

COVID-19

INFORMATION
AND ADVICE

Workplace Safety during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Entry Screening

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us are asking ourselves how do we stay safe while working and how do we keep our team members safe. Screening workers upon arrival at the workplace is one way to help keep yourself and others safe from COVID-19.

Whether your organization is continuing to work during the COVID-19 pandemic, or you are returning to work after public health restrictions have been relaxed, the same principles and considerations for safe work practices apply. The goal of this guidance document is to help organizations to work as safely as possible and minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

Key Principles:

- The main priority is the health and wellbeing of team members and the communities and populations that we serve.
- We must take all steps to ensure the risk of transmission in the workplace is equal to or lower than in the community (in public, at home, other settings).
- COVID-19 remains a threat, infection control and response mechanisms must become core components of our operations


How to Implement Entry Screening

You can implement entry screening to identify people who are unwell, and might be infected with COVID-19. Entry screening includes:

1. Temperature check to verify that the person entering does not have a fever.
2. Screening questionnaire to check that the person does not have COVID-19 symptoms and is not at elevated risk.

Screening can be done at the workplace, and before meetings and other gatherings. All people entering should be screened, including staff, volunteers, visitors, customers, and meeting and workshop participants

There are two different approaches that can be used to manage the screening process:

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- **Appoint a screener:** a person is trained to conduct the screening checks as people arrive at the workplace.
 - Advantages:
 - The person conducting the screening is specifically trained on the procedures.
 - The screener controls entry, and every person entering is required to interact with the screener.
 - The screener can provide assistance, information, and answer questions.
 - Limitations:
 - Requires a staff member or third party to conduct the screening.
 - Personal health information that is collected must be managed according to local privacy laws.
 - An area must be set aside for screening that allows privacy for the individual being screened, physical distancing, and use of personal protective equipment.
 - **Self-administered screening:** Individuals are required to self-administer the screening checks before they enter the workplace.
 - Advantages:
 - Can be straightforward to implement.
 - Individuals manage their own health information.
 - Limitations:
 - Every individual needs to be informed and understand the procedures.
 - Relies on every individual being accountable and taking the procedures seriously.
 - Application of the protocols may be variable depending on each individuals' understanding, risk tolerance, and possible screening fatigue.
 - Limited opportunity to ask questions and receive advice.

Temperature Check

A fever or increased body temperature is a symptom of COVID-19 disease. Normal body temperature varies and is usually in the range 36.1°C - 37.2°C or 97°F - 99°F¹,². A higher temperature may be an indication of an illness. Temperature checks before entering the workplace can help to identify staff or visitors who have an increased temperature and might be ill with COVID-19.

Conventional medical thermometers can be used, however they must be thoroughly disinfected between each use

¹ 'What Is Normal Body Temperature? Low vs. High, Normal Range', accessed 16 June 2020, <https://www.webmd.com/first-aid/normal-body-temperature>.

² 'Fever in Adults - Infections', Merck Manuals Consumer Version, accessed 16 June 2020, <https://www.merckmanuals.com/en-ca/home/infections/biology-of-infectious-disease/fever-in-adults.fev>



How to disinfect a thermometer

- Wash with soap and cool water, rinse well with clean, cool water.
- or
- Dip in 60-90% alcohol, or wipe with a cotton ball soaked in alcohol, rinse well with clean, cool water.

If possible, use a touchless thermometer.³ This can be easier to manage as it does not require disinfection between readings, and it allows a screener to maintain distance from the person being checked.

If you appoint a person to do the screening, the screener checks the temperature of each person before entering the workplace.

Self-administered temperature checks can be done by individuals upon arrival at the workplace, or they can check and record their temperature before coming to work each day.

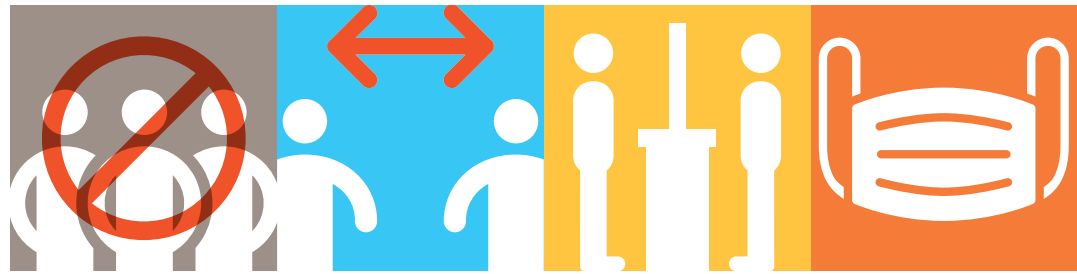
If the person has an elevated temperature, you should refuse entry and advise them to return home and self-isolate immediately. Review local guidance provided by health authorities to inform the individual of next steps. We recommend the person contact a primary care provider or local public health unit to discuss their symptoms, exposure, and seek testing. Staff members should inform their manager or supervisor.

Screening Questionnaire

Use a screening questionnaire to identify people who may be unwell and potentially infected. Everybody entering the workplace answers a series of questions about symptoms that they may have, possible contact with a sick person, and other potential exposure (see example of screening questions below). The screener can ask the questions directly to the person or it can be done as a self-assessment.

