to accommodation measures, they are encouraged to contact Labour Relations via the [Human Resource Service Centre](#) for guidance (select "General HR Enquiry Form").

### **13.1.4 An employees has a medical note from a health care professional, which states the employee requires an ergonomic assessment, what are the next steps?**

When a medical note for an ergonomic assessment is presented, managers should first have a discussion with their employee to gain a full understanding of the issue. Where there is no history of current or previous ergonomic issues (e.g. disability; injury; etc.), employees should be encouraged to review all of the ergonomic tools

available to ensure their work space is set-up and organized in safe ergonomic manner. In many situations, an ergonomic assessment will not be necessary and the situation can be resolved with other available supports.

Ergonomic assessments are a tool that may be used when there is specific indication, such as a disability, under the care of health care professional for a specific injury (e.g. physiotherapist), out-of-average physical characteristics (e.g. height). Where an employee has specific functional limitations and specialized intervention may be required, managers should speak with a [Duty to Accommodate Advisor](#).

Ultimately, it is up to management to make a decision as to whether an accommodation is required and purchase the appropriate equipment.

If managers have specific Duty to Accommodate questions or require guidance with regard to accommodation measures, they are encouraged to contact Labour Relations via the [Human Resource Service Centre](#) for guidance (select "General HR Enquiry Form").

If it is determined that an ergonomic assessment is required, the [Procedures on Requesting an Ergonomic Assessment](#) have remained unchanged. However, for safety and security reasons, it is strongly recommended to source a vendor capable of performing the ergonomic assessment virtually.

### **13.1.5 My employee is requesting ergonomic equipment, is this an accommodation request?**

Basic ergonomic equipment, such as, a mouse, keyboard, automatic stapler, office chair etc., are more often provided to address an ergonomic risk inherent to a task or function and ensure that employees can work productively without injury. While an employee may request these types of equipment to mitigate physical discomfort, these situations are separate from the duty to accommodate.

In some circumstances, specialized ergonomic equipment is provided to partly or fully address an accommodation request based on an employee's specific functional limitations or circumstances.

Ultimately, it is up to management to make a decision as to whether an accommodation is required and purchase the appropriate equipment.

If managers have specific Duty to Accommodate questions, they are encouraged to contact Labour Relations via the [Human Resource Service Centre](#) for guidance (select "General HR Enquiry Form").

## **13.2 Higher Risk Employees**

As a manager, you should be proactive in encouraging an employee to self-identify if they are at a higher risk than normal, during a COVID-19 pandemic, due to a predisposed medical condition or an identified condition, such as pregnancy.

Temporary measures to accommodate the employee must be considered for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. You should consult with your [Duty to Accommodate Advisor](#) for any circumstances not covered in the following information.

**13.2.1 If an employee comes to you, during the COVID -19 pandemic, identifying that they have functional limitations that require an accommodation, what should you do?**

**A. Employee at a higher risk than normal during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to a predisposed medical condition, an immune deficiency, or an identified condition:**

1. Discuss with the employee, their functional limitations and address their concerns. Consider possible solutions, such as, physical distancing, enhanced cleaning, enclosed office, etc.

Please note that while you may request that the employee consult their family doctor or a qualified health professional, consideration must be given to the fact that physicians may be overwhelmed and therefore may not be available to provide medical certificates to understand functional limitations.

Management is not entitled to information related to the employee's medical condition, including diagnosis, prognosis and medical history. All discussions must be kept confidential, to maintain the privacy of the employee.

2. If the measures considered/proposed cannot accommodate the employee's functional limitations, consider telework or training through Saba and/or GC Campus. Once all flexible work arrangements have been considered, other paid leave may apply.

**B. Employee is asked to report to another office or is now teleworking and was accommodated at regular workstation:**

Employees requesting to bring chairs or any other equipment home to support their telework situation or other office location must receive managerial approval and complete the Loan of Departmental Equipment form [ESDC-ADM3004](#). Managers should retain copies of the forms to be able to confirm that assets are returned to the office once business resumes as usual. Please note that the Real Property does not have the capacity to support arranging movers or courier companies to assist with moving chairs or furniture elements to the employee's telework location. Employees will be responsible for removing and returning items themselves and should follow proper physical distancing practices.

For more information, see [How do I Equip Employees to Work from Home?](#)

### 13.2.2 What advice can be provided to pregnant employees who express concern during a COVID-19 pandemic?

Based on current health advice, there are no specific measures required for employees who are considered more at risk of complications. The [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) recommends that pregnant women who feel well continue normal activities, like going to work, but that they should be even more vigilant about hand washing and carrying alcohol-based hand sanitizer, amongst others.

