

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 1 TABLE OF CONTENTS

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- 1 Table of Contents .....1
- 2 Preface.....2
- 3 General Information .....3
  - 3.1 COVID-19 .....3
  - 3.2 Symptoms .....3
  - 3.3 How is COVID-19 Spread? .....3
  - 3.4 Workplace Party Responsibilities .....3
- 4 Industrial Camp Suggested Guidelines .....4
  - 4.1 Training and Education.....4
  - 4.2 Communication .....4
  - 4.3 Camp/Work Site Control .....5
  - 4.4 Industrial Campsite Physical Distancing .....5
  - 4.5 Daily Self-Check .....6
  - 4.6 Self-Isolation .....6
  - 4.7 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) .....6
  - 4.8 Camp Facilities.....7
  - 4.9 Food and Kitchen Management .....8
  - 4.10 Worker Transportation.....9
  - 4.11 Sleeping Quarters/Washing/Laundry ..... 10
  - 4.12 Garbage/Waste Disposal ..... 10
- 5 Resources ..... 11
- 6 References..... 12
- 7 Appendix 1 Example Self-Assessment Checklist..... 14



# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 2 PREFACE

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- This document has been developed to support owner/operators/managers of remote industrial work camps, such as those used in forestry and mining, in order to provide guidance on risk assessment and prevention strategies as it relates to COVID-19 pandemic response measures.
- The information in this document is not to be used as a substitute to address the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) or Regulations or the Health Promotion and Protection Act or Regulations.
- Questions regarding compliance with the OSHA should be directed to the Ministry of Labour, Training, Skills and Development.

Contact Centre:

- Toll-free: 1-877-202-0008
  - TTY: 1-855-653-9260
  - Fax: 905-577-1316
- Questions pertaining to remote industrial work camp set up should be directed to your local public health unit. A complete listing of Ontario Public Health Units and contact information can be accessed using this link: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>
  - This guidance document provides basic information only. It is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, treatment, legal advice or address compliance requirements. It is advised to consult with your local public health unit regarding specific questions and pandemic response. The COVID-19 pandemic is an evolving situation therefore this document and guidance contained therein is subject to change as appropriate and without notice.
  - Current information can be obtained in the following locations.
    - Ontario Public Health <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>
    - Government of Canada <https://www.canada.ca/en/publichealth/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
  - If you would like help with a workplace risk assessment, please contact Workplace Safety North (WSN) by phone 1-888-730-7821, email [customercare@workplacesafetynorth.ca](mailto:customercare@workplacesafetynorth.ca), or [contact your local WSN Health and Safety Specialist](#).

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 3 GENERAL INFORMATION

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#### 3.1 COVID-19

- COVID-19 is a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are spread mainly from person to person through close contact, for example, in a household, workplace, or healthcare centre.

#### SYMPTOMS

- Symptoms range from mild – such as a common cold or other common respiratory infections – to severe, and can include:
- Fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, muscle aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat, and runny nose.
- Complications from the novel coronavirus can include serious conditions, like pneumonia or kidney failure, and in some cases, death.

#### 3.2 HOW IS COVID-19 SPREAD?

- COVID-19 is transmitted via larger liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter through these droplets into the eyes, nose or throat of individuals who are nearby.
- The virus is not known to be airborne (e.g. transmission through particles that are suspended in the air) and it is not something that comes in through the skin. It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough.

#### 3.3 WORKPLACE PARTY RESPONSIBILITIES

- All workplace parties have responsibilities for ensuring that work is planned, coordinated, and conducted in a manner that limits worker exposure to COVID-19.
- Employers are responsible to establish policies and procedures specific to COVID-19 in order to keep workers healthy and safe.
- Workplace parties must adhere to federal and provincial requirements to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Workplace parties must practice good personal hygiene, wear appropriate personal protective equipment, and partake in COVID-19 prevention strategies.
- Workers retain the right to refuse work they believe to be unsafe, but should follow company policies and procedures as it relates to the work refusal process.
- Workers should raise concerns with their supervisor, joint health and safety committee and/or health and safety representative.
- Employers must report all known positive test results for COVID-19 to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development in writing within four days, additionally, the joint health and safety committee must be notified and the trade union, if applicable.

