



COVID-19 Safety Plan

Effective June 1, 2020

In order to continue to reduce the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, services provided and the workplace environment have been modified by the use of a number of actions. This safety plan has been developed as per the guidelines provided by WorkSafe BC (COVID-19 and returning to safe operation – Phase 2) and in compliance with industry specific WorkSafe standards for offices and in-person counselling.

Core Personal Measures:

It is expected that all staff will observe the following guidelines of personal self-care in order to reduce transmission of the COVID-19 virus:

- No handshaking or physical contact (ie high fives)
- Practice good hygiene (frequent hand washing with soap and water and use of hand sanitizers, avoid touching one's face, practice respiratory etiquette such as coughing into one's elbow, disinfect frequently touched surfaces)
- Maintain reasonable physical distancing as much as possible
- Stay at home if sick or if one has symptoms of COVID-19 (see page 3)
- If one is at increased risk of a more severe illness because they are over 60 years old, or have compromised immune systems or an underlying chronic medical condition, they are to consult with their direct supervisor around extra precautions.

Physical Distancing:

In order to decrease the number of people in the office, staff will continue to work remotely most of the time. Front-line staff will have a maximum of one in-office day per week.

Staff schedules have been created taking into consideration placement of desks, so there is always a minimum of two metres between desks of staff working at a given time. In-person services will be provided only if necessary. Virtual services may continue to be offered from the office or from home.

Clients are to be seen only in designated large counselling rooms and the group room where there is space for adequate physical distancing. Only one worker will be assigned to each room on a given day in order to avoid sharing of equipment.

Groups will continue to be provided online. Team meetings, committee meetings, and board meetings will be run through Zoom, unless the group is small enough and the space large enough to provide adequate physical distancing.

Parents will not be permitted to wait in the waiting room for their child while in counselling unless they are specifically required to (such as when there is a Behaviour Support Plan in place). Two chairs are provided in the waiting room in #203 in order to accommodate these circumstances. Clients will be encouraged to come promptly on time for their appointments (not early) in order to minimize waiting room traffic.

Staff will be responsible to ensure that only one person is in the kitchen at a time, and to stagger bringing clients through corridors to the therapy rooms. A maximum of five people may be in the counsellor's shared office area at one time, however only for brief periods (ie. passing through).

A maximum of three people may be working in the counselling office area, and one person in the PSP office, at one time. A maximum of two individuals may be in the #203 waiting room at a given time, in addition to the Administrative Assistant at their desk.

Engineering Controls:

As mentioned above, only larger therapy rooms will be utilized in order to maximize physical distancing, with the expectation that there be a minimum of two meters between the staff person and the client in the room. Clients who are family members from the same household may sit in closer proximity to each other. In addition, plexiglass barriers will be utilized at the reception desks to protect administrative staff. Hand sanitizers will be made available in every room as well as the waiting room, and clients will be expected to sanitize their hands prior to entry into counselling rooms.

Administrative Controls:

As outlined above, staff working hours in the office will be scheduled to ensure physical distancing. Remote services will continue to be offered to clients. There will be zero tolerance for staff to come in to the office who have displayed symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 10 days, or if anybody in their immediate household have displayed the symptoms in the past 10 days.

These symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache. They are also not to come in to the office if they have been ordered by Public Health to self-isolate. If they have had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, they must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor symptoms. If any of these conditions apply but staff do not feel “too sick to work” they can work from home until the conditions no longer apply.

In addition, there will be zero tolerance for clients to come in while displaying the above symptoms. Clients are to be informed of this policy, and will be asked when booking appointments if they have symptoms. Clients will be turned away if they come to the office with symptoms. Sessions can be provided remotely from the office for those clients who are displaying symptoms and cannot attend their scheduled in-person session.

Clients will provide informed consent for in-person service during COVID-19.

Cleaning frequency of high touch areas will be increased from weekly to daily. This will include the plexiglass barriers and shared equipment such as copy machines.

Sessions will be staggered to allow for wiping down of counselling rooms and toys that were used between each session.

Staff are to use their own equipment such as therapy tools, computers and pens, and wipe down shared equipment after use.

Clients will be encouraged to bring their own pens for completing forms.

First Aid personnel will be provided with OFAA protocols for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Personal Protective Equipment:

According to WorkSafe BC, the use of personal protective equipment (ie. non-medical masks) is the least effective measure in the hierarchy of risk control. However, as air is re-circulated through the office and we are unable to open windows, the wearing of masks is a prudent protective measure. For this reason, clients over 12 years old will be required to wear masks while in the office. If they do not have their own masks, disposable masks will be provided to them. Staff are also required to wear non-medical masks or other face covering while in the presence of other staff or clients over 12 years old. Masks will not be required for staff persons alone in a room.