

Reopening Business in Halifax

Since the beginning of COVID-19, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce has been keeping our members and the business community informed and up to date on available resources and funding programs. We continue to support local business as we approach reopening the economy.

We have assembled the information below to support your business through the next phase of COVID-19. At this point of the pandemic, business owners are expected to maintain flexibility, adhere to public health protocols, and prepare for another potential halt in business if the COVID-19 spread continues in the future. It is important for businesses to check with local, provincial and federal levels of government as they will also be providing reopening support and guidelines and/or new regulations for businesses to follow. The Halifax Chamber will have this information available on our [resource page](#).

Toolkit

There have been drastic changes in how businesses can operate. To ensure continued operations, it is important to keep employees and customers safe while providing a quality customer experience. We have planned a 5-step approach to operate business safely with COVID-19.

Step One: Develop a COVID-19 Task Force

The Task Force/Staff team should:

- Be made up of two to five staff;
- Include a manager and a staff/line employee;
- Lead COVID-19 prevention plan;
- Ensure best practices are followed by all staff and customers for overall safety;
- Keep themselves updated with changing guidelines and policies from federal, provincial, and municipal governments to decide appropriate action plan.
- This taskforce could be run by the occupational health and safety team that may already exist in your workplace.

Step Two: Ensure workspace safety

- Signage is important to ensure proper hygiene and physical distancing.
- Signage includes spatial markings for physical distancing, rules and regulations to keep workplace clean.

PUBLISHED 12/05/2020

- Usage of screening tools like infrared cameras, non-contact face and body temperature detector to screen body temperature before entering the workplace.
- Stock workplace with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Hire a professional cleaner to deep clean your workspace.
- Develop self-assessment form for employees to take before every shift.
- This form includes questions to screen yourself to ensure workplace safety.
- Spread awareness by using a symptoms poster differentiating flu, cold and COVID-19.
- Ensure limited entry into the business, including waiting lines, to prevent congestion.
- High usage areas, including common areas, public washrooms and showering facilities, should be deep cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Restrict the capacity of areas to limit the number of people able to congregate.
- Ensure limited business travel currently.
- Communicate the COVID-19 plan made by the Task Force/staff team with all staff.

Step Three: Prepare your employees

- Employers should issue a self-screening checklist to all employees for voluntary, home self-screening prior to returning to work.
- Employees who have a fever or are otherwise exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to work.
- Employees exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms must stay home and follow quarantine guidelines.
- Require employees to report symptoms or known contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 to their manager.
- Provide PPE for all employees including masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and possibly face shields.
- Provide employees with everything they need to keep their work surfaces clean, including disposable wipes, hand soap, paper towels, disinfectants, and alcohol-based sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Practice sensible social distancing, maintaining six feet between co-workers.
- Employees should avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth – DO NOT shake hands.
- Discourage employees from sharing each other's equipment including phones, computers and tools.
- Train staff in proper hygiene practices.
- Reduce the number of employees on site through alternating workdays or shifts.
- Communicate weekly with your employees to ensure compliance.
- Check in regularly on the mental health of employees.

PUBLISHED 12/05/2020

Step Four: Prepare your customers

- Post guidelines at the entrance of your business regarding your expectations for customers behavior including, physical distancing, PPE usage and to not enter if they are exhibiting any symptoms.
- Customers could be asked to use hand sanitizer upon entering the store.
- Consider downsizing operations or limiting store capacity.
- When possible, open all non-essential doors to reduce the need for direct contact.
- Provide a place to wash hands or alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Place arrow shaped tape in high traffic areas to direct flow and keep six feet between customers.
- Update your website to reflect the new rules and any other operating changes.
- Reach out to the Halifax Chamber to aid with communicating the changes and readiness for customers.

Step Five: Prepare for transactions

- Sales registers should be six feet apart
- Provide hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes at register locations.
- Avoid cash exchanges and encourage customers to use credit/debit cards, tap to pay, PayPal or another form of contact-less payment.
- Install screens between staff and customers if necessary
- Disinfect transaction areas after each transaction
- Sanitize point of sale equipment after each use, including pens.
- Consider home delivery, take out, drive through and curbside pick-up options where applicable.
- Post a sign for deliveries outlining expectations (PPE, hand sanitizer, masks)

We're in your corner.

Please check www.halifaxchamber.com/covid19 frequently for additional resources and updates.