



RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Workplace Safety for Employers and Employees

For Employers

1. What is my responsibility as an employer?

Under Ontario law, employers have the duty to keep workers and workplaces safe and free of hazards, including COVID-19. It is critical that employers take responsibility for ensuring the appropriate measures are in place. **Employers should:**

- Direct employees to complete the COVID-19 [self-assessment](#) tool **daily** to help monitor for symptoms and proper guidance.
- Support employees who are instructed by the self-assessment tool to remain at home and self-isolate. Ensure the employee contacts the Renfrew County Virtual Triage Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) at 1-844-727-6404 to book an appointment for testing. If the employee does not want to be tested, they must self-isolate for 14 days and can return to work when it has been 24 hours since symptoms started improving.
- Send employees home from work if they are sick or symptomatic and instruct them to remain at home, [self-isolate and](#) contact the Renfrew County Virtual Triage Assessment Centre to book an appointment for testing.
- Ensure that employees wear appropriate personal protective equipment at all times, including [masks and facial coverings](#), practice [physical distancing](#), thorough hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Ensure that commonly touched surfaces are regularly [disinfected](#) throughout the workplace.
- Consider policies and practices such as teleworking arrangements, flexible hours, staggering start times for employees, use of email and teleconferencing.
- Prepare a contingency plan for possible increased numbers of employee absences due to illness in employees and their family members.

2. What should I do if my employee is being tested for COVID-19?

- While the individual is waiting for test results, the individual should not go to work and should [self-isolate](#).
- There are other situations where your employees may be asked by Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) to [self-isolate](#) such as being a close contact of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. RCDHU strongly recommends that you support the guidance your employees have received from any health authority.



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- Ensure to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces often. Use Public Health Ontario's resource on [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings – COVID-19](#).
- Ensure that you apply the necessary public health measures in your workplace such as [physical distancing](#), [wearing a mask/face covering](#), hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

3. What actions do I take if one of my employees has tested positive for COVID-19?

- Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 are directed to [self-isolate](#) and will be contacted by RCDHU and provided further guidance.
- Staff members who have had close contact with this employee should self-isolate and will be contacted by RCDHU and provided further guidance.
- If you receive questions from your employees, direct them to RCDHU's [novel coronavirus COVID-19 webpage](#).
- Review and follow Public Health Ontario's resource for [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings – COVID-19](#).

4. What actions do I take if one of my employees is a close contact of an individual who tests positive for COVID-19?

- Employees who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by RCDHU and provided further guidance.
- They will receive education and instruction from RCDHU on [self-monitoring and/or self-isolation](#). If your employee has received public health advice to self-isolate, they should NOT be going into work.

5. Will I be asked to close my business if one of my employees or patrons tests positive for COVID-19?

- RCDHU will be in contact with your business and will work with you to conduct a risk assessment. Recommendations will be made in support of workplace health and safety.

6. What should I do if a visitor or patron to my business has tested positive for COVID-19?

- An individual who tests positive will be directed to [self-isolate](#). They should NOT be accessing public spaces or businesses.



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- RCDHU will be in contact with individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and the people they have been in close contact with on a daily basis to provide education and guidance on their self-isolation period, and when it can be discontinued.

7. What is the role of the employer if RCDHU provides notification that an outbreak has been declared at my workplace?

The role of the employer includes:

- Taking all precautions reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker, as stated in the [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#).
- Implementing prevention measures found in guidance issued by the Ontario government and any specific prevention measures recommended by public health agencies.
- Complying with OHSA and other applicable legislation and regulations, and any orders issued by the [Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development \(MLTSD\)](#).
- Providing notices of an occupational illness to the MLTSD under ss 52(2) of the OHSA.
- Cooperating with public health investigations and MLTSD OHSA inspectors.
- Complying with recommendations and/or orders issued by RCDHU and OHSA inspectors.
- Maintaining accurate shift records and up-to-date contact information for employees.
- Communicate with staff and other stakeholders, as needed, when there is an outbreak.

For Employees

1. What actions should I take before I go to work each day?

- Complete the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) before going to work.
- Follow your workplace screening policies.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Bring only what you need into the building and make sure these items are clean.

2. What actions do I take if I am sick?

- Stay at home. Do not enter your workplace.
- [Self-isolate](#) at home and complete the online [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#).
- If you are directed to get a COVID-19 test, contact the [Renfrew County Virtual Triage Assessment Centre \(RC VTAC\)](#) at 1-844-727-6404 to book an appointment.



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- While you are waiting for your test results, your household contacts should be [self-monitoring](#) for symptoms. If the test is positive for COVID-19 then follow public health advice and RCDHU will contact you with further instruction.

3. What should I do to keep myself safe while at work?

- Employees must work with their employers to adhere to all local public health measures.
- If a worker has concerns that a co-worker has COVID-19 symptoms, the worker should raise concerns with a supervisor, joint health and safety committee, or a health and safety representative.
- Employees who have questions or concerns regarding safety in the workplace can contact the Ontario [Health and Safety Contact Centre](#) at 1-877-202-0008.