



# 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 10 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](#), eye protection as required, 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](#), 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 provincial and 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.