#### **Pregnant and Nursing Employees in the Federal Public Service**

- An employee who is pregnant or nursing may cease to perform her job if she believes continuing any of her current job functions may pose a risk to her health, foetus or child.
- Normally, the employee must consult with a qualified medical practitioner of her choice as soon as possible to establish if any of her current job functions pose a risk.
- Normally, the medical practitioner must provide a medical certificate confirming there is a risk and you must ensure that the duties she is performing meet the conditions outlined in the medical certificate.
- During a COVID-19 pandemic, consideration must be given to the fact that physicians may be overwhelmed and therefore may not be available to provide medical certificates to justify absences, understand functional limitations or certify a return to work. However, if the manager or employee feel it is necessary to identify potential risks, they may wish to obtain one, or seek advice from their public health authority.
- In the interim, you may, in consultation with the employee, reassign her to another job that you both agree would not pose a risk. The employee will continue to receive the wages and benefits of her incumbent position.
- Prior to the approval of leave, you should consider the use of flexible work arrangements (e.g. telework and training through Saba and/or GC Campus), if feasible (i.e. employee has access, employee is able, operational needs allow for it). Once flexible work arrangements have been considered, other paid leave may apply.

[Pamphlet 5 - Pregnant and Nursing Employees](#)

**As a manager, you must contact your [Regional OHS Advisor](#) at the onset of receiving a complaint.**



## 14.0 ASSISTING EMPLOYEES

### 14.1 Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

#### 14.1.1 How do you address the high level of anxiety that some employees may be experiencing?

During a COVID-19 pandemic, it is natural to experience anxiety and your employees may wish to speak with you. As a manager, you should ensure that your staff are aware of the EAP counselling services available to them through Health Canada's EAS at 1-800-268-7708 (24/7) or 1-800-567-5803 (TDD) for short term counselling and crisis counselling. You should also inform their employees of the [M2M and Peer to Peer program supports](#) for additional assistance. You should also familiarize yourself with signs and symptoms related to stress and stress management techniques ([Annex D](#))

In addition, you may obtain advice and assistance through Health Canada's EAS at 1-800-268-7708 (24/7), in order to help you better assist employees who have experienced a traumatic (critical event) or upsetting event in the workplace.

The following resources have been produced by Health Canada's Employee Assistance Services: [Preparing for and Responding to Workplace Trauma A Manager's Handbook](#) and the more comprehensive [Preparing for and Responding to Workplace Trauma A Manager's eGuide](#).

*Furthermore, additional resources and tools are available through [LifeSpeak](#).*

### 14.2 Mental Health in the Workplace

#### 14.2.1 How can I support employees/colleagues in the event of an employee or employee's loved one passes away?

Managers play a key role in helping employees deal with a loss, be it a colleague or a loved one. Treasury Board Secretariat has provided practical steps for managers and people leaders to follow to support a grieving employee or team. Additional resources are available for employees, which managers and people leaders can provide to their employees, as appropriate.

Please refer to the [Mental Health in the Workplace](#) iService site to access these and other important mental health resources.

## 15.0 STAFFING

### 15.1 Hiring

#### 15.1.1 How do you ensure you have sufficient staff to cover critical services during the pandemic?

Under the Public Service Employment Act (PSEA), several options exist to facilitate the speedy staffing of positions in response to an emergency, such as casual appointments, external non-advertised appointment and acting appointments. Other options are available to you: assignments and secondments, temporary services agencies/ contracting, as well as the Interchange Policy.

For more information on temporary staffing measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, refer to [Staffing – Temporary Measures During COVID-19](#).

### 15.2 Leaving the Department

#### 15.2.1 How do you complete the Separation Clearance process when an employee is leaving the department?

When an employee is leaving the Department on a temporary or permanent basis, you are responsible to ensure that employee returns all departmental assets assigned to them and that building and departmental system access is removed.

For more information on the separation clearance process during the COVID-19 pandemic, refer to [Separation Clearance Process](#) from Departmental Security.

## 16.0 COMMUNICATIONS

#### 16.1.1 Does ESDC have a pandemic communications plan?

Yes, ESDC has a communications plan that has been endorsed by the department's senior management team. The plan supports the [Departmental Strategic Emergency Management Plan](#) and is consistent with the Government of Canada communications approach. The plan has three objectives:

- to maintain the confidence and safety of employees delivering critical services by providing relevant, consistent, timely information;
- to support the federal communications response established by Public Safety Canada; and
- to sustain public confidence in the integrity of our services by providing clients

with useful information about changes to programs or service delivery.

### **16.1.2 How are employees being kept informed?**

Effective internal communication is a shared management responsibility. Collaboration, particularly between human resources management and communications functions, is essential. Managers and supervisors must communicate with employees openly, frequently, and before or at the same time as information is communicated to the public. Internal communication includes a mix of published materials (in multiple formats), oral presentations, staff meetings and learning events.