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

- If an employer is advised that a worker has an occupational illness due to an exposure at the workplace or that a claim has been filed with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), the employer must notify the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development in writing within four days.
  - The employer must address the notice to, "Attention: Director" and then mail or fax the notice, to the Ministry [regional office](#) closest to your workplace.
  - The employer must also advise the:
    - workplace joint health and safety committee
    - health and safety representative
    - trade union, if any

## 4 INDUSTRIAL CAMP SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

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- Industrial work camps provide an environment that can promote the transmission of infections, so it's important to implement effective infection prevention and control measures that can reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The guidelines listed below can be used as a resource for employers as part of their COVID-19 pandemic response plan. These guidelines are not intended to be used for remote camp set-up. For those workplaces, see [Ontario Regulation 502/17](#) and or consult with your local health unit.

### 4.1 TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- Train and educate workers on your company's pandemic response plan including:
  - Recognize symptoms of the COVID-19 illness.
  - Measures to be taken to reduce possible transmission.
  - Employer expectations regarding self-assessment, self-quarantine requirements, not reporting to work if a worker is symptomatic and what the company requires should this situation arise.

### 4.2 COMMUNICATION

- Identify who is responsible for managing your company's pandemic response and advise workers of such.
- Establish communication protocols; identify key personnel workers can contact if they have questions or concerns.
- Provide information on COVID-19 and identify where to find up-to-date resources and information.
- Ensure information provided is from a credible source.
- Provide information to workers on how to access appropriate resources such as employee assistance programs and mental health counselling.
- Post notices and bulletins in relevant languages pertaining to restricted access, handwashing instructions, physical distancing requirements, public health contact numbers, access to government websites, self-quarantine procedures, and important internal and external contacts numbers.

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### Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

- Ensure notification of appropriate authorities (i.e. Ontario Public Health or local public health units, and the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development in the event of a positive COVID-19 test or outbreak. Follow public health reporting requirements.
- Reduce or restrict the number of meetings being held; limit the number of participants attending face-to-face meetings. If possible, make use of technology to hold virtual meetings.
- If face-to-face meetings are required (i.e. pre-work safety meetings), hold meetings in open (marked) spaces or outside to allow for physical distancing.

#### 4.3 CAMP/WORK SITE CONTROL

- Control access to the camp and restrict visitor access to the site.
- Maintain logbooks of all persons attending the camp site (workers, visitors, suppliers, truck drivers, sub-contractors), and require every individual to sign in and out. Ensure a contact number is provided; this will enable tracking should the need arise.
- Customers, clients, and visitors may be asked to wear a face covering (non-medical or cloth mask) to protect those around them.
- Implement a daily self-assessment for every worker on site, including subcontractors, visitors, and suppliers.
- **Do not permit anyone to enter the camp site if they have travelled outside the country within the past 14 days or exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.**

#### 4.4 INDUSTRIAL CAMP SITE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- To stop the spread of COVID-19, physical distancing is a must. This means individuals must stay at least two metres (or six feet) apart.
- Implement all measures to ensure physical distance and separation between people.
- Limit social interactions and do not allow engagement activities at the camp site.
- Maintain two metre distances between workers; this may mean revised work schedules, re-organize work tasks to limit interactions between people. Consider using technology such as digital pictures, web-based applications for truck driver load slips, supplier delivery slips, etc.
- Use barrier devices if possible (i.e., Lexan screens, mesh, rope, fencing or other portable guards) as segregation systems to maintain physical distancing requirements.
- Install barrier tape to identify two metres (six feet) in common areas and large transportation vehicles such as buses, passenger vans.
- Assess site transportation requirements, reduce the number of workers being transported in any one vehicle at any one time.
- If physical distance and separation cannot be maintained, workers should have personal protective equipment (PPE) consisting of surgical/procedure mask and eye protection (goggles or face shield).

