



Vernon and District Immigrant and Community Services Society
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COVID-19 Safety Plan

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1. General COVID-19 safety precautions

The following list of precautions and rules are applicable for all staff and clients:

- Wash Hands often and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Avoid contact with people displaying symptoms of sickness.
- Avoid touching mouth, nose and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with other people such as hugging, shaking hands, touching or kissing when greeting.
- Practice good health habits. (Eating and sleeping well, keeping physically active).
- Practice good respiratory etiquette such as covering coughs and sneezes with arm.
- Self-isolate if you test positive or come in contact with someone who has been diagnosed positively with COVID 19. Immediately inform your agency contact if this is the case.

If you get sick:

- Stay home.
- Separate yourself from other people and animals.
- Inform your agency contact of your illness.

2. Risks

VDICSS is a medium risk organization in terms of potential exposure and contraction of COVID-19 or other communicable diseases. VDICSS offers a variety of services that are each unique in terms of preventative measure to ensure the safety of clients and staff. For the purpose of this plan we have defined the service offerings into the following categories:

- Individualized one on one support service (Settlement, Work BC, language assessment, Community connections and Career Paths for Skilled immigrants)
- Classroom setting activities (language classes, group exercises, conversation circles).
- Child care (childminding services)

Workplace risk assessment:

Common areas within the agency include the staff kitchen, bathrooms, front reception area, shared computers and classrooms.

High traffic-touch areas include door knobs, light switches, classroom tables, coffee pots, telephones, shared computers including keyboards, screen and cursor devices. Within the childminding room these areas include toys, books, tables and other accessible items within the center.

The following is a list of employee job tasks where preventative measures need to be considered:

- a. In-office one-on-one services including settlement services, language assessment, employment counselling and community connections.
- b. Teaching in a classroom setting.
- c. Childminding Center attendants supervising children.
- d. Front desk reception interacting with guests and visitors.
- e. Common Spaces.

Generally, employees do not share computers, communication devices or other tools minimizing the risk of cross contamination.

Protocols of reducing risks.

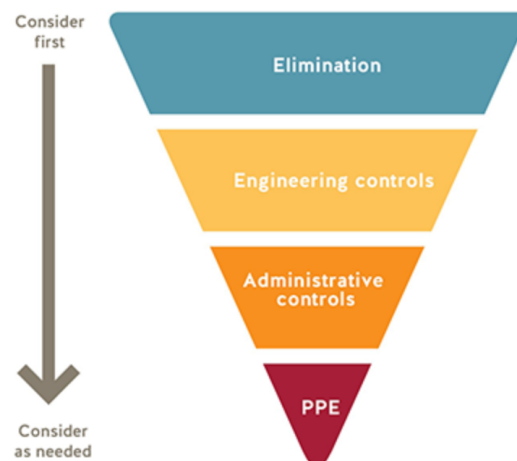
In accordance with the guidance of Work Safe BC we are adopting the 4 levels of protection:

First level protection (elimination): Limit the number of people in your workplace where possible by implementing work-from-home arrangements, establishing occupancy limits, rescheduling work tasks, or other means. Rearrange work spaces to ensure that workers are at least 2 m (6 ft) from co-workers, customers, and members of the public.

Second level protection (engineering controls): If you can't always maintain physical distancing, install barriers such as plexiglass to separate people.

Third level protection (administrative controls): Establish rules and guidelines, such as cleaning protocols, telling workers to not share tools, or implementing one-way doors or walkways.

Fourth level protection (PPE): If the first three levels of protection aren't enough to control the risk, consider the use of non-medical masks. Be aware of the limitation of non-medical masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets. Ensure workers are using masks appropriately.



a) In-office one-on-one services:

First level protection:

- Individualized services will continue in-person and preferably through remote options. Clients will be served through online platforms such as Zoom or via telephone.

