

## COVID-19 Practice Guidance Updated August 26, 2021

Note: New or changed information highlighted in yellow



### BC's Restart Plan Step 3 What does this mean for your workplace?

Following Premier Horgan, Minister Dix and Dr. Henry's announcement on June 29, 2021, BC transitions to [Step 3 of BC's Restart Plan](#) as of July 1, 2021.

The [Provincial Health Officer's \(PHO\) statement](#) (released June 17) talks about transitioning from COVID-19 Safety Plans to Communicable Disease Plans starting July 1, 2021.

This notice is primarily for occupational therapists who do not work for Health Authorities. Health Authorities will provide direction for their health care facilities.

#### What does this mean for your workplace?

WorkSafeBC provides information on [Preparing for Step 3 of BC's Restart: Communicable Disease Prevention](#). As of July 1, 2021, WorkSafeBC notes that employers will no longer be required to maintain a COVID-19 Safety Plan and will instead transition to communicable disease prevention.

- Your workplace must ensure that fundamental measures of communicable disease prevention are in place, including appropriate handwashing and personal hygiene practices, appropriate ventilation, and staying home when sick.
- Your workplace must also be prepared to implement or maintain additional measures at times when the risk of communicable disease in your region or workplace is elevated, as advised, and directed by public health.
- Download WorkSafeBC's [Communicable Disease Prevention: A Guide for Employers](#)

To provide a better understanding of workplace requirements to implement communicable disease prevention, WorkSafeBC has also posted [OHS Guideline G-P2-21 Communicable disease prevention](#).

### **BC's Restart Plan Step 3 - [PHO Guidance](#)**

Guidance in Step 3 of BC's Restart Plan includes the following:

- The [mask mandate order](#) under the Emergency Program Act was lifted July 1, however was reinstated provincially effective August 25, 2021.
- If you or anyone in your family feels sick stay home and get tested immediately.

### **Masks in Occupational Therapy Practice Environments**

Infection prevention and control remains a priority and occupational therapists are accountable to the applicable [Practice Standards](#) and should continue to use a [Point of Care Risk Assessment](#) to determine appropriate PPE for themselves and their clients during the provision of occupational therapy services.

[WorkSafeBC](#) advises employers to follow the direction of Public Health with respect to the use of masks. WorkSafeBC states that employers may choose to implement mask policies for workers and/or members of the public that exceed the requirements of Public Health.

The College has requested further clarification from the PHO with respect to mask use in community occupational therapy practice. If/when guidance is received, we will update this notice accordingly.

Check [BC's Response to COVID-19 page](#) regularly for the latest information on the ease of restrictions and amendments.

### **Proof of Vaccination**

The College fully supports the vaccination efforts of the province – for occupational therapy practitioners and the public.

On August 20, 2021, the Provincial Health Officer released the [COVID-19 Vaccination Status Information and Preventative Measures Order](#) that impacts occupational therapists providing services in long term care and assisted living facilities. All occupational therapists that provide services in this practice area should read and be familiar with the details of the [Order](#).

On August 23, 2021, the Ministry of Health released information on [proof of vaccination requirements](#), which go into effect by September 13, 2021. Occupational therapists should familiarize themselves with the details and applicability to their personal and professional activities. The College is waiting for additional information from the PHO, Ministry of Health

and BC Centre for Disease Control to clarify proof of vaccination associated with locations where health care services are provided.

As the risk of COVID-19 transmission remains in our communities, we thank you for adhering to public health directives in providing occupational therapy services to support the residents of BC to stay safe and well. Let Dr. Henry's advice continue to guide us as we navigate new times of transition together.

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***Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe.***