

COVID-19 Guidelines for Personal Service Settings

This guidance is to support owners/operators on how to reopen personal services settings while reducing the risk of staff and clients from contracting COVID-19. Personal service settings (PSS) include hairstyling and barbering, tattooing, micropigmentation, ear and body piercing, electrolysis, nail salons, and aesthetic services. For information on reopening businesses and workplaces during the COVID-19 pandemic, please refer to the [4-Step Public Health Planning Guide](#).

You are advised to start preparing now for re-opening, but you are not permitted to start operating services until the revised Order under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act is announced by the Provincial Government and comes into effect. Please note that that announcement may contain conditions which result in amendments to the guidance below.

Personal Service Settings must comply with the [PSS Regulation](#) in addition to [Ontario's Emergency Orders](#) and guidance from Toronto Public Health.

COVID-19 Transmission

Respiratory transmission: [COVID-19](#) is an illness that is spread mainly from person-to-person through close contact from respiratory droplets of someone with COVID-19. The respiratory droplets can travel up to two metres/six feet when we cough, sneeze or talk.

Contaminated surfaces: It is possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. This new coronavirus can survive on plastic and stainless steel surfaces for [up to 72 hours](#).

Protective Measures to Keep Everyone Safe

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Keep a two metre/six feet distance from others, when possible.
- Wash your hands often, and avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Wear a face mask or covering when you are in an enclosed, public setting.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Employee Health Screening and Attendance

- Communicate to staff about the changes being made to protect them against COVID-19 by posting signage, updating information to the website or voice mail, etc.
- Ensure all staff complete a health screening questionnaire before each shift. The questions can be completed on paper or ask your staff directly. See our [employee screening form](#).
- Stagger or adjust working hours and shifts to reduce the number of staff in your business.
- Have a flexible sick policy so staff do not come to work sick.
- Remind employees about the importance of reporting illness to their supervisor/manager.
- If employees become sick with COVID-19 [symptoms](#), while at work, they should go home right away and [self-isolate](#).
- Instruct staff to call Telehealth, their health care provider or an [Assessment Centre](#) to get tested.

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- In general, employees can return to work 14 days after their symptoms began if they had COVID-19.
- There are no tests for staff to do to be cleared to return to work.
- For other illnesses, or if an employee has tested negative for COVID-19, they should not attend work until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Prevent COVID-19 Outbreaks

- Maintain records of staff and clients to support public health contact tracing efforts (i.e. name, date, time, contact information).
- If a customer or staff have COVID-19 and were contagious while at the shop, public health will investigate and notify staff and customers who may have been exposed. This may include instructions for staff to self-isolate or self-monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Anyone with even one symptom should get tested and stay home.
- Public health will advise of any additional cleaning and disinfecting measures needed to reduce the risk of spread in the setting.

Measures to Encourage Physical Distancing

- Take a walk through the premise/workplace to identify areas needing adjustments, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, based on public health requirements.
- Calculate the number of clients allowed on the premises for ease of movement while maintaining two metres/six feet of distance from others. Estimate 50%, or one person per 10 square metres (whichever is lower). *Note this requirement may be updated or changed based on provincial regulations.*
- Communicate to customers about the changes you have made to protect them against COVID-19, including by posting signage, updating information to your website or voice mail, etc.
- Limit entrances to control staff and customers entering the premise at any given time.
- Limit customer appointments to allow adequate space to maintain physical distancing between customers and staff.
- Do not allow clients to bring guests to the appointment, including children.
- Post [physical distancing signs](#) at all entrances, by cashiers or service counters.
- Provide visible cues such as tape, stickers or safety cones every two metres/six feet for customers lining up when waiting outside.
- Place markers or circles indoors so the clients know where to stand when interacting with staff.
- Remove non-essential furniture, to allow ease of movement for physical distancing.
- Install plexiglass and other barriers if possible, where there will be close contact between staff and clients, between workstations and at the checkout.
- Do not have clients wait in a waiting room. Ask clients to call when they arrive and wait outside or in their car.
- Walk-in clients must call from outside the business or in their cars before they can enter.
- Staff should remind clients to stay two metres/six feet apart, as much as possible.
- Discourage staff from congregating in lunchroom/common areas.
- When it is not possible to maintain a two metres distance, staff and clients should both wear a mask.
- Use tap features at checkout instead of cash, where possible.

