

Plan to work and work your plan...

In times of uncertainty, such as a pandemic or other major emergency or natural disaster, having procedures and precautions clearly organized in a workplace safety plan to protect visitors and staff at your location is paramount.

This guide has been prepared by the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) and the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS).

This document outlines safe practice guidelines that should be considered when creating a COVID-19 Operational Plan, along with examples of best practices for preparing your facility, employees and visitors to keep safety front of mind. This resource is designed to inform and guide the development of your Visitor Information Service COVID-19 Operational Plan. The information is meant to be adapted to represent your particular needs as you consider the type(s) of service you offer.

Checklists and examples of safety signage included in this guide allow you to verify and increase the safety of your surroundings and employee health while supporting visitor confidence.

Inspecting your facility and taking action to prevent transmission of COVID-19 will aid in promoting safety in our communities as we welcome visitors.

We hope you will find this guide to be a practical tool to help you along the way.



5 WAYS TO PREPARE TO WELCOME VISITORS

COMMUNITY VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES 2020

1 Develop a COVID-19 Operational Plan

- Conduct a risk assessment of your operation and identify appropriate mitigation measures
- Facilitate personal hygiene etiquette
- List proper cleaning and disinfection procedures
- Ensure best practices are being followed by staff
- Remain updated with changing guidelines and policies from government



2 Ensure Workplace Safety

- Place signage around your visitor service to ensure proper hygiene, and remind staff to practice physical distancing
- Stock your visitor service with the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Develop an employee assessment tool or system for use before and during every shift



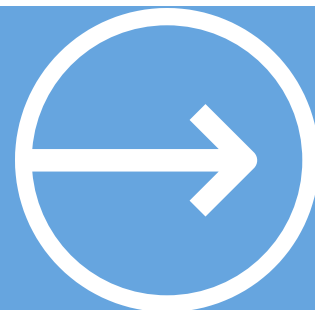
3 Prepare your Employees

- Introduce employee assessment tool for screening
- Require employees to report symptoms or known contact with someone who has COVID-19
- Train staff in proper hygiene practices (*Clean It Right* training program)
- Discourage employees from sharing equipment



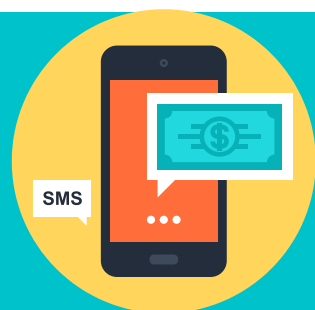
4 Prepare your Visitors

- Post guidelines and rules at the entrance of your visitor service
- Consider limiting visitor capacity
- Provide a place for visitors to wash or sanitize their hands
- Place arrows on the ground/floor to direct the flow of traffic
- Detail the waiting line with 6ft floor marks



5 Safe Communication with Visitors

- Install plexiglass screens between staff and visitors
- Consider keeping literature behind the counter and create tailored packages for visitors
- If you sell merchandise, sales registers should be 6ft apart; avoid cash exchanges if possible



COVID-19 SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINES

A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY
VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES



COMPILED IN COLLABORATION BY:



We have assembled the information below to support your Visitor Information Service through the next phase of COVID-19. At this point in the pandemic, Visitor Information Centres and Services are expected to maintain flexibility, adhere to public health protocols, and prepare for another potential halt if the COVID-19 spread continues in the future. It is important 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 and services to follow.

Operational Plan

- Develop a COVID-19 Operational Plan that outlines procedures and protocols (eg. regular cleaning and disinfection, staff hygiene etiquette)
- Conduct a risk assessment within your operation and identify appropriate mitigation measures
- Determine style of service (in-person, online and telephone only, or a combination)
- Consider extending season end date if appropriate
- Reduce number of high touch surfaces (eg: keep most literature behind the counter and create tailored visitor packages)
- Limit number of visitors in building and facilitate physical distancing
- Be mindful of the number of staff on duty in relation to the size of the space and their ability to practice physical distancing
- COVID-19 Awareness (signage) on:
 - **proper hand hygiene**
 - **respiratory hygiene**
 - **physical distancing**



Ensure Workspace Safety

- Signage is important to encourage and ensure proper hygiene and physical distancing practices
- Signage includes spatial markings for physical distancing, rules and regulations to keep workplace clean
- Stock workplace with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as:
 - **face masks or face shields**
 - **gloves**
 - **hand sanitizer**
- Ensure regular and thorough cleaning of high touch surfaces including common areas and public washrooms
- Develop self-assessment form for employees to take before every shift
- Spread awareness by using a symptoms poster differentiating flu, cold and COVID-19
- Ensure limited entry to prevent congestion and close contact
- Ensure all travel counsellors know and understand the aspects of the safety measures outlined in your COVID-19 Operational Plan



Prepare your Employees

- Employees should be issued a self-screening checklist and be informed of health related policies such as:
 - Employees who have a fever or are otherwise exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms should remain at home and follow public health protocols
 - Employees should be required to report symptoms or known contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 to their manager
- Provide PPE for all employees including:
 - **masks or face shields**
 - **gloves**
 - **hand sanitizer**
- 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
- Encourage staff to practice social distancing, maintaining six feet between co-workers
- Employees should avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth and **DO NOT** shake hands
- Discourage employees from sharing each other's equipment including phones, computers and tools
- Train staff in proper hygiene practices (eg. *Clean It Right* certification program - details below)
- Communicate weekly with employees to ensure compliance
- Check in regularly on the mental health of employees