### **16.1.3 How are clients being kept informed about possible changes in service delivery due to high absenteeism?**

To prepare for emergencies, each branch and region has a business continuity plan.

These plans identify ways to minimize service disruptions to clients (e.g. assigning additional personnel from other areas, re-directing clients to other centres or channels, or, in some cases, office closures). One of the objectives of the communications plan is to keep clients informed of any service changes or disruptions. Depending on the situation, a number of means could be used to inform clients, such as notifying local media, phone messages and the Internet.

Co-ordination between headquarters and regional operations in communication matters is essential.

### **16.1.4 What should I do if a reporter contacts me? Who is the department's spokesperson?**

Media play an important role in providing the public with news and information about government, and reporting on the public's views and opinions of government. The Media Relations Unit coordinates media requests, particularly for interviews or technical information on specialized subjects, and works with subject-matter experts to respond to enquiries.

Depending on the nature of the media enquiry, the Minister may respond or delegate to a departmental spokesperson through the Media Relations Unit.

Media should contact the **Media Relations Office** at **819-994-5559** or [media@hrsdcrhdsc.gc.ca](mailto:media@hrsdcrhdsc.gc.ca) for more detailed information or to set up an interview.

### **16.1.5 What is the difference between risk and crisis communications?**

According to the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, a crisis is a situation that challenges the public's sense of "appropriateness, tradition, values,

safety, security or integrity of government". Whereas a risk, from an issues management perspective, is a situation that precedes a crisis, and for which strong mitigating measures may be applied, in order to limit the amount of damage it creates. The objective of risk communication is to address these problems before they occur. Risk communication is also seen as a two-way information transfer, where stakeholders (in this case your employees) act as both the source and receiver of information on risk.

## 17.0 ESDC CONTACT INFORMATION

Area / Function	Contact Information	
<b>Human Resources</b>		
<a href="#">Labour Relations</a>	<a href="#">Human Resources Service Centre</a>	
<a href="#">Occupational Health and Safety</a>  <b>Team Leader, Regional Operations</b> Western Canada and Territories Ontario National Capital Quebec Atlantic	<a href="#">Human Resources Service Centre</a>  <a href="#">Christian Arseneault</a> 506-777-6509 <a href="#">Ken Loy</a> 604-974-6317 <a href="#">Brian Staples</a> 647-790-9125 <a href="#">Christina Hetu</a> 819-664-1293 <a href="#">Marie-Josée Caron</a> 581-443-0992 <a href="#">Diane Gauvin-Maurey</a> 506-247-0538	
<a href="#">Compensation</a>	<a href="#">Human Resources Service Centre</a> <a href="#">Compensation - Key Users</a>	
<a href="#">Disability Management</a>	<a href="#">Human Resources Service Centre</a>	
<a href="#">Duty to Accommodate</a>	<a href="#">Human Resources Service Centre</a>	
<a href="#">Staffing</a>	<a href="#">Human Resources Service Centre</a>	
<a href="#">Employee Assistance Program</a>	<a href="#">NA-PAE_EAP-GD</a>	1-800-268-7708
<b>Security</b>		
<a href="#">Departmental Security Officers</a> Western Canada and Territories Ontario National Capital Quebec Atlantic	<a href="#">W-T-SECURITY-SECURITE-GD</a> <a href="#">NC-ONT_INCIDENTS</a> <a href="#">NC-SECURITY-SERVICES-SECURITE-GD</a> <a href="#">QC-SECURITE-SECURITY-DIIS-IISD-GD</a> <a href="#">ATL-INT-SECURITY-SECURITE-GD</a>	
<b>Emergency Management and Business Continuity</b>		
<a href="#">Business Continuity Planning</a> National Emergency Operations Centre Regional Emergency Operations Centres Western Canada and Territories Ontario National Capital Quebec Atlantic	<a href="#">NC-NEOC-ESDC-CNOU-EDSC-GD</a>  <a href="#">W-T-REOC-CROU-GD</a> <a href="#">ON-REOC-CROU-GD</a> <a href="#">NC-NEOC-ESDC-CNOU-EDSC-GD</a> <a href="#">QC-REOC-CROU-GD</a> <a href="#">ATL-DIST-REOC-CROU</a>	

## 18.0 DOCUMENT CONTROL

This guide, which was adapted from ESDC's *Manager's Guide to HR Issues on a Pandemic Influenza*, takes effect March 15, 2020. Revisions and updates take effect as noted in the table below.