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 4.5 DAILY SELF-CHECK

- As part of their daily activities all workers should be required to complete a daily self-check. This is a symptoms check. The province of Ontario has launched an interactive self-assessment tool which can be accessed using the following link: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/#q0>
  - Additionally, this document includes a checklist that can be used (See Appendix 1)

### 4.6 SELF-ISOLATION

- If there is concern that a worker has symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 while in camp, it is recommended that you implement immediate response measures.
  - Employers should have procedures in place that address steps to be taken if an individual reports COVID-19 symptoms.
- Ensure proper training of first aid attendants and supervisors on these procedures.
- Provide the individual with a surgical/procedural mask or other means of covering their mouth and nose, if available.
- Promptly move the individual to an area separate from others.
  - Workers who are self-isolating should be in separate quarters, with their own lavatory facilities if possible.
- If the individual is within close driving distance of their home and is able to safely travel home without using shared transportation they may opt to go home.
- Direct the person to the online self-assessment tool or to a health care provider who will provide advice on next steps, including where to go for testing if required.
- If the worker cannot go home, support the individual to self-isolate in camp until further instructions are received from health care professionals.
- Any rooms they have been in while symptomatic should be cleaned and disinfected.
- If urgent medical care is needed, call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.

### 4.7 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- During an outbreak of an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, recommendations for PPE specific to job occupations or tasks may change over the course of time. This is dependent on many factors, such as recommended controls by provincial health organizations and information gathered on PPE effectiveness to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Employers should conduct a risk assessment to determine appropriate PPE needed at their respective worksites.
  - Consider the task that workers perform (i.e. a kitchen worker may require different PPE than a truck driver, tree planter, or heavy equipment operator).

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

- Examples of PPE that may be used include goggles, face shields, face masks, and respiratory protection (disposable and/or tightfitting) when appropriate. Additional policies and procedures may need to be developed.
- Workers need to be trained in the safe use, care and maintenance of PPE in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

### 4.8 CAMP FACILITIES

- Coronaviruses like COVID-19 are one of the easiest types of viruses to kill with the appropriate disinfectant product when used according to the label directions.
- Health Canada has published a [list of hard surface disinfectants](#) that are likely to be effective for use against COVID-19. Although they do not claim to kill COVID-19, cleaners can play a role in limiting the transfer of microorganisms.
- Health Canada recommends cleaning high-touch surfaces often, using either regular household cleaners or diluted bleach.
  - This bleach solution should be prepared according to the instructions on the label or in a ratio of 1 teaspoon (5 mL) per cup (250 mL). Directions are based on bleach that is 5% sodium hypochlorite, to give a 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution.
- In addition to regular inspection requirements, facilities and equipment must be inspected frequently (in many cases several times per day), cleaned and maintained in good working order and required supplies must be replenished as necessary.
- Facilities and equipment to be regularly cleaned include, but are not limited to:
  - Washrooms, offices/jobsite trailers, common areas, eating areas, chairs, tables, light switches and doorknobs, sanitize shared tools, machines and equipment, such as hand-held communication devices, two-way and satellite radios, check-in devices (Spot, Garmin) include writing utensils, laptops, cell phones and shared transportation units (i.e. buses, vans).
    - Checklists that include cleaning times are a great tool to use to ensure cleaning requirements are adhered to.
- Workers assigned to cleaning duties must be trained on any special precautions that must be taken, including PPE use.
- Conduct a physical inspection of the worksite to determine where to strategically place handwashing and sanitizing equipment and facilities to provide an adequate supply of sanitizing hand cleaner dispensers and handwashing stations to allow for readily available access and frequent handwashing.
- A list of hand sanitizers authorized by Health Canada can be found online by accessing the Health Canada website COVID-19 response.
- Everyone must practice regular handwashing:
  - Ensure supplies are adequate.
  - Offer guidance on good hygiene practices, through visible posters displayed around the campsite.

## Workplace Safety North

### Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

- Reiterate the importance of good personal hygiene practices at meetings.
- Where plumbed facilities are impracticable, provide access to a portable washroom and handwashing facilities.
- Provide waste receptacles in several locations, preferably lined and touchless, if possible.
- Restrict access to shared congregation areas (television, games rooms, socialization areas). If restrictions are not possible, limit usage of these areas, restrict the number of individuals permitted in location, ensure there is adequate space for physical distancing and that the areas are cleaned frequently.
- Regular ventilation practices are encouraged, such as opening doors and windows to reduce build-up of exhaust fumes or other non-COVID contaminants, and to control other hazards such as heat.

