

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

As of September 4, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

Contact North | Contact Nord's COVID-19 Operational Continuity Plan and Reopening Plan is 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.

Check SharePoint for updates.

A. CURRENT STATUS

All regions of Ontario are now in [Stage 3 of A Framework for Reopening our Province](#), which allows non-essential businesses, such as Contact North | Contact Nord, to reopen its physical locations and return to delivering services in-person.

Contact North | Contact Nord is working with the hosts for all online learning centres to determine when we can safely reopen each online learning centre in accordance with the steps outlined in Section C.

We are tracking the open/closed status of online learning centres on [SharePoint](#).

We are also tracking the open/closed on [studyonline.ca/etudiezenligne.ca](#). Please feel free to share these links with clients, stakeholders and partners.

As of Friday, September 4, 2020, 5 online learning centres, the Sudbury Operations Centre and the Thunder Bay Operations Centres reopened.

Prior to reopening an online learning centre or the operations centres, Contact North | Contact Nord is taking [all necessary steps](#) to protect your health and safety and that of students and visitors. See Section C for more details on the process to reopen an online learning centre and the operations centres.

Across Ontario, more municipalities require their residents to wear non-medical masks or face coverings in indoor and other locations, and retail and other businesses may have their own mask or other requirements to enter their location.

Please follow all mandatory requirements to ensure your health and safety.

B. CORPORATE OBJECTIVE

Contact North | Contact Nord's objective is for all employees to return to their

normal place of work in the corporation's physical locations (operations centres and online learning centres) when the corporation determines it is safe to do so. The return to the corporation's physical locations does not apply to employees who were approved to work from their home offices prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This objective balances the need to meet the corporation's operational requirements while meeting the corporation's responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace for its staff.

The return to the corporation's physical locations is completed in phases. In the first phase, Contact North | Contact Nord will limit the number of staff who can work in its physical locations to protect the health and safety of staff and clients. If there is a request for a temporary accommodation to allow a staff member, who previously worked in one of the corporation's physical locations, to continue to work from their home location for a limited period of time, these requests must be made in writing to the staff member's supervisor.

The supervisor documents the request and obtains any additional information (i.e. rationale for the request), makes no commitment and submits the documented request to her/his supervisor for review. The final recommendation is submitted by the respective Director to the President – Chief Executive Officer for approval on a case by case basis. The final decision is shared with Human Resources Services.

C. PRESIDENT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER APPROVAL REQUIRED TO REOPEN ONLINE LEARNING CENTRES AND OPERATIONS CENTRES

The approval of the President – Chief Executive Officer is required to reopen an online learning centre or an operations centre.

To reopen, the responsible Director, Operations & Development or Director, Recruitment & Partnerships must confirm the following information:

- 1) The reopening is allowed under the Government of Ontario's regional approach for Stage 3.
- 2) There are no local municipal or public health unit restrictions on reopening.
- 3) The local host (in the case of online learning centres) is allowing us to reopen.

There may be scenarios where the host is reopening its location but not allowing the general public to access the location. In this scenario, the online learning centre remains closed and staff continue to work from home until such time as the general public can access the online learning centre and authorization is provided by the President – Chief Executive Officer to reopen. Staff may access the online learning centre, if safe to do so, to prepare for the reopening.

- 4) The local host (in the case of online learning centres) has protocols in place to protect its clients and visitors to the location (copy or verbal confirmation required).
- 5) All [required health and safety measures and supplies](#) are in place to protect the health and safety of Contact North | Contact Nord staff, students, and visitors.

Upon confirmation of the above five items, the President – Chief Executive Officer will approve the reopening.

At any time after reopening, if any of the above five conditions change, the President – Chief Executive Officer will direct the immediate closure of the online learning centre and relocation of staff to home offices.

If local staff become aware of any change in these five conditions, please alert your supervisor immediately with the specific details. Your supervisor will review the information and make a recommendation to the President – Chief Executive Officer.

D. CONTACT NORTH | CONTACT NORD PLANNING FOR THE REOPENING OF ITS PHYSICAL LOCATIONS

Contact North | Contact Nord initiated a planning process in May 2020 to prepare for the reopening of its physical locations.

[Transition to the New Normal Workspace](#) is continually updated based on new developments.

The ability to reopen an online learning centre is dependent upon the host and its policies for access to the location. Contact North | Contact Nord was advised by some hosts that we may not be able to reopen the online learning centres until later this fall, January 2021 or later.

It is a core deliverable for Contact North | Contact Nord to operate our physical locations and provide local support services to Ontarians in their communities. As a result, in communities where it is impossible to reopen our online learning centres in the near future, we are actively looking for locations within the community where we can temporarily relocate the online learning centre and provide in-person, local support services.

We will only relocate online learning centres to locations where we can protect the health and safety of Contact North | Contact Nord staff and clients.