Version	Revision Date	Revised By	Description of Revisions
1.0	2020-03-15	S. Ramsay	Original Version
1.1	2020-03-19	S. Ramsay	Additional questions; minor updates
1.2	2020-03-25	S. Ramsay	Additional questions; minor updates
1.3	2020-04-02	S. Ramsay	Additional questions; minor updates
1.4	2020-04-20	S. Ramsay	Additional questions; minor updates
1.5	2020-04-27	S. Ramsay	Additional questions; minor updates
1.6	2020-05-04	S. Ramsay	Additional questions; minor updates
1.7	2020-05-11	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.8	2020-05-18	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.9	2020-06-01	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.10	2020-06-08	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.11	2020-06-15	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.12	2020-06-22	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.13	2020-06-29	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.14	2020-07-13	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.15	2020-08-10	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.16	2020-08-28	J. Janzen	Additional questions; minor updates
1.17	2020-10-09	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.18	2020-11-29	J. Janzen	Additional questions; Restructure of section 8.8; Removal of Section 8.9 <i>Leave Due to Illness</i> ; Removal of Section 8.10 <i>Leave to Care for Family Member</i> ; Minor updates
1.19	2020-12-11	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.20	2021-01-08	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.21	2021-01-18	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.22	2021-02-05	J. Janzen	Minor updates
1.23	2021-03-08	D. Seaman	Additional question; Minor updates
1.24	2021-04-26	D. Seaman	Additional question; Minor updates
1.25	2021-06-02	D. Seaman	Minor updates
1.26	2021-06-24	D. Seaman	Additional question

## 19.0 ANNEXES

The following annexes provide additional information and can be printed and used as quick reference sheets, as needed.

**ANNEX A: Due Diligence / Risk Management Requirements**

Canada Labour Code, Part II (CLC-II)

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/L-2/>

ITEMS	RISK MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES
1. Employer's Duties	<p><b>Note: "Prescribed" means prescribed by the Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the health and safety at work of every person employed by the employer is protected.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 124
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide every person granted access to the work place by the employer with prescribed safety materials, equipment, devices and clothing.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(l)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide, in the prescribed manner, each employee with the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure their health and safety at work.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(q)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that each employee is made aware of every known or foreseeable health or safety hazard in the area where the employee works.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that every person granted access to the work place by the employer is familiar with and uses in the prescribed circumstances and manner all prescribed safety materials, equipment, devices and clothing.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(w)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the activities of every person granted access to the work place do not endanger the health and safety of employees.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(y)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, implement and monitor, in consultation with the policy committee or, if there is no policy committee, with the work place committee or the health and safety representative, a prescribed program for the prevention of hazards in the work place appropriate to its size and the nature of the hazards in it that also provides for the education of employees in health and safety matters.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(z.03)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When necessary, develop, implement and monitor a program for the provision of personal protective equipment, clothing, devices or materials, in consultation, except in emergencies, with the policy committee or, if there is no policy committee, with the work place committee or the health and safety representative.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(z.13)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take all reasonable care to ensure that all persons granted access to the work place, other than the employer's employees, are informed of every known or foreseeable health or safety hazard to which they are likely to be exposed in the work place.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 125 (1)(z.14)

ITEMS	RISK MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES
2. Employee's Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use any safety materials, equipment, devices and clothing that are intended for the employee's protection and furnished to the employee by the employer or that are prescribed.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 126 (1)(a)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow prescribed procedures with respect to the health and safety of employees.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 126 (1)(b)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take all reasonable and necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of the employee, the other employees and any person likely to be affected by the employee's acts or omissions.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 126 (1)(c)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comply with all instructions from the employer concerning the health and safety of employees.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 126 (1)(d)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to the employer any thing or circumstance in a work place that is likely to be hazardous to the health or safety of the employee, or that of the other employees or other persons granted access to the work place by the employer.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 126 (1)(g)
3. Internal Complaint Resolution Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An employee who believes on reasonable grounds that there has been a contravention of this Part or that there is likely to be an accident or injury to health arising out of, linked with or occurring in the course of employment shall, before exercising any other recourse available under this Part, except the rights conferred by sections 128, 129 and 132, make a complaint to the employee's supervisor.</li> </ul>	CLC-II 127.1 (1)
4. Refusal to Work if Danger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An employee may refuse to use or operate a machine or thing, to work in a place or to perform an activity, if the employee while at work has reasonable cause to believe that:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the use or operation of the machine or thing constitutes a danger to the employee or to another employee;</li> <li>a condition exists in the place that constitutes a danger to the employee; or</li> <li>the performance of the activity by the employee constitutes a danger to the employee or to another employee.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	CLC-II 128 (1)(a)(b)(c)



