

# CONTACT NORTH | CONTACT NORD COVID-19 OPERATIONAL CONTINUITY PLAN AND REOPENING PLAN

As of Wednesday, March 23, 2022 – 3:00 p.m.

- As of Monday, March 21, 2022, Contact North | Contact Nord has reopened 52 online learning centres for in-person support.
- On Friday, March 18, 2022, [Contact North | Contact Nord announced the easing of public health measures](#) at the online learning centres and the operations centres.
- Contact North | Contact Nord employees must comply with any COVID-19 health and safety requirements established by hosts.
- Contact North | Contact Nord shared the employer's expectations for COVID-19 vaccination and expectations and timeline for return to online learning centres and operation centres on July 26, 2021.
- Contact North | Contact Nord operations centres and online learning centres are reopening where it is safe to do so and government, health authorities and our hosts allow.
- We remain committed to having all our online learning centres open and fully operational by **September 2022**.

For more details, read Contact North | Contact Nord's COVID-19 Operational Continuity Plan and Reopening Plan below.

It is regularly updated on SharePoint with notification to all staff of any changes. All staff have access to SharePoint, either at their place of work or remotely.

Continue to regularly check SharePoint for updates.

## A. CURRENT STATUS

- 1) Contact North | Contact Nord Easing Public Health Measures at Online Learning Centres and Operations Centres

On Friday, March 18, 2022, [Contact North | Contact Nord announced the easing of public health measures](#) at its online learning centres and operations centres to align with the Government of Ontario's direction.

As a result of the easing of public health measures, the guidelines for business-related travel in Section C. are modified. Please review this section.

Contact North | Contact Nord employees are reminded they must continue to comply with any COVID-19 health and safety requirements established by our local partners who host our online learning centres.

## 2) New Government of Ontario Guidelines for Masks, Self-Isolation and Physical Distancing

Symptoms of COVID-19 and its variants range from mild — like the flu and other common respiratory infections — to severe. If you feel sick, it's important that you stay home or talk with a doctor if necessary. [Taking a self-assessment](#) can help you determine if you have symptoms of COVID-19 and are required to isolate.

Here is a summary of the three key guidelines.

### Mask Mandates

**Effective Monday, March 21, 2022**, mask requirements are removed in most settings, except public transit, long care and retirement homes, health care settings, congregate care settings, shelters, and jails.

### COVID-19 Isolation Requirements

#### **Effective Wednesday, March 16, 2022:**

- For non-household contacts, no isolation is required. However, for 10 days after exposure these contacts should self-monitor for symptoms, wear a mask, not visit anyone with a high risk of illness and not attend or work in a high-risk setting.
- For household contacts, no isolation is required for those aged 18 and older with a booster shot and those under 18 who are fully vaccinated with two shots.
- As well, any household members who have recently tested positive in the last 90 days do not need to isolate.
- Any household members who don't meet the criteria have to isolate, officials said.
- Household contacts are also being asked to follow the same monitoring criteria as non-household contacts for 10 days following exposure.
- Meanwhile, all immunocompromised individuals should isolate for 10 days — down from 20 days previously. But these individuals should also follow additional precautions such as masking, avoiding high risk settings and vulnerable people for another 10 days.

### Physical Distancing

**Effective Monday, March 1, 2022**, under the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario, public health units may decide to reduce or remove physical distancing requirements. Many health units no longer require physical distancing. Please check with your public health unit to ensure you are aware of your local requirements.

3) Employer's Expectations for COVID-19 Vaccination and Timelines for Return to Online Learning Centres and Operations Centres

Contact North | Contact Nord distributed its expectations for COVID-19 vaccination and the timelines for return to online learning centres and operations centres on July 26, 2021, via a SharePoint Announcement from the Director, Human Resources Services.

We remain committed to having all our online learning centres open and fully operational by **September 2022**.

## **B. TOP PRIORITY**

Contact North | Contact Nord's top priority is the health, safety and well-being of its employees and clients visiting its operations centres and its online learning centres.

## **C. BUSINESS TRAVEL PERMITTED**

### **Guidelines**

Contact North | Contact Nord staff may travel for necessary business-related purposes, that cannot be reasonably conducted virtually, including meetings with external stakeholders/partners and clients outside of the online learning centres and operations centres. The following guidelines apply based on the nature of the travel.

### **Meetings with Stakeholders/Partners**

Treat these requests carefully and only agree to meet in person if the meeting cannot reasonably be accommodated through a Zoom session or phone call.

Do not feel pressured to agree to meet face-to-face if you feel your personal health and safety may be at risk. Outline your specific concerns to your supervisor and discuss alternate options.

Follow these three guidelines:

1. Ascertain the stakeholder/partner organization is:
  - a) Open to outside visitors
  - b) Accepting visitors and can provide a safe location to meet
2. Ensure there is a detailed plan for the visit, where you will go within the building, what the space will be like, and any location-specific rules you must observe to minimize risk. Indoor social gatherings are limited to up to 50 people (as of February 17, 2022).

