

Communicable Disease Plan 2021

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Introduction

This Communicable Disease Plan is designed to promote the health and safety of college employees and students by providing information that can be used to prevent the contraction and spread of communicable diseases and the appropriate response to a communicable disease outbreak. **A communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from one person to another.**

Health and Safety in conjunction with Human Resources and Communications & Marketing will alert the campus community when there is a communicable disease threat affecting members of the college community.

College communicable disease prevention, mitigation, and response activities are guided by the Communicable Disease Safety Plan. In the event of an emergency, Coast Mountain College will work with the Northern Health Authority, notify the college community of the emergency, take actions to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors, and provide additional guidance if necessary.

Scope

Communicable diseases falling within the scope of this Plan are those typically caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites and normally spread through direct or indirect human contact or through the consumption of contaminated food/water. Examples of communicable diseases include but are not limited to:

- Coronavirus
- Hepatitis A
- Norovirus
- Influenza
- Measles
- Meningococcal
- Meningitis
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Tuberculosis

Prevent

Preventing communicable disease involves **taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk of communicable disease transmission in the workplace.**

Vaccines, antibiotics, antivirals, innate immunity, and/or acquired immunity can provide some protection against certain communicable diseases.

Not all communicable diseases are treatable, nor are current treatments guaranteed to protect against a communicable disease. Therefore, it is important to limit the spread of a communicable disease before it has the potential to cause serious illness/disease by **implementing the prevention measures:**

- Daily health checks (self-assessment).
- Return/ stay home when feeling ill.
- Follow illness reporting processes.
- Follow government and public health directives.
- Wash your hands well and often.
- Personal hygiene.
- Routine cleaning of facilities and high-touch surfaces.
- Practice a healthy lifestyle; exercise, eat a balanced diet, and get sufficient sleep.
- Handle and prepare food safely: keep foods at a correct temperature, cook foods (especially meat) thoroughly, wash produce, and observe expiration dates.
- Follow universal precautions when working with bloodborne pathogens.
- Avoid travel, public places, work, and school when sick to prevent the spread of communicable disease.
- Maintain appropriate immunizations and vaccinations based upon the health region in which you live and work, your exposure and in accordance with your physician's recommendations.

Identify

The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level, or within the workplace.

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a communicable disease and understanding the modes of transmission is the first step in reducing the incidence of disease associated with communicable diseases.

Signs and symptoms will vary depending on the disease, but common characteristics associated at the onset of most communicable diseases typically include fever and other flu-like symptoms: achiness, upset stomach, fatigue, fever, and headaches. When traveling abroad, be aware of communicable disease threats; certain communicable diseases are endemic to certain regions of the world.

Plan

It is important to have a plan in place within your unit or department to respond to staffing and other business issues that may arise during a communicable disease emergency or whenever employees are unable to attend work due to illness.

A unit plan should address:

- Designate employees who will work during a communicable disease emergency either onsite or at an alternate location.
- Cross train staff to provide levels of backup for critical positions.
- Develop temporary remote work arrangements with those staff who may have to work from an alternate location.

Respond

The following procedures are to be followed whenever a communicable disease emergency such as a regional communicable disease outbreak, pandemic, or public health emergency is declared by local, provincial or national officials.

For routine, seasonal, or individual health issues, consult your healthcare provider. Routine, seasonal, and individual health issues DO NOT need to be reported to the College unless advised to do so by your healthcare provider.

Employees

An employee who is diagnosed with or believe they have a communicable disease must:

- *Stay or return home and avoid any further travel and any close contact with others.*
- *Seek and follow medical advice.*
- *Inform your Supervisor of your condition or diagnosis and relay and pertinent information provided to you by your healthcare provider.*
- *Familiarize yourself with any medical benefits and supports available to you.*
- *Do not return to campus until you have been advised by a health care professional that it is safe to do so.*

Notify your supervisor; and

- *Record your time away from work as sick leave.*
- *Work with your Dean or Manager to make any necessary adjustments to mitigate impacts on delivery and student success.*
- *Use antibiotics and antivirals appropriately and exactly as prescribed for the full duration of the prescription — do not self-medicate or share medicines with others.*
- *Maintain awareness of communicable disease and the progression and nature of any specific communicable disease emergency by monitoring reliable media outlets communications from the college and direction from your public health authority.*

Supervisors

Supervisors who become aware of an employee under their supervision who exhibits communicable disease symptoms or is diagnosed with a communicable disease must not release the employee's name, identifying information, or condition to other employees.

Supervisors should remain in contact with a employee and work with the employee on a healthy and safe return to work, ensuring that the HR Department is promptly notified of sick leave usage.