**ANNEX B: Pandemic Readiness Planning Considerations**

POLICIES/PROCEDURES/PLANS	CONSIDERATIONS
<p>1. Business Continuity Plans (BCPs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCPs should be developed and/or reviewed to ensure the identification of critical business functions/services and surge capacity requirements to provide critical services during a COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>• BCPs should also take into consideration the availability of and requirement for personal protective equipment to ensure service continuity.</li> <li>• The availability of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Critical Incident Stress Management services should be considered in BCPs.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Managing the Spread of infection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To limit the spread of infection, employees who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must not come to work and, if they are at work, must be sent home and ask to seek medical attention.</li> <li>• Clear direction must be provided to minimize the spread of COVID-19 virus.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Healthy Workplace Practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the employer's duty to protect the health and safety of employees and anyone else who visits its premises.</li> <li>• During a COVID-19 pandemic, the employer has the responsibility to take all reasonable precautionary measures to ensure that the workplace is free from infection and to prevent the spread of infection.</li> <li>• Healthy Workplace practices during a COVID-19 pandemic should address the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) physical distancing;</li> <li>b) personal hygiene;</li> <li>c) cleanliness of premises; and</li> <li>d) personal protective equipment (if required).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>4. Travel During a COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>Refer to the <a href="https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus">travel advice</a> section on <a href="https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus">Canada.ca/coronavirus</a> for the current restrictions and advisories, or follow the advice of your public health authority.</p>

**ANNEX C: Recommended Personal Measures to Limit the Spread of COVID-19**

PERSONAL MEASURE	SOME HOW-TO TIPS
Hand Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent and careful hand washing is an effective way of preventing the spread of infection. Wash your hands regularly with warm, soapy water, especially before and after eating, after going to the bathroom, after coughing or sneezing, and after touching surfaces that may have been contaminated.</li> <li>• Remove jewellery before hand washing procedures. Rinse hands under warm running water. Lather with soap and, using friction, cover all surfaces of the hands and fingers (minimum of 20 seconds). Rinse under warm running water. Dry hands thoroughly with a single-use towel. Turn off faucet without re-contaminating hands, e.g. using a single-use towel.</li> <li>• Alcohol-based hand sanitizers (with an alcohol concentration of 60 to 80 per cent) should be used only if you do not have soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers do not contain antibiotics, but the alcohol acts as a disinfectant.</li> </ul>
Cough and Sneeze Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 can travel one to two metres in the air and can live several hours on your hands and surfaces.</li> <li>• Limit the spread of infection by covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or raise your arm up to your face to cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm, not into your hand.</li> <li>• Throw away used tissues promptly and wash your hands as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical distancing strategies are non-medical measures intended to reduce the spread of disease from person to person by discouraging or preventing people from coming into close contact with each other.</li> <li>• Some options include, but are not limited to:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Avoid handshakes (encourage non-contact greetings).</li> <li>b) Avoid face-to-face meetings. Use telemeetings instead.</li> <li>c) Cancel or postpone non-essential meetings/workshops/training sessions.</li> <li>d) Meet in large meeting rooms and minimize meeting times.</li> <li>e) Avoid using public pens or whiteboard markers—carry your own.</li> <li>f) Avoid sharing computer keyboards.</li> <li>g) Avoid the lunchroom rush.</li> <li>h) Avoid cafeterias and restaurants.</li> <li>i) Avoid commuter rush periods.</li> <li>j) Avoid unnecessary travel (especially to Pandemic regions).</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
Cleaning of Surface Contact Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly clean surface contact material to minimize the spread of COVID-19.</li> </ul>

## ANNEX D: Emergency Response / Stress Management During a Pandemic

### During a pandemic personnel may be required to:

- coordinate or manage personal, family-related, and professional activities or commitments on short notice;
- prepare for an emergency assignment;
- work long, variable hours;
- meet strict deadlines;
- lodge in hotels;
- have irregular meals and rest periods;
- be unable to maintain regular communication with family members (due to work requirements); and
- make sensitive decisions of a political, economic, and/or operational nature.

All of these variables may lead to excessive stress.

Reacting to stress is normal, but not everyone experiences stress in the same way. Variables that affect our reaction to stress can include our support systems, our emotional makeup, our thoughts about the situation, our actions during and after a critical incident, and how much the event reminds us of some personal issue(s). For some individuals, their stress reactions may interfere with their ability to function normally during and after the situation.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS RELATING TO STRESS

#### The following are some stress-related signs and symptoms:

- nausea, dizziness, confusion
- difficulty making decisions
- difficulty concentrating
- frustration, anxiety, irritability
- sleep disturbances
- general fatigue
- crying
- headaches
- sense of feeling overwhelmed
- apathy
- loss of appetite
- increase in the intake of alcohol or an increase in smoking
- frequent interpersonal conflict
- short-term memory difficulties
- shortened attention span
- tension
- negative feelings such as profound sadness or helplessness

#### Long term exposure could lead to:

- physical pain
- heart disease
- digestive problems
- sleep problems
- depression
- obesity
- autoimmune diseases
- skin conditions, such as eczema

### STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

#### The following are some stress management techniques:

- Establish a comfort zone and respect it.
- Identify and respect personal limitations to prevent burnout.
- Ensure good food intake to sustain your energy and well-being.
- Ensure rest periods and exercise.
- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Try to avoid excessive caffeine intake.
- Maintain regular contact with family and friends.
- Share your concerns, thoughts, and feelings with someone you trust.