#### 4.9 FOOD AND KITCHEN MANAGEMENT

- Camps must comply with the regulatory requirements under the Health Protection and Prevention Act, such as Ontario Regulation 493/17 (Food Premises) and Ontario Regulation 502/17 (Camps in Unorganized Territory). Additional COVID-19 prevention suggested measures include:
  - Post signage indicating the number of people permitted in the eating area at any one time.
  - Rotate eating schedules/times to accommodate physical distancing.
  - Prohibit self-serve access to kitchen areas.
  - Bagged/boxed lunches should be prepared by kitchen staff and designated individuals.
    - Kitchen staff and or designated individuals will individually disburse bagged/boxed lunches.
  - Dining stations/tents should be marked with recommended distances between workers two metres (six feet).
    - Restrict entry so that workers may only enter the dining facility when there are vacant dining stations available.
  - Only designated kitchen workers and supervisory staff should be permitted to enter food preparation or storage areas.
  - Mandate that kitchen staff or assigned individuals will serve food to workers.
  - Prohibit the use of buffet-style serving.
  - Utensils, serving dishes should be individually wrapped.
  - Workers should not handle/touch plates, cups, utensils other than their own.
  - Small individual packets should be used for condiments like salt, pepper, sugar, ketchup, mustard, vinegar, etc.
  - Workers should be required to wash their hands before entering any eating area or food preparation area; increased hand washing/sanitizing should also be practiced.
  - Eating areas should be thoroughly cleaned/sanitized after every meal shift.



## Workplace Safety North

### Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

- Dishwashing shall be done by designated individuals, self-washing by individuals should be prohibited.
- Dishwashing systems must meet the requirements of Ontario Regulation 493/17 (Food Premises).
- All kitchen supplies (including boxes and containers) should be sanitized if there is any chance of touching by other persons prior to arrival at camp.
- Proper PPE is to be worn by kitchen workers.
- Workers in isolation shall be served meals in a separate facility or dining area.

#### 4.10 WORKER TRANSPORTATION

- Conduct an assessment and evaluate the number of workers being transported at any one given time. Take measures to ensure that the physical distance between workers is maintained.
- If possible, have workers travel to the worksite in their own vehicle.
  - Implement working-alone procedures and check-in policies for workers who are travelling to the work site alone.
- If shared transportation (buses, vans, company trucks) are used, implement measures to ensure appropriate distancing.
  - This may mean having workers sit one to a seat.
  - Staggering riders.
  - Minimizing the number of workers per trip,
  - Increasing the number of overall trips to safely transport workers to the camp/work site.
- If possible and available, consider using larger vehicles to ensure physical distancing or use multiple vehicles.
- If physical distancing cannot be accomplished, consider additional control measures such as having workers don suitable PPE.
- Implement processes that allow for physical distancing when loading and unloading buses or other vehicles.
  - Workers awaiting transportation should maintain physical distancing in a safe location away from traffic.
- If not already established consider instituting designated drop off and pick up locations, which have been assessed for worker safety.
- Hand-washing facilities or sanitizing stations should be readily accessible to workers as they enter and exit the vehicle.
- Routine cleaning of transportation vehicles is required. High contact surfaces require frequent/routine cleaning. These include headrests, handholds, seatbelts, door handles, steering wheels, and communication equipment in the vehicles such as two-way radios.

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### **Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19**

#### **4.11 SLEEPING QUARTERS/WASHING/LAUNDRY**

- Adhere to Ontario Regulation 502/17 (Camps in Unorganized Territory).

#### **4.12 GARBAGE/WASTE DISPOSAL**

- Adhere to Ontario Regulation 502/17 (Camps in Unorganized Territory).