3. Wash your hands upon entry to a location and on exit. If handwashing is not possible, bring personal hand sanitizer for use before entering and after leaving.

Wherever possible, schedule meetings with education and training providers and other stakeholders via audio, Zoom or other virtual means.

Address any questions to your supervisor.

### **Meetings with Clients/Students Outside an Online Learning Centre**

Due to the delayed reopening of some online learning centres, there may be requests from clients to meet face-to-face at other locations in the community to provide service.

Treat these requests carefully and only agree to meet if the request cannot reasonably be accommodated through a Zoom session, phone call or other virtual means.

Do not feel pressured to agree to meet face-to-face if you feel your personal health and safety may be at risk. Outline your specific concerns to your supervisor and discuss alternate options.

If you do meet face-to-face with a client, follow these five guidelines:

1. Meet in a public location that has the necessary protocols in place. Observe all of the location's protocols, including the new limit of 50 people per indoor social gathering (effective February 17, 2022).
2. Do not meet in a client's home or your home.
3. Where feasible and practical, meet outdoors.
4. Do not meet with a client if you are not feeling well or have any symptoms of COVID-19.
5. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer prior to and after the meeting.

Address any questions or concerns to your supervisor.

## **D. TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF CANADA**

Visit the Government of Canada's [COVID-19 vaccinated travellers entering Canada website](#) for information on returning to Canada.

## **E. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

COVID-19 is a serious health threat, and the situation is evolving daily. The risk will vary between and within communities, but given the increasing number of cases in Canada, the risk to Canadians is considered **high**.

This does not mean all Canadians will get the disease. It means there is already a significant impact on our health care system.

There is an increased risk of more severe outcomes for Canadians who:

- Are 65 and older
- Have compromised immune systems
- Have underlying medical conditions

## **F. PROTECTING YOURSELF**

The Ontario Ministry of Health lists the following steps to protect your health and reduce exposure to the COVID-19 virus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Sneeze or cough into your sleeve, not your hand
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are sick

## **G. WHAT HAPPENS IF A STAFF MEMBER MUST GO INTO SELF-QUARANTINE AT HOME?**

Contact North | Contact Nord will support staff if they must remain at home:

- a) If the symptoms are mild, a staff member can continue to work from home and receive their regular pay.
- b) If the symptoms are debilitating and staff cannot perform work, full-time staff can draw from accumulated paid sick time. Once accumulated paid sick time is exhausted, Contact North | Contact Nord can issue a Record of Employment (ROE) and the staff member can apply for sickness benefits through Employment Insurance. The Government of Canada recently announced changes to this benefit so employees do not have to wait the mandatory one-week waiting period and can be paid for the first week of their claim.
- c) For part-time staff who are ill and cannot work, Contact North | Contact Nord can issue a Record of Employment (ROE) and the staff member can apply for sick benefits through Employment Insurance.

Supervisors immediately advise HR Services of any staff members who must go into self-quarantine at home. The supervisor and HR Services identify any further actions that may be required, including notification to the local public health unit.

The Government of Canada is providing support to Canadians and businesses facing hardship as a result of COVID-19. Click [here](#) for information on accessing these supports.

## **H. RESPECT OTHER STAFF MEMBERS CONCERNS**

Everyone reacts differently to situations such as the closure of their workplace or the potential exposure to a virus such as COVID-19. Please be mindful and sensitive of this as you interact with your colleagues. Feel free to share any concerns you have with your supervisor or refer to the Employee Assistance Plan, which is available to full-time employees as part of the benefits package.

## **I. EXECUTIVE CONTINUITY**

In the event the President – Chief Executive Officer is unable to fulfill his responsibilities, the Director, IT, Finance & Organizational Planning has delegated authority to make all required corporate decisions.

In the event the Director, IT, Finance & Organizational Planning is unable to assume the President – Chief Executive Officer's responsibilities, the Director, Human Resources Services has delegated authority to make all required corporate decisions.

## **J. RESOURCES**

Public Health Agency of Canada website (updated daily):

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Public Health Agency of Canada Know the Facts Sheet:

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19/coronavirus-factsheet-eng.pdf>

Public Health Agency of Canada Be Prepared Fact Sheet:

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-be-prepared-factsheet-eng.pdf>

Government of Ontario COVID-19 website:

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>

Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000

[Local public health units](#)

#### **K. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS OF OFFICIALS**

Promptly follow any directions provided by your local public health unit, emergency responders or government officials.

Call your supervisor immediately upon receipt of such directions.

#### **L. REQUESTS FROM THE MEDIA FOR COMMENT**

Do not respond. Refer any media inquiries to 1-800-561-2222 and ask to be transferred to the President – Chief Executive Officer.