**Contact the Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-268-7708 (24/7) or 1-800-567-5803 (TDD), should you require counselling services.**

### ANNEX E: Alphabetical Listing of Acronyms

Acronym	Complete Name/Meaning
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
CFOB	Chief Financial Officer Branch
CLC	Canada Labour Code
CLC-II	Canada Labour Code, Part II (Occupational Health and Safety)
DTA	Duty to Accommodate
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FERP	Federal Emergency Response Plan
HC	Health Canada
EAS	Health Canada Employee Assistance Services
HR	Human Resources
HRSB	Human Resource Services Branch
ISB	Integrity Services Branch
CLI	Coronavirus Like Illness
LR	Labour Relations
NCR	National Capital Region
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSEA	Public Service Employment Act
TBS	Treasury Board Secretariat
VPN	Virtual Private Network

## ANNEX F: Procedures for Requesting Enhanced Disinfecting and Cleaning for Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

1. The manager, on-site lead, or designate, must notify the **PSPC National Service Call Centre** (1-800-463-1850) of a suspected case of COVID-19 that requires an additional cleaning / disinfection plan implementation. Include in the request, details as to where the individual was located in the building, path of travel, etc.

The manager, on-site lead, or designate, must notify ESDC's Regional Real Property team of a suspected case of COVID-19 and ticket number provided by PSPC, using the applicable general delivery email account / portal. Subject line should adhere to the following format: COVID-19 Suspected Case – Additional Cleaning Request – Site Name

- **Atlantic Region Real Property General Delivery email:**  
[ATL-CFOB-REAL-PROPERTY-ASSET-MANAGEMENT-DGAPF-GESTION-IMMOBILIER](mailto:ATL-CFOB-REAL-PROPERTY-ASSET-MANAGEMENT-DGAPF-GESTION-IMMOBILIER)
  - **Quebec Region Real Property General Delivery email:**  
[qc-dgfa-installation@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:qc-dgfa-installation@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)
  - **Ontario Region Real Property General Delivery email**  
[ON-CFOB\\_DGAPF-SD\\_IS-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:ON-CFOB_DGAPF-SD_IS-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)
  - **WT Region Real Property Web Portal**  
[WT CFOB Portal](#)
  - **NCR Region Real Property General Delivery email:**  
[NC-ACCOMMODATIONS-INSTALLATIONS-GD@servicecanada.gc.ca](mailto:NC-ACCOMMODATIONS-INSTALLATIONS-GD@servicecanada.gc.ca)
2. ESDC's Regional Real Property team will follow-up with PSPC / BGIS Property Facility Manager, to ensure the landlord, or the cleaning service provider, has been contacted and has been provided direction as to the additional cleaning requirements / disinfection plan, timelines for resolution, etc. PSPC, or their service provider, will work with ESDC to design and implement an appropriate disinfection plan. ESDC's Regional Real Property team will provide updates to the client requestor.

### Triggers to initiate a decontamination cleaning could include:

- Employee exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms.
- Employee in close contact with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- An employee with a travel history to a COVID-19 affected area or had contact with a case of COVID-19, who was not asked to self-isolate, develops symptoms such as fever, cough and/or shortness of breath while in the workplace.
- A client comes into a client service centre requesting a service from the Government of Canada. The client mentions that they have been asked to self-isolate by public health authorities. The client has symptoms of fever, cough and/or shortness of breath.
- A client comes into a client service centre requesting a service from the Government of Canada. The client mentions that they are supposed to be in mandatory quarantine. The client has symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath.

**Notes:**

- PSpC advised that if the call is received during the day, the disinfection plan may be able to implemented as quickly as the same evening.
- ESDC's National Real Property are establishing national blanket contracts (SSA – Supplemental Service Agreement) with PSpC to fund all requests and to ensure there are no delays in actioning requests. PSpC have confirmed that work will not be stopped awaiting confirmation of funding / contracts.
- PSpC will not be making decisions on building closures unless capacity does not exist to support base building life safety systems. Employers are responsible to make workplace continuity decisions in consultation with the respective building specific Senior Designated Officer, which may include guidance from their senior management and Treasury Board Secretariat, Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer.

## ANNEX G: Workplace OHS Scenarios for COVID-19

Please refer to the [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 - Quick Reference Chart](#).

For assistance in applying leave provisions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to prepare for possible sensitive discussions with employees, managers are encouraged refer to [the Practical Guide for Managers - Use of Leave with Pay for Other Reasons \(699\)](#).