Customer Screening

- Screen clients over the phone prior to booking an appointment.
- Place [posters](#) at the entrance to ensure clients do not enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms.
- People with symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed into the premise to avoid spreading the virus to staff and other clients.
- Offer to reschedule appointments for clients, when they are sick.

Cloth Masks & Face Coverings for Customers

- Cloth masks and face covers should be worn by customers and staff.
- Provide disposable masks for clients who have not brought their own.
- Not all customers will be able to tolerate a mask. Alternative ways to provide service to these individuals should be considered. For example, providing service at the end of the day, with no other customers in the location, and keeping a six feet physical distance as much as possible.

Support and Encourage Proper Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Educate employees on proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
 - Wash hands with liquid soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds frequently, before and after the handling of personal protective equipment and after each interaction.
 - Cover cough or sneeze with the elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash hands.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with 70-90% alcohol concentration) in a dispenser for staff and customers to use.
- Continue to top up the supply of soap and paper towels throughout the day.
- Post [Hand Washing](#), [Cover your Cough](#) and [Hand Sanitizing](#) signage in visible locations.

Support and Encourage Proper Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Provide staff training on the proper use of PPE and the importance of other infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures (e.g. hand hygiene, physical distancing).
- [Non-medical masks or face coverings](#) should be used when physical distancing cannot be maintained and when providing service to customers.
- Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering will protect others from the wearer's respiratory droplets and germs.
- Staff should receive clear instructions on the [proper use](#) of masks, when and [how to safely put on and take off a mask](#).
- Use of disposable gloves is not a substitute for proper hand hygiene.
- If employees use gloves, it is important to change gloves when changing tasks, after every client, or more often, as necessary.
- When gloves are removed, new gloves must be used each time. Wash hands with soap and water for 15 seconds before putting on and after taking off gloves.
- If goggles and face shields are used, they should be labeled to the assigned staff and disinfected routinely.
- Employees should not share PPE.

Laundry

- Dirty towels and linens must be placed in a lined laundry bin for washing with hot water and detergent using a washing machine. Dryers should be used as the heat further kills any viruses.
- Laundry baskets or reusable bags must be sanitized between uses and should not be used for clean towels/capes.
- Use a clean cape for each client, and consider using a disposable barrier between the client and their skin. Clean and disinfect capes between clients.
- Use a clean towel, not a neck brush, to remove loose hair.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection

- Cleaning, disinfecting or sterilization of items should continue as indicated in the Personal Services Setting Regulation, including tools, equipment, shampoo bowls, manicure tables, chairs, workstations, etc., and other products after every use.
- Ensure high touch areas and all equipment are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before opening.
- Remove magazines and soft/porous items such as cushions and rugs that are difficult to sanitize.
- When scheduling appointments, allow additional time between clients for proper cleaning and disinfection of workstations and equipment.
- Ensure frequent [cleaning and disinfecting](#) of high-touch surfaces and common areas such as door handles, counters, cabinet doors, light switches, faucets, toilet handles, handrails, touch screen surfaces and keypads.
- Where possible, use disposable, single-use supplies.
- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
- Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN) that confirms it is approved for use in Canada.
- Check the expiry dates of products you use, and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Chlorine bleach solutions may be prepared and used for disinfection if appropriate for the surface.
- Ensure a minimum of two minutes disinfectant contact time and allow to air dry.
- Ensure single-use items, including masks and gloves, are discarded immediately after use to reduce the risk of contamination. Garbage bins should be lined and disposed of regularly.

Service specific requirements and checklists will be forthcoming for the following sectors:

- Hairstyling and barbering
- Manicure/pedicure and aesthetic services
- Tattooing and ear/body piercing

Download and Print Posters for your Workplace

[Physical Distancing](#)

[Protect yourself](#)

[COVID-19 - Cover Your Cough](#)

[How to safely put on and take off a mask](#)

[Posters and Staff Screening Questionnaires](#)

Other Resources

[Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings, 3rd Edition](#)

[Province of Ontario Guidance to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#)

[Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety COVID-19 Tip Sheets](#)

More Information

As information changes frequently, please visit www.toronto.ca/COVID19 to stay up to date. Information for Personal Service Settings is also available at [BodySafe](#) or 416-338-BODY (2639).