



**BC NURSES'
UNION**

Standing up for health care

COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN

JULY 2021

Version 3.1

www.bcnu.org

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Our Actions

Gradual Reopening:

As the COVID-19 pandemic impacts begin to subside, public health officials have permitted certain aspects of the economy to reopen. Despite the permission of officials to do so, BCNU will be taking a cautious approach to reopening that assesses the public health situation, the ability for the BCNU Offices to safely be altered to allow social distancing, individual staff needs and the operational requirements of the organization.

Broadly speaking, this will be conducted in three phases. These phases will be as follows:

Phase 2: BCNU Offices will remain largely closed in accordance with the provincial health orders.

Phase 3: Activities which would be dramatically improved by employee attendance at BCNU Offices as well as the return of staff who have identified a need which may make their return to the office appropriate. This phase will be divided into several subphases for ease of planning purposes.

Phase 3.1: Examples of activities in Phase 3.1 shall include:

1. Bargaining for Collective Agreements;
2. On a case-by-case basis, in-person meetings shall be permitted between BCNU staff and membership conducted in BCNU Offices;
3. In person meetings conducted between BCNU staff, membership and employers on employer or off-site premises; and
4. Other similar events.

Each one of these actions shall have task-specific, safe-work practices as outlined in the Appendix section of this document.

During Phase 3.1, there shall be no further expansion of staff returning to BCNU Offices, beyond those that are required to complete the tasks outlined above or those who have special accommodations.

Phase 4: Complete reopening of all BCNU Offices and restoration of all normal business functions.

All following planning shall be limited to Phase 3.1 activities only. Subsequent plans shall be released for further Phase 3 subphases and Phase 4 as the COVID-19 pandemic develops.

As the COVID-19 pandemic situation improves, additional work areas will be identified and an expansion of BCNU employees working from our offices will occur.

Continuous Improvement:

This plan shall be considered a living document and may be amended or altered as direction from public health and occupational health and safety officials. This plan may be amended, in whole or in part, or suspended at any point. Notification of changes to this document will be made to all staff in accordance with the communications requirements within the plan.

This plan will be formally reviewed no less than once per week to ensure that it is meeting the needs of BCNU and all BCNU employees.

Our Spaces

Preparing our Buildings:

Prior to the opening of the BCNU Offices, a complete assessment of all spaces has been conducted. This included a physical assessment, a testing of building systems such as the HVAC and security systems and the alteration of many of our physical spaces.

Victoria and Kelowna Offices

All planning shall apply equally to Burnaby, Victoria and Kelowna offices.

Limiting Access:

To comply with social distancing requirements, BCNU will be continuing to take steps to limit the number of persons within BCNU Offices. This will include:

Sign In

All persons utilizing BCNU Offices, inclusive of staff, elected officials, members and visitors shall be asked to sign in and out during Phase 3.1 in a log located at the main entrance of each worksite.

Restricting Access

No person who has symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses shall be permitted to enter the BCNU Offices at any point. Signage will be posted at every entry point to this effect, including identifying known symptoms of COVID-19.

Remote Work

To minimize risk, staff are required to work remotely from home if their presence is not operationally required at the BCNU Offices during Phase 3.1 of our reopening plan.

Start Times and Entry Points

Should it become necessary, BCNU may incrementally alter start times of staff to maintain social distancing in high congestion areas such as hallways, elevators, etc. Staff shall be notified of any altered start time in accordance with Collective Agreements and shall be paid at appropriate rates of pay.

Hand sanitizer shall be available at all entry points. Staff must utilize hand sanitizer immediately prior to entering the building.

Member Use

During Phase 3.1, members may be granted access to the BCNU Offices in limited circumstances and only upon the express permission of an appropriate Director. In all cases, members shall be restricted to pre-designated areas of the building only and must wait in these locations for service. Further procedural guidance for member use of the building can be found in Appendix section of this document.

Council Use

During Phase 3.1, Council shall also be permitted to utilize the BCNU Offices on an as required basis. Council members are always expected to comply with all requirements of this plan.

Deliveries

In Phase 3.1, deliveries to BCNU Offices shall be limited to staff working at reception and in the shipping and receiving department. Delivery personnel shall not be permitted into BCNU Offices.