Prior to approving or denying a request for Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699), and to review any ongoing situations requiring this type of leave, the manager must consult Labour Relations through the [Human Resources Service Centre](#).

## ANNEX H: Frequently Asked Questions at a Glance for COVID-19

*For additional frequently asked questions, please visit [iService](#).*

- 6.1.1 As a manager, can I share information about the health of an employee?
- 6.1.2 If an employee advises you that they believe that they may have been exposed to or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, what are my obligations as a manager to ensure their privacy, while balancing the well-being of the rest of my team?
- 6.1.3 Can a manager ask an employee if they have a confirmed case of COVID-19?
- 7.2.1 What should an employee do if they are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing?
- 7.2.2 What should an employee do if they observe COVID-19-like symptoms in a colleague?
- 7.2.3 Can an employee request to stay home due to a fear of being infected or exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace?
- 7.2.4 What if an employee is at work and is not exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, but has concerns for their health and safety?
- 7.2.5 Are employees expected to complete an injury report or workers' compensation form as a result of becoming ill with COVID-19?
- 7.2.6 What should be done if an employee comes to work or is at work and is demonstrating COVID-19-like symptoms?
- 7.2.7 Is there a requirement to increase the cleaning of an employee's workstation during a pandemic?
- 7.2.8 What do I do if the employee who is exhibiting symptoms, consistent with COVID-19, refuses to leave the office?
- 7.3.1 Should a workplace be closed if there are not enough First Aid Attendants to meet the requirements?
- 7.3.2 Is the manager/supervisor obligated to pay for transportation of an employee who becomes sick at work?
- 7.4.1 What is the difference between isolation, self-isolation, quarantine and self-monitoring?
- 7.4.2 When would an employee be expected to isolate, self-isolate, be quarantined or self-monitor?
- 7.4.3 What steps should one take to limit contact with others?
- 7.5.1 What can employees who deliver in person services do to protect themselves?
- 7.5.2 How can employees keep Client Access Work Stations (CAWS) and biometric equipment safe for clients and employees?



- 7.5.3** During a pandemic, what additional steps should managers take to prepare employees to screen incoming clients?
- 7.5.4** Can an employee refuse to serve a client whom they believe is sick?
- 7.7.1** What do I do if an employee who is at work and is not exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms, expresses concern for their health and safety?
- 7.7.2** What do I do if I receive an OHS Complaint related to COVID-19?
- 7.8.1** Do employees have the right to refuse work if they believe it to be a danger?
- 7.8.2** What steps must be followed if an employee refuses dangerous work?
- 7.9.1** Is there a vaccination for COVID-19?
- 8.1.1** In the event of an emergency, can managers require employees to perform tasks outside of their regular duties or work outside of their headquarters area?
- 8.1.2** If an employee is asked to report to another work location within their headquarters area (within 16 KM of workplace), will the department pay for parking?
- 8.1.3** If an employee is asked to report to their work location, will the department reimburse transportation costs?
- 8.1.4** If an employee is asked to report to another building, within their headquarters area (within 16 KM of workplace), will the department provide the transportation or pay for travel to this new location?
- 8.1.5** Due to the use of the departmental fleet of vehicles being suspended, can critical employees be reimbursed for the use of a personal vehicle or a rental car to perform critical duties?
- 8.2.1** When should acting pay be provided to employees?
- 8.2.2** Can employees be required to perform duties at a lower level?
- 8.3.1** Are managers authorized to change their employees' hours of work?
- 8.4.1** Can managers require employees to work overtime?
- 8.4.2** Can overtime be assigned to an employee during the same day on which Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) has been granted?
- 8.5.1** Who decides if an office should be closed?
- 8.5.2** What happens to employees, casuals, students, and terms of less than three months, in case of an office closure?
- 8.5.3** What happens to temporary agency personnel and contractors in case of an office closure?
- 8.5.4** As a manager, if I instruct an employee not to report to work due to an office closure, does the employee have to submit a leave form?