Supervisors who become aware of an employee under their supervision who has contracted a communicable disease through a verified contact at work or because of an outbreak will contact HR Department.

Supervisors and employees can contact Human Resources with any questions or concerns they may have regarding workplace issues surrounding communicable disease.

Students

A student who is diagnosed with or believes they have a communicable disease must:

- *Stay or return home and avoid any further travel and close contact with others.*
- *Seek and follow medical advice.*
- *Inform your instructor and accessibility services of your condition or diagnosis and relay and pertinent information provided to you by your healthcare provider.*
- *Familiarize yourself with any medical benefits and supports available to you.*
- *Use antibiotics and antivirals appropriately and exactly as prescribed for the full duration of the prescription — do not self-medicate or share medications with others.*
- *Maintain awareness of communicable disease and the progression and nature of any specific communicable disease emergency by monitoring reliable media outlets communications from the college and direction from your public health authority.*

Returning to Learning or Work

Prior to returning to learning and work on campus, students and employees must take precautions to prevent spreading a communicable disease by ensuring that symptoms have passed.

Remain at home if contagious, and, follow the advice of public health or a health care professional for guidance or clearance to return to your regular activities.

Confidentiality

All student and employee medical information is treated as private and confidential and will be handled in compliance with legal requirements and professional ethical standards.

Communication, education and training

Communicable diseases and prevention is for the health and safety of our community. Information is intended for all employees, students, visitors, contractors and subcontractors. CMTN shares information through:

- Health and safety information on CMTN main webpage, Return to Campus page, social media channels.
- All CMTN employee emails and Sharepoint resources – sent on a regular basis, with safe work procedures and resources updated regularly.
- Student emails – sent at regular intervals
- Visitor and contractor information – sent via email and on the CMTN main webpage.
- Signage increasing awareness and promoting appropriate practices posted in high visibility locations throughout work and learning spaces.

Review

This document will be reviewed on a regular basis for the prevention of communicable diseases.

APPENDIX A: Higher Potential Disease Descriptions

Name	Vaccine Preventable?	Description of Symptoms
Measles (Rubella)	Yes	Symptoms: high fever; cough; runny nose; red/watery eyes; tiny white spots (Koplik spots) in mouth; rash Transmission: coughing and sneezing; virus can live up to two hours in contaminated air or on a surface
Meningitis	Yes	BACTERIAL Symptoms: fever; headache; stiff neck; nausea; vomiting; sensitivity to light; confusion Transmission: germs spread person-to-person (depends on type of bacteria) VIRAL Symptoms: fever; headache; stiff neck; sensitivity to bright light; sleepiness or trouble waking up from sleep; nausea; irritability; vomiting; lack of appetite; lethargy Transmission: caused by other viruses like mumps, measles, influenza, etc.
Mumps	Yes	Symptoms: fever; headache; muscle aches; tiredness; loss of appetite; swollen/tender salivary glands approximately 16-18 days after infection Transmission: coughing, sneezing, or talking; sharing items; touching contaminated objects
Norovirus	No	Symptoms: diarrhea; vomiting; nausea; stomach pain Transmission: contaminated food or drink; touching contaminated surfaces and then putting fingers in mouth; having direct contact with someone who is infected
Coronavirus (COVID-19)	Yes	Symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties Transmission: Person-to-person via droplets, coughing, sneezing, or talking; sharing items; touching contaminated objects
Influenza	Yes	Symptoms: fever; cough; sore throat; runny or stuffy nose; muscle/body aches; headaches; fatigue; sometimes vomiting and diarrhea Transmission: person-to-person via droplets
Varicella (Chicken Pox)	Yes	Symptoms: fever; tiredness; loss of appetite; headache; itchy, fluid-filled blisters Transmission: touching or breathing in the virus particles that come from the blisters

APPENDIX B: Inclusion and Vaccination Support

CMTN encourages vaccination against communicable disease for the health and safety of our community.

CMTN provides vaccination support by means of:

- Promoting information and awareness of vaccinations through trusted sources.
- Paid leave for employees accessing their vaccinations.
- On-campus and pharmacy-arranged vaccination clinics for employees and students.
- Free vaccinations for employees required to obtain them due to high occupational risk and as determined in conjunction with HR and Health and Safety.

CMTN supports inclusion in work and learning. When an individual is unable to wear a mask, be vaccinated, or may otherwise require accommodations to ensure their inclusion in learning or work, confidential support is available to ensure that alternative risk-control measures are considered and put in place. Employees work with their Manager and the HR Department, and students work with their instructor and accessibility services.

All information pertaining to an individual's health, including vaccination status are a matter of personal, medical privacy.

No one should be requiring that any individual disclose their vaccination status where this information is not required for occupational health and safety without consulting with Human Resources. Discrimination on the basis of health, including vaccination status, falls under protected grounds and will not be tolerated.