Food deliveries may be conducted to the BCNU Offices, but staff must select a contactless delivery option and arrange to pick up any food outside of the office.

Other Visitors

During Phase 3.1, collective bargaining activities may occur at the BCNU offices. Visitors conducting collective bargaining activities shall be escorted into and out of the building and shall be restricted to certain areas only and must comply with all safety processes. Additional procedures for visitors within the BCNU offices for the purposes of collective bargaining may be found in the Appendix section of this document.

Other visitors shall be permitted to enter the BCNU Offices during Phase 3.1, but visitor usage should be minimized. If visitors are required to enter the BCNU Offices, they shall be made aware of the contents of this plan prior to their arrival and shall be restricted to specific areas of the building only.

Meetings

In-person meetings shall be permitted during Phase 3.1. Every effort shall be taken to utilize video or tele-conference technology. When meetings must be conducted in person, attendance should be minimized to the smallest number of attendees possible and strict social distancing measures should be adhered to when possible. Additional processes for the conduct of in-person meetings can be found in the Appendix section of this document.

Controlling Flow in our Buildings:

Direction of Travel in Hallways

Directional travel is no longer required in BCNU buildings.

Elevator Use

Occupancy limits shall be posted on each elevator. At no time shall occupancy limits be exceeded. Locations where employees should stand while the elevator is in operation should be clearly marked in each elevator car.

Elevator panels shall be routinely disinfected by BCNU cleaning staff.

Priority shall be granted to those already in the elevator. Should parties meet at the door of the elevator, the right of way shall be given to those exiting the elevator. Those waiting for an elevator should remain two (2) meters from elevator doors to ensure separation between themselves and those that are inside the elevator car.

Signage:

Signage, informing employees of changes to procedures within the BCNU Offices, shall be clearly posted. Signage samples developed by WorkSafe BC can be found in the Appendix section of this plan.

Increasing Cleaning:

BCNU has increased the number of cleaning staff present in the building and will be ensuring that these

workers are appropriately trained in cleaning processes to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Enhanced cleaning techniques are being utilized during Phase 3.1. These enhanced cleaning protocols will include high risk areas such as doors, bathrooms and other common areas, as well as periodic deep cleans and advanced germicidal techniques.

Bathrooms

Bathroom cleaning shall be increased, and a schedule of cleaning posted on each bathroom door. Capacity shall be reduced in non-single use bathrooms to ensure social distancing.

Designated bathrooms for visitors and members shall be clearly marked. Staff shall not use these bathrooms.

Frequently Touched Surfaces

Frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, elevator touch panels and other high touch surfaces shall receive enhanced cleaning. Additionally, hand sanitizer stations shall be placed near high touch areas. Employees are required to wash or sanitize their hands prior to and following touching high touch surfaces.

Creating Distance:

Open Workspaces

Employees who normally work at workstations that are not separated by walls shall have their workspace arranged in such a way as to maintain an enhanced social distancing between other persons or hallways. If this is not operationally feasible, effective barriers such as plexiglass or other similar materials to limit possible exposure shall be installed prior to the use of these areas. Employees shall not share work terminals or desks at any point.

Whenever possible, communal doors shall remain open to minimize contact with door handles or other surfaces.

Private Offices

Employees who work in private offices shall attempt to remain within their office, with the door closed, whenever possible. Employees shall not enter the office of another employee at any time and staff shall not share work terminals or desks at any point.

Room Limits

All meeting rooms and other areas shall have their occupancy limited and those limits clearly posted on the entry doors. Furniture in each meeting room shall be arranged in such a way as to create social distancing. Employees shall not move furniture or rearrange chairs or tables in any meeting room.

Rooms which are used for collective bargaining or for in-person meetings shall be clearly marked and shall not be used except for these purposes.

Common Spaces

Access to common spaces and lounge areas shall be limited to promote social distancing. Staff shall not move tables or chairs and shall always be mindful of social distancing.

Common areas used during collective bargaining shall be clearly marked and shall not be used except for these purposes.

Outdoor Areas

All outdoor areas can be accessed by staff. Social distancing of two meters should be always adhered to.

Visitors and members may not access roof top gardens or courtyards.

Smoking is not permitted on BCNU property. Those who smoke must do so off BCNU property and should always maintain social distancing of two meters.