- 8.5.5 If employees use the daycare that is in a government building that is presently closed, will the department reimburse daycare costs?
- 8.6.1 What is a critical service?
- 8.6.2 Is ESDC still focused on only delivering critical services??
- 8.6.3 What direction should be given to employees who are providing non-critical services?
- 8.6.4 If an employee is asked to use their personal phone, will the department reimburse long distance costs?
- 8.6.5 If an employee is asked to work from home, will the department reimburse the internet costs?
- 8.6.6 If an employee is asked to work from home, will the department reimburse the cost for supplies (e.g. paper, pens, etc.)?
- 8.7.1 What is the difference between telework and remote work?
- 8.7.2 Should variable hours (i.e. compressed schedule) be approved or continued if the employee is using Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699)?
- 8.7.3 Can a manager approve an employee's request for hoteling?
- 8.7.4 Can I approve an employee's request to telework?
- 8.7.5 During a pandemic, could a telework situation under a Duty to Accommodate (DTA) be affected due to ESDC's IT network infrastructure?
- 8.7.6 Can employees work on sensitive / protected / classified information while teleworking?
- 8.7.7 How do I Equip Employees to Work from Home?
- 8.7.8 What if an employee working from home is unable to connect remotely via AppGate / VPN?
- 8.7.9 What direction should be provided to employees working from home when they are unable to connect remotely via AppGate / VPN?
- 8.7.10 What provisions are in place to address the reimbursement of parking fees while employees work from home due to emergency situations, such as the current pandemic?
- 8.7.11 What documents are required for employees working remotely?
- 8.7.12 If an employee is currently working from home, can a manager approve a request to work from a secondary telework location?
- 8.7.13 Can employees claim a deduction for their home office expenses and what is required from managers?
- 8.7.14 Can a manager approve an employee's request to telework outside of Canada?
- 8.8.1 How should leave requests be managed during a COVID-19 pandemic?

- 8.8.2 In situations where Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699) has been granted, should the leave be entered into myEMS (PeopleSoft)?
- 8.8.3 My employee's remote work location is located in a different province than their office location, what provincial/civic holiday are they entitled to?
- 8.8.4 Are casual employees, students, and term employees of less than three months entitled to Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699)?
- 8.8.5 Should a medical certificate be requested to substantiate a request for leave due to illness?
- 8.8.6 Can an employee experiencing stress or anxiety as a direct consequence of COVID-19 and unable to perform their duties for those reasons be granted Leave with Pay for Other Reasons (699)?
- 8.8.7 In the absence of a medical certificate confirming a return to work, when can an employee who has been absent due to a COVID-19 related illness return to work?
- 8.8.8 What is the difference between a family status obligation and a preference?
- 8.8.9 Can an employee currently on LWOP for care of immediate family return to work sooner than initially agreed upon?
- 8.8.10 What type of leave applies to employees who are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine during working hours?
- 8.8.11 What type of leave applies for employees who are experiencing side effects due to the COVID-19 vaccine?
- 8.8.12 **What type of leave applies for employees who are taking their child or someone they have a duty of care to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**
- 8.9.1 I approved vacation leave for an employee and the office was subsequently closed (or operations were suspended). Does the employee still have to use vacation days?
- 8.10.1 How should management address leave requests to volunteer?
- 8.11.1 If leave has already been approved, can it be withdrawn?
- 8.11.2 Should employees be permitted to cancel upcoming annual leave that has been approved?
- 8.11.3 Should employees be permitted to amend or cancel upcoming leave with income averaging (LIA) that has been approved?
- 8.12.1 Can an employee's probation period be suspended for the duration of the pandemic if they are assigned to different duties than those comprised in their substantive position?
- 9.1.1 Are there limitations on how ESDC employees should use social media, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- 11.1.1 Should events and large gatherings continue during a pandemic?
- 12.1.1 Should training requests be denied or cancelled?
- 12.1.2 How can one access Saba from home?
- 13.1.1 If an employee was accommodated in the office and is now working from home, does the accommodation measure need to be implemented at their home?
- 13.1.2 An employee has requested to retrieve equipment from their office, is this a duty to accommodate?
- 13.1.3 Since working from home an employee has been experiencing discomfort (e.g. wrist, neck, shoulders) what should I do?
- 13.1.4 An employees has a medical note from a health care professional, which states the employee requires an ergonomic assessment, what are the next steps?
- 13.1.5 My employee is requesting ergonomic equipment, is this an accommodation request?
- 13.2.1 If an employee comes to you, during the COVID -19 pandemic, identifying that they have functional limitations that require an accommodation, what should you do?
- 13.2.2 What advice can be provided to pregnant employees who express concern during a COVID-19 pandemic?
- 14.1.1 How do you address the high level of anxiety that some employees may be experiencing?
- 14.2.1 How can I support employees/colleagues in the event of an employee or employee's loved one passes away?
- 15.1.1 How do you ensure you have sufficient staff to cover critical services during the pandemic?
- 15.2.1 How do you complete the Separation Clearance process when an employee is leaving the department?
- 16.1.1 Does ESDC have a pandemic communications plan?
- 16.1.2 How are employees being kept informed?
- 16.1.3 How are clients being kept informed about possible changes in service delivery due to high absenteeism?
- 16.1.4 What should I do if a reporter contacts me? Who is the department's spokesperson?
- 16.1.5 What is the difference between risk and crisis communications?

**ANNEX I: Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in the Workplace**

Please refer to [EDSC's Guide on Returning to the Workplace](#) for additional information.

- [Responding to Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in the Work Place](#)