APPENDIX C: Risk Assessment and Control

Risk Assessment

The following risk assessment table is adapted from WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation Guideline G6.34-6. Using this guideline as a reference, we have determined the risk level to our workers, depending on their potential exposure in the workplace. See Appendix C for the level of risk and risk controls in place for specific positions.

	Low Risk <i>Persons who typically have no contact with infected people.</i>	Moderate risk <i>Persons who may be exposed to infected people from time to time in relatively large, well-ventilated spaces.</i>	High risk <i>Persons who may have contact with infected patients or with infected people in small, poorly ventilated spaces. Usually Healthcare.</i>
Hand Hygiene	Yes (washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand rub, or using hand wipes that contain effective disinfectant)	Yes (washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand rub, or using hand wipes that contain effective disinfectant)	Yes (washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand rub, or using hand wipes that contain effective disinfectant)
Disposable gloves	Not required	Not required , unless handling contaminated objects on a regular basis	Yes , in some cases, such as when working directly with infected patients.

Body protection – Aprons, gowns, or similar	Not required	Not required , unless determined by a current task-based risk assessment	Yes , in some cases, such as when working directly with infected patients.
Eye protection – goggles or face shield	Not required	Not required , unless determined by a current task-based risk assessment	Yes , in some cases, such as when working directly with infected patients.
Airway protection – Masks and/or N95 respirators	Not required	Not required , unless determined by a current task-based risk assessment	Yes in some cases, such as when working directly with infected patients.

Risk Control

The Regulation requires Coast Mountain College to implement infectious disease controls in the following order of preference. Controls used to mitigate the risks of exposure include:

- Elimination
- Engineering Controls
- Administrative Controls
- Education and Training
- Safe Work Practices
- Personal Protective Equipment

Facility and Maintenance Measures

As an active measure against the spread of communicable disease, all those visiting CMTN campuses are encouraged to wash their hands well and often, to use hand sanitizer as needed, and to use etiquette when coughing or sneezing. Hand washing facilities are available in every washroom on campus and in student housing; hand sanitizer supplies are available throughout buildings; all organized events include access to hand-washing station or sanitizing supplies.

CMTN facilities are cleaned routinely in accordance with BCCDC standards and in collaboration with BCNET. Routine cleaning includes high-touch surfaces. Additional cleaning requirements can be arranged by staff through Service Desk tickets to Facilities. Supplies are available throughout campus to encourage anyone to wipe down shared surfaces and equipment before and after use.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in buildings on campus follow established guidelines. Attention is given to ensuring that all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems are designed, operated and maintained in accordance with requirements and standards for indoor air quality, and that they are working properly.

Responding to elevated risk

CMTN follows the direction and controls as specified by the BCCDC, BC Ministry of Health, Northern Health Authority, and by WorksafeBC, while continuing to monitor and liaise with these authorities on changes that may impact the institution. From time to time, public health may advise of elevated risks of communicable disease transmission in particular places or contexts. Where public health has advised of an elevated risk of communicable disease transmission relevant to a workplace, region, or industry, employers must take steps to assess the risk in the workplace and to follow the necessary measures to the extent practicable as provided by public health.

Resources

For additional information about a specific communicable disease including symptoms, prevention, treatment, and communicable disease outbreak, please visit the following:

- Your personal health care provider(s) or physician
- HealthLinkBC: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/about-8-1-1>
- Northern Health Communicable Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/services/environmental-health/communicable-diseases>
- BCCDC Communicable Disease Control Manual: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/communicable-disease-control-manual>

APPENDIX D: Position-specific risk assessment chart

Position	Level of Risk	Control Procedures
Front counter, retail, and other staff delivering services to the public (including food services)	Low	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices
Facilities and Grounds workers	Low	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices increased sanitization processes, PPE based on task-based risk assessment.
Managers	Low	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices.
General Administrative Staff	Low	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices.
Instructors (field schools, field trip, labs, sciences, other)	Low	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices.
Instructors (Lab/Clinical) – on campus	Low to Moderate	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices and increased sanitization processes, PPE based on task-specific risk assessment.
Instructors (Trades) and Tool Room Attendants	Low to Moderate	Regular and effective hand hygiene, increased sanitization processes, personal protective equipment as outlined in Operating Guideline.
Instructors (Clinical) – during clinical placements at non-Coast Mountain College healthcare facilities	Moderate	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices and increased sanitization processes, PPE based on task-specific risk assessment.
First Aid Attendants	Moderate to High	Regular and effective hand hygiene, illness protocols, cleaning practices increased sanitization processes, PPE based on task-based risk assessment.