

OHS/ES eNews

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, you will receive special editions of eNews with the latest developments in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Employment Standards (ES).

COVID-19: a workplace health and safety concern

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that can be spread either directly or indirectly.

- Direct infection can happen if:
 - Someone coughs or sneezes on you.
 - You shake hands with someone who is sick and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Indirect spread can happen from contaminated surfaces, tissues, cloth or paper.

The OHS Resource Portal has a [COVID-19 coronavirus](#) section with bulletins related to minimizing risk from respiratory viruses.

When do I report a COVID-19 incident to Alberta OHS?

All serious incidents and potentially serious incidents, including those related to COVID-19, must be reported to OHS. These include the following:

- Fatalities and hospitalizations (admitted to hospital) related to incidents where COVID-19 was acquired as a result of the worker's engagement in a work activity.
- Incidents where a worker at the work site is "exposed" to confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 (potentially serious incidents).
- A COVID-19 "exposure" would include the following:
 - incidents where the work site is not following the rules, procedures and guidance related to COVID-19 protection and a worker is exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19; or
 - incidents where the COVID-19 controls in place have failed and a worker is exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.

More information can be found in the [Reporting and investigating injuries and incidents bulletin](#).

Contact OHS

1-866-415-8690 (toll-free)
780-415 -8690 (Edmonton)
TTY: 1-800-232-7215
TTY: 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)
[Report a serious incident](#)
[Online incident reporting service](#)

Contact ES

1-877-427-3731 (toll-free)
780-427-3731 (Edmonton)
[Ask an Employment Standards question](#)

N95 respirator alternatives

Allowing the use of respirators meeting international standards as alternatives to N95 respirators approved by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

On May 3, a ministerial order took effect that temporarily amends the OHS Code during the COVID-19 public emergency. This amendment lists specific respirator standards, approved for use in other countries, that employers can use without needing to request an approval.

This amendment addresses the interim situation of domestic shortages of NIOSH-approved N95 respirators, and remains in effect until 60 days after the state of public emergency is over. Other requirements related to respiratory protection still apply, including a successful fit test on all mask types. The Ministerial Order can be viewed [here](#).

COVID-19 information

Visit [Temporary workplace rule changes](#), [Supports for businesses](#), [Open to public businesses](#) and [Restrictions on businesses](#) for up-to-date information.

- [COVID-19 Chief Medical Officer health care PPE guidelines](#)
- [COVID-19 publications by industry \(NEW\)](#)
- [Guidance for managers and operators of industrial work camps \(UPDATED\)](#)
- [Hazard assessment and control](#)
- [Working from home during a pandemic](#)
- [Workplace health and safety after a flood \(NEW\)](#)

Alberta Health Services

- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Mental Health Help Line](#)

Other resources

Alberta Construction Association

- [Pandemic planning for the construction industry](#)

Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association

- [COVID-19 and your hotel](#)
- [Sample property closure checklist.docx](#)

Alberta Liquor Store Association

- [Common COVID-19 safety measures you can implement in-store](#)

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

- [COVID tips for retail](#)
- [COVID-19 tip sheets for high-risk and essential occupations and industries](#)

WorkSafeNB

- [Embracing the new normal](#)

Quick links

- [COVID-19 info for Albertans](#)
- [Alberta OHS legislation](#)
- [Employment Standards](#)
- [Partnerships in Injury Reduction](#)
- [Alberta Queen's Printer](#)

Moving toward a relaunch

Alberta's Relaunch Strategy puts safety first while gradually reopening businesses, resuming activities and getting people back to work.

- [Alberta's relaunch strategy](#)
- [Guidance and resources for workplaces on Alberta Biz Connect](#)
- [Restricted and non-restricted services](#)

Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta (WCB)

WCB-Alberta has developed a new "[COVID-19 at work](#)" fact sheet for employers. This fact sheet provides information about workplace outbreaks and answers questions about when and why claims need to be reported to WCB.

Visit WCB's [COVID-19 web page](#) for up-to-date information about their programs and services.

Mental health at work

Canadian Mental Health Association: Alberta

- [COVID-19 outbreak: Protecting your mental health](#)

Government of Canada

- [COVID-19 and mental health @ work](#)

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If in doubt with respect to any information contained within this material, or for confirmation of legal requirements, please refer to the current edition of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* and *Occupational Health and Safety Code*, *Public Health Act* Order, or other applicable legislation. Further, if there is any inconsistency or conflict between any of the information contained in this material and the applicable legislative/*Public Health Act* Order requirement, the legislative/*Public Health Act* Order requirement shall prevail.

This material is current to May 15, 2020. The information, law, requirements, and policies are constantly changing during this unprecedented global pandemic. It is important that you keep yourself informed of the current requirements.

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