Prepare your Employees

- Any sales registers should be six feet apart or consider the installation of a physical barrier, such as a clear plastic guard or plexiglass between staff if 6ft physical distancing can't be maintained
- Provide hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes at register locations or counters
- Avoid cash exchanges and encourage customers to use credit/debit cards, tap to pay, PayPal or another form of contact-less payment
- Disinfect transaction areas and equipment regularly
- If a visitor comes in that is experiencing COVID-like symptoms, have a plan in place for staff to follow (eg. have the visitor call 811 and recommend that they return home, then implement cleaning protocol etc.)
- Post a sign for deliveries outlining expectations and the process



***Clean It Right* certification training**

Clean it Right is an online self-directed training program designed to provide awareness and education on cleaning your facility. All Community Visitor Counsellors in Nova Scotia will utilize the *Retail Service Module* of the program, which has applicability in a Visitor Information Centre/Service setting. Successful Participants receive a certificate and Centre's will receive a window decal once they meet program participant level requirements. More information on this program and how to register will be sent out in July.

Stay Connected with your Visitors and Tourism Operators

COVID-19 has changed our world immeasurably, including how and where we travel. As tourism industry partners you can help to rebuild public confidence in traveling and reassure visitors that exploring and enjoying experiences in Nova Scotia can be done safely. Your Visitor Information Service COVID-19 Operational Plan and its implementation is the key to this.



Visitor counsellors, as ambassadors of this plan, also have an important and close connection with tourism industry operators and can use this influence to further extend visitor and public safety when recommending accommodations and experiences.

Counsellors should:

- Clarify which experiences (dining, cultural, outdoor etc.) and accommodations are operating in the region and if possible, what visitors can expect in terms of health and safety measures (eg. whether masks are required)
- Ensure directions to the nearest operational public washrooms are available if your visitor service washrooms are closed
- Be attentive to what visitors are looking for and asking about and build resources as needed (eg. where to buy masks or sanitizer etc.)
- Share useful tips and resources with other visitor centres/services and communicate important updates to your visitor services co-ordinator to be shared provincially.



Resources

Stay Informed

- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>
- <https://tourismstrong.ca/>
- <https://www.tourismns.ca/news-events/intouch-blog>

Create a Plan

- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/COVID-19-prevention-plan-checklist.pdf>
- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/COVID-19-Fact-Sheet-Business.pdf>
- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy/#masks>

Signage and Poster

- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/Hand-Washing-Poster.pdf>
- <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/Staying-Healthy-Habits-EN.pdf> \
- https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/Social_Distancing_poster.pdf

Created with References from: Halifax Chamber of Commerce
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce
Saint John Region Chamber
Greater Moncton Chamber of Commerce



Visitor Services Daily Assessment Form

Remember that we are all in this together and have to work as a team to ensure everyone is safe and stays healthy.

Remind our visitors that we must adhere to social distancing procedures of 2m or 6ft and follow arrows and signage. If a visitor forgets, kindly remind them. If a visitor refuses to follow procedures call local authorities for assistance.

To start the day

- All COVID signage is in place – check door, floor, washrooms
- Open sign/flags are up and visible
- Washroom check – is everything is in order
- Sanitation station is in place
- Masks for staff are ready and all are wearing appropriately
- Work stations are free of unnecessary items that visitors can touch, etc

Comments: _____

Mid day

- Disinfect your work station, including all devices
- Disinfect washroom vanities
- Disinfect entry door handles and all hard, high-touch surfaces
- Sanitation station is in place and filled

Comments: _____

End of day

- Disinfect your work station
- Disinfect washrooms thoroughly, fill soap dispensers
- Disinfect entry door handles and all hard, high-touch surfaces
- Sanitation station is refilled
- Clean floors
- Fill paper towel dispensers and toilet paper dispensers
- Remove garbage from any bins
- Check cleaning supplies, if low add to the list of items for purchase (should have protocols in place for purchasing or replenishing)
- Remove any garbage from outside of property
- Disinfect all electronic devices, keyboards and phones with wipes
- If you have a gift shop, ensure everything is in place and all are surfaces are disinfected

Comments: _____



COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN IN PLACE

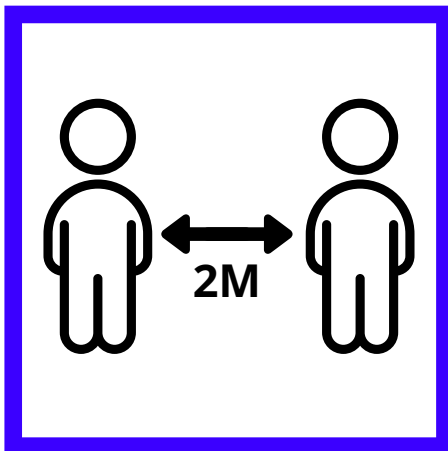
If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Flu-like Symptoms
- Coughing
- Shortness of Breath

DO NOT ENTER!



Our staff are taking the following steps to keep everyone safe:



**PHYSICAL
DISTANCING
STAND 6FT/2M
APART**



**CLEANING/
DISINFECTING
SURFACES
REGULARLY**



**WASHING HANDS
OFTEN**

**PLEASE
STAND**

6FT

2M

APART