If the questions identify a person who may be unwell or potentially infected, you should refuse entry and advise them to return home and self-isolate immediately. Review local guidance provided by health authorities to inform the individual of next steps. We recommend the person contact a primary care provider or local public health unit to discuss their symptoms, exposure, and seek testing. Staff members should inform their manager or supervisor.

³ CDC, 'General Business Frequently Asked Questions', Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 April 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html>.



MINIMIZE CONTACT
AND INTERACTION

MAINTAIN PHYSICAL
DISTANCING

USE PHYSICAL BARRIERS

USE PERSONAL
PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Infection Control Procedures

There are several methods that can be used to reduce the potential for infection during the screening process³. These include, minimizing contact and interaction, physical distancing, using physical barriers and personal protective equipment.

- Self-administered temperature checks avoid the need for contact between the person being screened and a screener.
- Screeners always maintain 2 metres or 6 feet distance from the person being screened.
- Screener conducts checks from behind a physical barrier such as a screen or window that protects the screener's face and mucous membranes from respiratory droplets.
- If physical distancing or use of barriers is not possible, then the screener should use personal protective equipment while conducting the checks:
 - Face mask, eye protection (goggles or face shield), and gloves should be worn.
 - Gloves should be changed after any contact with a person being screened.
- Ensure that the screening area and any equipment or materials used are cleaned and sanitized frequently.
- Provide easily accessible handwashing or sanitizing facilities for the screener, people being screened, and those self-administering their own checks. Encourage both screeners and people being screened to wash hands with soap frequently.
 - All should wash hands when arriving at the workplace.
 - All should wash hands after touching or using any of the screening equipment or materials.
 - The screener should wash hands before and after contact with a person being screened.

³ CDC, 'General Business Frequently Asked Questions', Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 April 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html>.

Limitations of Entry Screening

There are some limitations and issues with entry screening. Consider the following points to ensure entry screening is the right option for your context:

- Entry screening does not guarantee that all cases of COVID-19 will be identified.
- A person with COVID-19 may not always have a fever.⁴
- A person with COVID-19 may have very mild symptoms or no symptoms at all.⁵
- COVID-19 symptoms are similar to many other illnesses, including the common cold, flu, and malaria.
- A person may have a fever that is not due to COVID-19; fevers can be caused by many other illnesses.
- Screening may include collecting and using personal health information; this may be subject to specific controls and regulations. Review local privacy laws to ensure you are protecting worker privacy.

Examples of Screening Questions and Self Administered Temperature Log

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Daily Screening Questionnaire

NAME _____ DATE _____

NAME OF INTERVIEWER _____

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- 1 Do you have a fever? (ake temperature: fever is a temperature of 37.3 C or greater)

 Yes No
- 2 Do you have any of the following symptoms or signs?

New or worsening cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Sore throat, difficulty swallowing, hoarse voice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Runny nose, sneezing, or nasal congestion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of smell or taste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Unexplained fatigue/irritability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Headache	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- 3 Have you travelled outside your country or had close contact with anyone that has travelled internationally in the past 14 days?

 Yes No
- 4 Have you had close contact* with anyone with respiratory illness or a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 while not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment?

 Yes No

*Close contact includes providing care, living with or otherwise having close prolonged contact (within 2 meters) with the person with ill, or contact with infectious bodily fluids (e.g. from a cough or sneeze) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.

Results of Screening Questions:

- If the individual answers **NO** to all questions from 1 through 4, they have passed. They should be told to self-monitor for symptoms and be reminded about the required temperature check at the end of the day.
- If the individual answers **YES** to any question from 1 through 4, they have not passed. They should go home to self-isolate immediately. Staff should contact their manager/immediate supervisor. Participants should be told to contact a primary care provider, local public health unit to discuss their symptoms and/or exposure and seek testing.

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Staff Temperature Log

NAME _____

Instructions

1. Take axillary (under the arm) temperature.
2. Take your temperature at the same time each day (eg: when you wake up and at 6pm).
3. Write down the exact temperature that it reads.
4. If greater than 37.3° celsius or 99.1° fahrenheit, isolate yourself at home, call your supervisor and the appropriate health authority and follow their instructions.
 - a. A 1° celsius increase from your normal temperature is considered to be a fever.
5. Keep the form up to date and available to be checked and reviewed periodically by your supervisor.

Example:

Date:	Temp 1	Time AM	Temp 2	Time PM	Symptoms (yes/no/describe)	
Monday	04-May	36.8	7:05	37.0	6:30	No

Date:	Temp 1	Time AM	Temp 2	Time PM	Symptoms (yes/no/describe)
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

4 Wei-jie Guan et al., 'Clinical Characteristics of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in China', New England Journal of Medicine 382, no. 18 (30 April 2020): 1708–20, <https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa2002032>.

5 Rongrong Yang, Xien Gui, and Yong Xiong, 'Comparison of Clinical Characteristics of Patients with Asymptomatic vs Symptomatic Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Wuhan, China', JAMA Network Open 3, no. 5 (1 May 2020): e2010182–e2010182, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.10182>.

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