Second level protection:

- In-person client meetings are in designated rooms that are equipped with either a plexiglass barrier if social distancing can't be accommodate or in a room that is large enough to maintain social distancing (min of 2 meters or 6 feet).
- The room is equipped with designated writing utensils for the staff member and the client to prevent cross contamination.
- While in the room, both the staff member and the client are to wear masks throughout the entire consultation. The client will be made aware that he/she is to bring her/his own mask to the session. Should the client not have a mask available, the agency will supply a mask at nominal cost.

Third level protection:

- Staff is aware not to share office supplies if possible and to minimize surface contacts in common areas. Masks are mandatory for staff outside their office.
- Disinfectant wipes are available throughout the office to disinfect shared equipment such as photocopiers and printers.
- Hand sanitizing dispensers are available in each office for individual use as well as in common areas such as high-traffic areas and entrances.
- Appropriate signage is installed in certain areas to remind staff and clients of proper protocols. These signs may include narrow hallway procedures, handwashing and hand sanitizing reminders and workstation best practices.
- Employees receive instruction and communication in regards to precautionary measures.

Fourth level protection:

- VDICSS provides staff with PPE. This may include but is not limited to masks, latex gloves and face shields. Masks are mandatory in office areas outside of the individual offices.

b) Teaching in a classroom setting

Classes continue via Zoom remotely or in-person until further notice. A return to only online teaching will be re-evaluated if needed. The protection levels listed below apply for in-person classes.

First level protection:

- The classroom is set up with social distancing practices. (minimum of 2 meters or 6 feet apart per student and away from the teachers). This allows only a certain number of students to be in the classroom.
- If there are additional students beyond the class limits, students will be invited to join via video conferencing.

- Students have their own writing utensils, stationery and supplies. No sharing of supplies is permitted in the classroom.

Second level protection:

- The classrooms are large enough to maintain social distancing effectively. If for any reason social distancing can't be maintained plexiglass protection shields need to be in place.

Third level protection:

- Students are expected to wash their hands prior to entry into the classroom in the washroom.
- Students and teachers are asked to disinfect their work desks and arm chair surfaces prior to the start of the class and post class with agency-provided wipes.
- Teachers ensure students maintain social distancing between each other and the staff.
- Traffic in and out of the classroom during classes is restricted/limited.
- Students consume snacks or drinks inside the classroom. The usage of the staff kitchen is not permitted for students as long as the COVID-19 procedure is in effect.
- Coffee or other beverages are not be available to students. Students are encouraged to bring their own beverages.
- Students are encouraged to enter and exit the building before and after the class as efficiently and quickly as possible.
- Hand sanitizers are available in the classroom. Teachers will remind students to sanitize hands throughout the sessions.
- Employees receive instruction and communication in regards to precautionary measures.

Fourth level protection:

- PPE such as face masks or face shields will be available for the teacher if they choose to wear them.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own face masks. The agency has a limited stock available for a nominal fee.
- Since the primary purpose of the class is language training, masks may not be practical in this setting. During class, as long as social distancing is ensured, masks are not compulsory in the classroom.
- Students will be required to wear masks when entering the building, exiting the building and if they need to leave the classroom to use the washroom.

c) Childminding Center

Childcare programs in B.C are licensed and regulated through the Ministry of Health, Child Care Licensing. As a result, The Childminding Centre will always strictly adhere to all restrictions and mandates provided by this governing body. The Ministry of Health, Child Care Licensing has instructed child care providers to follow all directives provided by the Ministry of Health and the

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) for procedures and safety protocols. We continue to monitor these guidelines and will modifying this plan as applicable.

First level protection

- Children's activities are currently provided in-person. When needed it will be re-evaluated if in-person services need to be suspended.
- Children that are ill will not be permitted into the Childminding Center. (Symptoms include but not limited to fever, chills, diarrhea, body aches, cough or runny nose.)
- Children will have designated craft materials such as crayons, glue, paper etc. (No sharing will be permitted).
- The maximum children permitted in the room will be capped at 8 units at any given time.

Second level protection

- Cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces, door knobs, toys will occur after each Childminding class.