Office Equipment

Efforts shall be made to limit the number of staff utilizing common office equipment such as photocopiers, fax machines and printing equipment. This shall be arranged by individual managers or coordinators and every effort shall be taken to limit this number to the lowest possible number of employees. High touch areas such as keypads and paper trays shall be routinely disinfected by cleaning staff. Staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to and after utilizing common office equipment.

Visitors and members shall not be permitted to utilize common office equipment. Arrangements shall be made to provide this service using BCNU staff if required.

Staff should not share stationary or other office equipment. Staff shall be permitted to order any stationary required to avoid sharing. Orders for supplies must be made through Purchasing.

Kitchens and Lunchrooms

Access to kitchens shall be limited. No reusable plates, glasses, mugs or cutlery shall be available for staff use during Phase 3.1. Staff may bring their own plates, glasses, mugs, water bottles and/or cutlery but these must be taken home each day for cleaning. Disposable water and coffee cups shall be made available.

Access to BCNU fridges and microwaves shall be limited to those with dietary or other restrictions which require the refrigeration or heating of food or medication. Staff, members or visitors who require access to fridges and microwaves for dietary or medical purposes must identify these needs to the appropriate Director. Fridge and microwave handles and surfaces shall be routinely disinfected by cleaning staff.

Staff, visitors and members must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to and after utilizing fridges or microwaves. All staff may bring their lunch in coolers should they wish. Coolers shall be taken home each day. Due to fire risk, staff may not bring in any device used for heating food.

Controls for coffee, water and vending machines shall be routinely disinfected by cleaning staff. Staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to and after utilizing coffee, water and vending machines.

Access to lunchrooms shall be limited. Occupancy limits shall be posted, and furniture arranged to increase social distancing. Employees shall not move furniture within lunchrooms or kitchens. Employees must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to and after utilizing lunchrooms. Staff are authorized to eat at their desks but should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately prior to and after eating.

Shared food shall not be permitted in any kitchen or lunchroom and staff should not share food with each other at any point.

Catering

Use of catering shall be limited and shall only be undertaken with the express permission of the Chief Operating Officer. At no time shall communal food be offered. All catering provided shall be in individual packaging only.

Restricted Areas

Areas which cannot be made safe or are being used for storage shall be designated as restricted. Signage shall be clearly posted on entryways to these areas. Employees shall not enter these areas without the expressed permission of the Chief Operating Officer.

First Aid

First Aid will continue to be rendered but care must be taken to avoid exposure to COVID-19. Staff who become symptomatic for respiratory illness or and COVID-19 symptoms must inform the First Aid Attendant, prior to contact and by electronic means if possible.

First Aid Attendants who are treating a patient who cannot communicate their symptoms must assume that there is a risk of COVID-19 and take all appropriate precautions including the use of PPE. Appropriate PPE will be made available for first aid attendants and will be stored in the First Aid room. First Aid Attendants shall receive training in the donning, doffing and safe use of this PPE prior to use. CPR or other First Aid practices may generate aerosols and droplets which could carry COVID-19. Should First Aid be required, staff without appropriate PPE should not approach a person receiving First Aid.

Additional information can be found in the Appendix of this document.

Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer Stations:

Hand washing and/or the use of hand sanitizer is an effective way to limit the spread of COVID-19. Hand sanitizer stations are being installed at all key locations in the BCNU office. Staff are expected to maintain an extreme level of diligence in hand hygiene.

PPE Use:

Following the hierarchy of control, personal protective equipment (PPE) is considered as a last option for halting possible COVID-19 transmission. While PPE is commonly used amongst our membership in healthcare settings, BCNU is committed to using more effective controls such as administrative and engineered controls such as social distancing and physical barriers whenever possible.

PPE Availability

All employees who are asked to attend BCNU Offices will be issued one non-medical face mask. Additional supplies of medical grade PPE will be available in the First Aid room.

In accordance with public health recommendations, staff are required to wear medical or non-medical face masks or face coverings while attending any BCNU event or workplace during Phase 3.1. Staff may wear medical or non-medical face masks or face coverings which they have acquired themselves, although BCNU cannot comment on the effectiveness of these products at stopping the virus.