E. BUSINESS TRAVEL IN ONTARIO PERMITTED

Guidelines

Contact North | Contact Nord staff may travel within Ontario for necessary business-related purposes, which 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 do so if the meeting cannot reasonably be accommodated through a Zoom session or telephone 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 seven 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. Outline the purpose of business travel and seek/receive permission from your supervisor to do so.
3. 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.
4. Wear a mask at all times when interacting with individuals and maintain 2 metres (6 feet) physical distancing.
5. 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.
6. Do not provide printed copies of any materials. Use your laptop to display information and send electronic copies of any materials via e-mail after the meeting. Wipe the laptop you are using before the presentation and after if it came in contact with anyone else. Click [here](#) for cleaning procedures for electronics.
7. Record the names of all individuals met in the daily report to your supervisor in the event contact tracing is required.

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 continued closure of 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, telephone 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 10 guidelines:

1. Meet in a public location which has the necessary protocols in place. Observe all of the location's protocols.
2. Do not meet in a client's home or your home.
3. Where feasible and practical, meet outdoors.
4. Prior to the meeting, review the [Mandatory Questions](#) with the client that are used for entry to an online learning centre. Do not meet with the client if they answered yes to any of the questions. Follow the [instructions](#) to make alternative arrangements with the client.
5. Do not meet with a client if you are not feeling well or have any symptoms.
6. Maintain 2 metres (6 feet) of physical distance between you and the client at all times.
7. Do not shake a client's hand or otherwise connect in any way.
8. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer prior to and after the meeting.
9. Do not provide printed copies of any materials. Use your laptop to display information and send electronic copies of any materials via e-mail after the meeting. Wipe the laptop you are using before the presentation and after if it came in contact with anyone else. Click [here](#) for cleaning procedures for electronics.
10. Record the names of all clients met in the daily report to your supervisor in the event contact tracing is required.

Address any questions or concerns to your supervisor.

F. 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.

G. 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 that all Canadians will get the disease. It means that there is already a significant impact on our health care system. If we do not flatten the epidemic curve now, the increase of COVID-19 cases could impact health care resources available to Canadians.

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

- Aged 65 and over
- With compromised immune systems
- With underlying medical conditions

H. 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

To protect yourself if you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health is recommending everyone in Ontario practice [physical distancing](#) to reduce their exposure to other people.

Physical distancing means doing your best to avoid close contact with people outside of your immediate family. Close contact includes being within 2 metres (6 feet) of another person.

If you have to go out to get food or other critical supplies, care for a relative or friend, or get necessary health care, be sure to [practice safe physical distancing](#).

I. IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Symptoms range from mild – like the flu and other common respiratory infections – to severe. The most common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Hoarse voice
- Difficulty swallowing
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Nasal congestion
- Change in sense of smell/taste
- Chills
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g. nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea)?

If you are experiencing these symptoms or a worsening of these symptoms, immediately contact **Telehealth Ontario** at 1-866-797-0000 or your [local public health unit](#) for direction. Follow the direction received from these sources and immediately call your supervisor.

J. 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 sick benefits through Employment Insurance sickness benefits. 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 sickness benefits.

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.

K. STAFF PERSONAL TRAVEL

All Contact North | Contact Nord staff must follow the direction of public health authorities and take all necessary steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If you leave your home, be sure to [practice safe physical distancing](#) and adhere to any mandatory requirements to wear a mask or face covering.

Follow and adhere to all local public health and/or municipal directions and prohibitions regarding any outdoor activity.

To limit the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Canada advises avoiding all non-essential travel outside of Canada and all travel on cruise ships until further notice.

If you do have to travel outside of Canada, the Government of Canada requires you to [self-isolate](#) for 14 days after your return. Do not report to work at either an operations centre or an online learning centre and advise your supervisor immediately. You and your supervisor will determine if you are able to work from home during the self-isolation period.

During the self-isolation period:

- Monitor your health for fever, cough or difficulty breathing.
- Wash your hands often for 20 seconds and cover your mouth and nose with your arm when coughing or sneezing.

If you develop a fever, cough or difficulty breathing within 14 days:

- Continue to isolate yourself from others
- Immediately call Telehealth Ontario at [1-866-797-0000](tel:1-866-797-0000) or your [local public health unit](#) and:
 - Describe your symptoms and travel history
 - Follow their instructions carefully

Staff who make the decision to travel may be impacted financially if they are not able to work when return from travelling for pleasure.

Supervisors advise the President – Chief Executive Officer and HR Services of any

staff in this situation.

L. RESPECT OTHER STAFF MEMBERS CONCERNS

Everyone manages/reacts to situations differently 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 contact the Employee Assistance Plan available to full-time employees as part of your benefit package.

Click [here](#) to access the Employee Assistance Plan brochure on SharePoint.

M. 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.

N. 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>

Ontario Ministry of Health (updated every day, 7 days a week at 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.):

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

Ontario Ministry of Health Information Sheet:

<https://files.ontario.ca/moh-coronavirus-info-sheet-english-2020-02-18.pdf>

Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000

[Local public health unit](#)

O. 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.

P. REQUESTS FROM THE MEDIA FOR COMMENT

Do not respond and refer all requests from the media for comment to the President – Chief Executive Officer.