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 5 RESOURCES

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Workplace Safety North Website

<https://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca/news/news-post/workplace-safety-north-and-ontario-mine-rescue-covid-19-update>

<https://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca/resources/covid-19-resources>

Government of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

Government of Canada - Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>

Ontario Ministry of Health

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>

Ontario Public Health Units

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

[https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-labour-training-skills-development?\\_ga=2.257904648.2078245850.1536853771-231218211.1536853771](https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-labour-training-skills-development?_ga=2.257904648.2078245850.1536853771-231218211.1536853771)

# Workplace Safety North

## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 6 REFERENCES

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BC Forest Safety Council COVID-19 Resources section, accessed March 31, 2020

<http://www.bcforestsafe.org/node/3460>

Government of Canada Corona Virus Disease- COVID-19, accessed April 1, 2020

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

Government of Alberta Guidance for Managers and Operators of Industrial Camps Fact Sheet, accessed April 1, 2020

<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-work-camps-fact-sheet.pdf>

Government of Ontario Public Health, accessed April 1, 2020

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>

Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Construction Site Health and Safety During COVID-19, accessed April 1, 2020

[https://www.ontario.ca/page/construction-site-health-and-safety-during-covid-19?\\_ga=2.137291184.1040332559.1585674311-354319658.1538766723](https://www.ontario.ca/page/construction-site-health-and-safety-during-covid-19?_ga=2.137291184.1040332559.1585674311-354319658.1538766723)

### Additional Resources

Stay updated with daily government updates:

- [Government of Ontario](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)

### Ontario government and agency-issued resources about COVID-19

The [Ontario Ministry of Health](#) is providing consistent updates on the provincial government's response to the outbreak, including:

- status of cases in Ontario
- current affected areas
- symptoms and treatments
- how to protect yourself and self-isolate
- updated Ontario news on the virus

[Public Health Ontario](#) is providing up-to-date resources on COVID-19, including:

- links to evolving public health guidelines, position statements and situational updates
- synopsis of key articles updating on the latest findings related to the virus

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- recommendations for use of personal protective equipment
- information on infection prevention and control
- testing information
- other public resources

### Other COVID-19 resources

[Health Canada](#) outlines the actions being taken by the Government of Canada to limit spread of the virus, as well as what is happening in provinces and communities across the country. It also maintains a live update of the number of cases by province.

The [World Health Organization](#) is updating the latest guidance and information related to the global outbreak and spread beyond Canadian borders.

It also provides the most up-to-date information on:

- current research and development around the virus
- a COVID-19 situation “dashboard”
- emergency preparedness measures
- live media updates on the spread of the virus

This resource does not replace the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations, and should not be used as or considered legal advice. Health and safety inspectors apply the law based on the facts in the workplace.

[INFOGRAPHIC: Forest Products Sector Enhanced Safety Measures for Preventing Pandemic](#) – download and share

*If you would like additional information, resources, or assistance with any of your health and safety needs, please contact Workplace Safety North (WSN) by phone 1-888-730-7821, email [customercare@workplacesafetynorth.ca](mailto:customercare@workplacesafetynorth.ca), or [contact your local WSN Health and Safety Specialist](#).*

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## Guidance on Industrial Work Camps during COVID-19

### 7 APPENDIX 1 EXAMPLE SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

COVID-19 – SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST			
<p>Workers must complete this assessment daily. If answering yes to any of the questions below, immediately institute employer-established self-isolation protocols. Direct the person to a healthcare provider who will provide advice on next steps, including where to go for testing if required.</p> <p>Visitors/suppliers/subcontractors are also required to complete this self-assessment checklist prior to entering the camp site. Any individual answering YES to any of the questions MUST NOT be admitted to the work camp and should be advised to consult with public health officials.</p>			
Name		Date	
1. Do you have any of the below symptoms:			
Fever?	YES	NO	
Cough?	YES	NO	
Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing?	YES	NO	
Sore throat?	YES	NO	
Runny Nose?	YES	NO	
Feeling unwell or Fatigued?	YES	NO	
Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea?	YES	NO	
2.	Have you, or anyone in your household travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Have you had close contact (face-to-face contact within 2 metres or 6 feet) with someone who is ill with cough and/or fever?	YES	NO
4.	Have you, or anyone in your household been in contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19?	YES	NO
*Form modified; original reference Alberta Guidance for Managers and Operators of Industrial Work Camps/alberta.ca/covid19			