Visitors and members who enter BCNU Offices are requested to wear a medical or non-medical face mask or face covering at all times that they are present in the BCNU Offices, with the exception of while eating or drinking.

PPE Training

Masks or face coverings do not provide complete protection against COVID-19.

If used, masks or face coverings should:

- > fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops;
- > maintain their shape;
- > be made of at least two layers of tightly woven material (such as cotton or linen); and
- > be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping.

Masks or face coverings should not be placed on or used by:

- > anyone who has trouble breathing; and
- > anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

When wearing a mask or face covering, you should:

- > wash your hands immediately before putting it on and immediately after taking it off;
- > make sure the face covering fits well around your nose and mouth;
- > avoid moving the mask around or adjusting it often;
- > avoid touching the covering while using it; and
- > not share it with others.

Masks or face coverings should be changed when they get wet or dirty.

Our Needs

Our Jobs Away from our Buildings:

Air Travel

All air travel shall be permitted and shall only be authorized upon the permission of the relevant Director or delegated Manager or Coordinator during Phase 3.1.

Those who are travelling by aircraft will be required to receive additional safety training prior to flying and must comply with all requirements set forward by both the air carrier and Transport Canada or other similar body.

Shared Motor Vehicle Travel

During Phase 3.1 travel by taxi or ride share shall also be permitted, as required.

Hotel Use

Hotels may be utilized on an as required basis by staff during Phase 3.1. All staff must follow the COVID-19 Safety Plan or Infectious Disease Plan of the hotel and should request this prior to their stay.

Meetings Conducted Off BCNU Sites

During Phase 3.1, staff may need to conduct off-site meetings. Every effort should be made to conduct such meetings via video or tele-conference. If this is not possible, staff may conduct off-site meetings.

Employees shall be required to adhere to strict social distancing and handwashing protocols. Employees should request and review the COVID-19 Safety Plan or Infectious Disease Plan for the site where the meeting is being conducted prior to attending the meeting. Additional information may be found in the Appendices of this document.

Our People

Sickness and Sick Leave:

Any employee experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness are not permitted to enter BCNU Offices. Staff who are ill or subject to a public health order to isolate should take sick leave or work from home, as appropriate. Those who have come in contact with a COVID-19 positive person should also work from home for 14 days and monitor for symptoms. Staff who deplete their sick leave bank may be granted special leave on a case-by-case basis.

Employees who begin to feel ill at work, even with mild symptoms, should immediately report this to their supervisor and a First Aid Attendant. Additional information for First Aid Attendants can be found in the Appendix section of this document. Employees should then immediately wash their hands, or use sanitizer, don a mask or other facial covering, and seek appropriate medical attention. If the employee cannot transport themselves home, emergency services should be called.

Communications:

This plan shall be sent to all BCNU staff by electronic means and shall be available on the BCNU intranet. A hard copy shall be prominently posted at the reception desk of each BCNU office.

Directors, Managers and Coordinators must understand all applicable provisions of this plan and are responsible for enforcing those provisions amongst staff who have returned to BCNU Offices.

Other Related Policies:

This COVID-19 Safety Plan may reinforce our working from home or working alone policies and procedures as well as other policies and procedures including IT, security and timekeeping.

COVID-19 Plan Impact on Other Policies

When there is conflict with this plan and an existing BCNU policy or procedure, this plan shall be considered correct.

Appendixes

WorkSafeBC Posters: Help prevent the spread of COVID-19

[Cover coughs and sneezes](#)

[Hand washing](#)

[How to use a mask](#)

[Occupancy limit](#)

Occupational First Aid Attendant COVID-19 Instructions:

[First aid attendants' protocols](#)

JOHSC Membership:

- > Christopher Rickinson, Employer rep (Co-Chair)
- > Melody McGowan - Employer rep
- > Michelle Wijesinghe -Worker rep (USW 2009) (Co-Chair)
- > Jacquie Matinde- Worker rep (USW 2009)
- > Maria Cuellar - Worker rep (MoveUp)
- > Dhanu Mohankumar - Worker rep (MoveUp)
- > Leanne Anderson - Worker rep for Kelowna Office
- > Melanie Steer - Worker rep for Victoria Office

Incident Reporting Forms:

[Worker's Report of Injury or
Occupational Disease](#)