Third level protection

- Children will be expected to wash their hands in the washrooms prior to entry into the Childminding Center.
- Jackets, strollers and bags are to remain in designated areas inside the Childminding Center.
- Children are to change their outside shoes to inside shoes. Outside shoes are to be left outside of the Childminding Center.
- Traffic in and out of the Childminding Center will be restricted/limited to children, parents and childminding staff. Other staff are only permitted in special circumstances.
- Parents and children utilize a designated entry and exit door to minimize potential cross contamination with other staff and clients
- Parents will feed their children inside the Childminding Center. The usage of the staff kitchen is not permitted for students, clients or children as long as the COVID-19 procedure is in effect.
- VDICSS has emergency bottled water and pre-packaged snacks available.
- Parents and children will be encouraged to enter and exit the building before and after the class as efficiently and quickly as possible
- Hand sanitizers dispensers are available in the Childminding center. Childminders will help sanitize children's hands constantly throughout the visit in the Childminding Center.
- Parents and staff will receive instruction and communication in regards to precautionary measures. (See Appendix B).

Fourth level protection

- VDICSS makes PPE available to staff. This may include but is not limited to masks, latex gloves, or safety glasses.

d) Front desk reception

First level protection

- VDICSS employs a front desk employee.
- No more than 2 clients are permitted in the reception area which will be posted at the entry door.
- All clients will be screened through the COVID-19 Questionnaire.
- Reception is spaced appropriately to meet the 2 meter or 6 feet social distancing requirement.
- The client will be advised to disinfect their hands immediately with one hand sanitizer dispensers available in the reception area.
- The door sign will also ask visiting clients to wear a mask when entering VDICSS.
- Clients will be encouraged to book online meetings instead of in-person sessions to reduce the traffic in the office

Second level protection

- A plexiglass barrier is installed on the reception desk to add an extra layer of protection between the staff member and clients.
- The reception worker will clean and disinfect other areas the client may have touched, including the door handles and or seats, computers etc.
- The front desk area is secured with electronic locks to control public traffic flow.

Third level protection

- If possible the reception worker will remain behind the plexiglass barrier throughout the encounter.
- The reception worker will also manage the maximum number of visitors and ask visitors to wait outside, if possible.

Fourth level protection

- VDICSS will make PPE available to staff. This may include but is not limited to masks and latex gloves.
- The reception worker will be required to wear a mask during each encounter.

e) Common Spaces

First level protection

- Common spaces within VDICSS are defined as the kitchen, filing room and bathrooms. Clients are not permitted in the kitchen or filing room.
- Masks are mandatory in all common spaces for staff.
- The kitchen will have a maximum of 2 staff members at the same time.

- Staff will be advised to wipe down surfaces, handles and cupboards after each use in all common rooms.
- Staff is advised not to share cups, cutlery or plates and to use paper towels instead of towels.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned daily. Only disposable towels will be made available.

Second level protection

- The usage of barriers is not applicable in the common spaces.
- The File room is locked and only accessible by a select few employees.

Third Level protection

- The cleaning expectations have been communicated to staff. Staff will be made aware of changes if needed.

Fourth level protection

- PPE such as face masks and gloves will be made available to all staff.

3. Policies

Refer to Appendix A - **Coronavirus (COVID-19) VDICSS Society policy**

4. Training and Roll out plan

A joint walk-through of the COVID-19 procedural document including Q/A (Signoff required) was performed. The plan has been posted on the website and staff reminded about it during the general staff meeting.

5. Monitor and update plan

- COVID-19 updates will be discussed in staff meetings and through emails
- Government updates will be monitored and shared at the meetings.
- Changes to the procedure and policies will be tracked through document/version control.

6. Assess and address risks from resuming operations

- A return to strictly online services will be re-evaluated if needed.
- New employees will be made aware and oriented with the COVID 19 plans, policies and procedures.

Appendices for staff:

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) VDICSS Society policy has been signed by all employees.