

# What To Do When Physical Distancing is not Possible?

## WHAT IS PHYSICAL DISTANCING?

Physical distancing means maintaining at least 2 metres (6.5 feet) of distance between individuals.

If physical distancing is not possible while doing work tasks, you must control the potential exposure to COVID-19 by doing the following:

Consider whether or not the task is truly essential at this time:

- Can the task be delayed?
- Can it be safely done in another way?
- Can the number of workers involved be reduced?

If the task is considered essential and cannot be delayed, then use the following procedures:

## HEALTH SCREENING

Do not permit workers, sub-contractors, etc., on to a worksite if they meet the provincial self-isolation requirements, below. The employer may consider utilizing a site access pre-screening questionnaire.

Self-Isolation Requirements:

- If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- If you are a close contact of someone diagnosed with COVID-19;
- If you have been assessed by Public Health for COVID-19 and/or are waiting to hear the results of a laboratory test for COVID-19;
- If you have traveled anywhere outside of Newfoundland and Labrador, for 14 days upon return to the province; or
- If you have been advised to self-isolate for any other reason by Public Health.

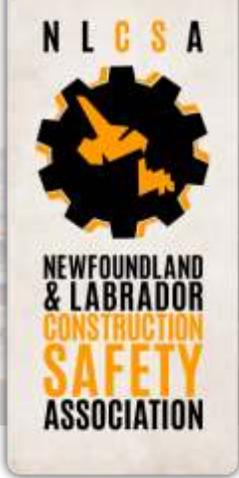
## HANDWASHING

- Provide a handwashing or hand sanitizing station that is easily accessible for the affected workers.
- Thoroughly wash hands regularly, especially when gloves are removed after the task has been completed and physical distancing could not be maintained.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with bare or gloved hands.

## CLEANING & DISINFECTING

- When the task is completed ensure the tools that were used are cleaned and disinfected (see NLCSA document on Enhanced Surface Cleaning and Disinfection).
- Clean and disinfect all high-touch surfaces in the area.

Version 5 - Updated Mar 04, 2021



# What To Do When Physical Distancing is not Possible?

## FACE COVERINGS

As a minimum requirement, to mitigate a worker's exposure to COVID-19 where physical distance cannot be maintained, a worker must wear:

- A non-medical mask (this includes cloth masks and face coverings).

Personal protective equipment available at the workplace which can provide an equivalent or greater level of protection (i.e. surgical masks, N95 disposable respirators) would also be acceptable but must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and applicable legislation (See PPE section below).

Non-medical masks are suitable if (and only if) they are being used to protect solely against COVID-19 transmission. All other COVID-19 control measures must be maintained (hand washing, cleaning/disinfecting, etc.). In situations where workers have a greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 (i.e. entering a home under quarantine, to perform emergency repairs), a higher level of protection will be required. For such situations, a hazard assessment will be conducted and appropriate control measures implemented, based upon the level of risk. Similarly, if hazards other than COVID-19 exist, (i.e. welding fumes, silica dust, wood dust, etc.) a hazard assessment must also be conducted and controls appropriate to those hazards must be implemented.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Engineering and administrative control measures are the most preferred methods to be implemented in the workplace (i.e. physical distancing, barriers, reducing the number of individuals on site, etc.) Where tasks require the use of PPE to help mitigate a worker's exposure to COVID-19 (i.e. tasks where physical distancing cannot be maintained, in high risk work settings etc.) the organization must ensure that:

- A hazard assessment is conducted to identify the appropriate PPE, based upon the hazards identified and level of risk and reviewed with all workers.
- All PPE meets the requirements of the Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.
- Workers are trained in the proper use and care of the personal protective equipment, including how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE; how to properly dispose of or disinfect, inspect for damage, maintain PPE, and the limitations of PPE
- Workers are properly fitted for the PPE (i.e. fit testing for tight fitting respirators).
- Supervisors are enforcing PPE requirements on site.

## Cleaning/Disposal Considerations

- Provide a plastic disposal bag for disposal of consumables (Surgical masks, N95 Respirators, disposable gloves, cleaning wipes etc.). Seal the disposal bag and store it with other garbage.
- Sanitize glasses and half/full-face respirators using disposable wipes. Dispose of disposable wipes in the disposal bag.
- When complete, store reusable PPE and coveralls in a storage room. Ensure no cross contamination between PPE belonging to different workers.
- Do not wear coveralls home. Wash coveralls daily if possible.



# COVID-19

## What To Do When Physical Distancing is not Possible?

	Work Method Step Describe the task, step by step	Hazard/Risk What are the hazards of each step?	Control Methods & Monitoring What hazard safe guards will be used? How will the effectiveness of the controls be determined? (Inspection & ongoing monitoring)
1.	Confirm work to be completed requires workers to encroach on the 6-foot physical distancing requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialized PPE unavailable.</li> <li>Workers are unfamiliar with procedure and Exposure Control Plan.</li> <li>Miscommunication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers will review this procedure and the COVID-19 Exposure control plan (Attached) before completing this work.</li> <li>FLRA to be completed before task with additional PPE noted and reason for breaking physical distancing rules.</li> <li>Workers will wear all appropriate PPE when encroaching on the 6ft physical distancing rule.</li> <li>Workers will decontaminate tools/equipment/PPE at the beginning of each day by wiping down or spraying down with disinfectant.</li> <li>Workers will be clean shaven for tight fitting respirators, as per manufactures recommendations.</li> <li>If PPE not available these tasks will be postponed until PPE is available.</li> </ul>
2.	Complete various construction related tasks while within 6-feet of co-workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential overlapping within work area with other trades.</li> <li>Co- Activity.</li> <li>Workers not following procedure.</li> <li>Workers displaying signs or symptoms of COVID-19.</li> <li>Transmission of COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers will ensure additional PPE is being worn at all times.</li> <li>Before eating, drinking or smoking, workers will wash their hands to the WHO standard.</li> <li>Shared tools will be decontaminated when switching users by using disinfectant wipes or spray.</li> <li>Supervision will regularly review ongoing task to ensure compliance with this SWP.</li> <li>Workers are to report anyone with signs or symptoms of COVID-19 to their supervision immediately.</li> </ul>
3.	End of task/end of shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Miscommunication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report any developing symptoms of COVID-19 to supervisor immediately.</li> <li>Report any workers displaying signs or symptoms of COVID-19 to supervisor immediately.</li> </ul>

This document has been adapted from the document "COVID-19 What To Do When Physical Distancing is Not Possible, published by the British Columbia Construction Safety Association.