Overview
Workplaces in high case areas with onsite transmission of three or more cases (a cluster) will be required to close for 10 days. A workplace that does not comply may be subject to enforcement.

- There must be three or more confirmed cases linked to the worksite transmission
- The 10-day closure is determined by public officials and starts from the date the cluster was determined to have existed

Outbreaks versus clusters
In Alberta, Alberta Health Services (AHS) identifies an outbreak in a non-health-related workplace when there are five or more linked cases of COVID-19. An investigation is then started to determine the source of infection, the ways the virus has spread, and if additional public health actions are required. In health-related workplaces, lower numbers of cases trigger this same investigation and response.

If a cluster is present, it would be identified once an outbreak investigation opens. A cluster is three or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 that likely occurred in the workplace (onsite transmission).

Where this measure applies
Workplace closures will be implemented in areas that have been identified as high case areas (50 cases per 100,000 and at least 30 active cases). This measure is in effect for at least three weeks, even if a community moves below the high case threshold, and will be extended if necessary.

See all affected areas

Implementation date
This measure takes effect on Monday, May 10. Workplaces with clusters that occur before this date will not be subject to closures. However, workplaces that have ongoing transmission will be, if there are three or more new cases due to onsite transmission.

When closures are required
Closures are issued for a minimum of 10 days. Public health officials will determine if a closure is required based on a number of factors:

- There are plausible routes of transmission and close contact potential in the workplace
- Other community exposures or close contacts with other known cases have not occurred
- A common offsite exposure (e.g., carpooling, social gatherings, etc.) has not occurred
- The cases have occurred within a limited window and can be linked together
- Or, public health officials have other reasons to believe that transmission has occurred onsite
COVID-19 INFORMATION

WORKPLACE CLOSURES

Process

1. When AHS opens an outbreak investigation into a workplace, they will assess if transmission has occurred onsite and look for linked cases through contact tracing.

2. If public health officials find evidence of a cluster, they will assess the circumstances and issue a closure if required.

3. While a workplace is closed, both staff and the public are restricted from accessing the workplace except for ongoing maintenance or in the event of an emergency.

4. AHS will work with the workplace to implement any measures to reduce the risk or limit potential transmission during the 10-day closure.

5. After 10 days, the workplace will be able to re-open, but may still be subject to ongoing outbreak investigation and public health actions.

Appeals

Workplaces are able to appeal through application to the Public Health Appeal Board.

Exempt workplaces and partial closures

There are some workspaces that are required to be open for general functioning of the community they are situated in (e.g., work camps, critical services). See the appendix for a list of exempt businesses.

These workplaces are still subject to investigation for outbreaks and transmission. If a cluster is detected onsite, the workplace will still have to implement measures to stop transmission occurring onsite.

Some workplaces are multifaceted and are naturally divided into different areas, where not all workers go or there is very little crossover (e.g., a warehouse with office space). In these workplaces, if transmission is limited to one area only, that area may be closed for 10 days while the rest of the workplace remains open. Any workplace that has to partially close will still be required to implement measures to stop onsite transmission.

Proactive measures for workplaces

Businesses can limit the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace and thereby provide the best chance to avoid closures by following all public health measures.

- Workplaces should review or develop their COVID-19 safety plan. Guidance documents can help support plan development.

- Workplaces should review and comply with general operational guidance and any relevant sector guidance on BizConnect.

- Workplaces should talk to staff about options for vaccination, can generally promote immunization, and make it as easy as possible for staff to be immunized.
## COVID-19 INFORMATION

## WORKPLACE CLOSURES

### Appendix: Exempt and non-exempt workplaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exempt workplaces</th>
<th>Subject to closure with exceptions*</th>
<th>Subject to closure</th>
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| Public safety and security  
  • Fire, police, EMS, 911 call centres  
  • Corrections  
  • Hazardous material management  
  • Search and rescue | Grocery stores  
  Pharmacies  
  Pet stores  
  Funeral homes  
  Transportation services (excludes trucking and long-haul transport) | Professional services  
  • Law offices  
  • Accountants | |
| Health and medical  
  • Hospitals  
  • Urgent/emergency health services  
  • Regulated health services | Financial services  
  Office work  
  Small and large manufacturing  
  Hotels/motels  
  Small trades companies | Retail stores  
  • Clothing, toys, crafting, car sales, etc.  
  • Includes big box stores |
| Utilities  
  • Water treatment and distribution  
  • Electricity and energy  
  • Telecommunications  
  • Waste management | Recreation and entertainment entities | |
| Warehouses | Personal and wellness services | |
| Petrochemical  
  • Oil and gas industry and associated work camps | Food-serving businesses  
  • Restaurants, bars, cafes, pubs, etc. | |
| Commercial construction | | |
| Airports | | |
| Schools (K-12 and post-secondary)  
  • Excluding administration | | |
| Child care settings  
  • Licensed child care  
  • Daycares and day homes | | |
| Shelters and other social programs | | |
| Continuing care | | |
| Residential addiction treatment centres | | |
| Animal welfare | | |
| Agri-food industry  
  • Farming  
  • Ranching  
  • Food manufacturing | | |
| Public transit | | |
| Courts | | |

* Exceptions are intended to ensure the continuation of critical services where no other alternatives exist.