

## Return to Practice Guidance for CSEP Certified Personal Trainers® and CSEP Clinical Exercise Physiologists™

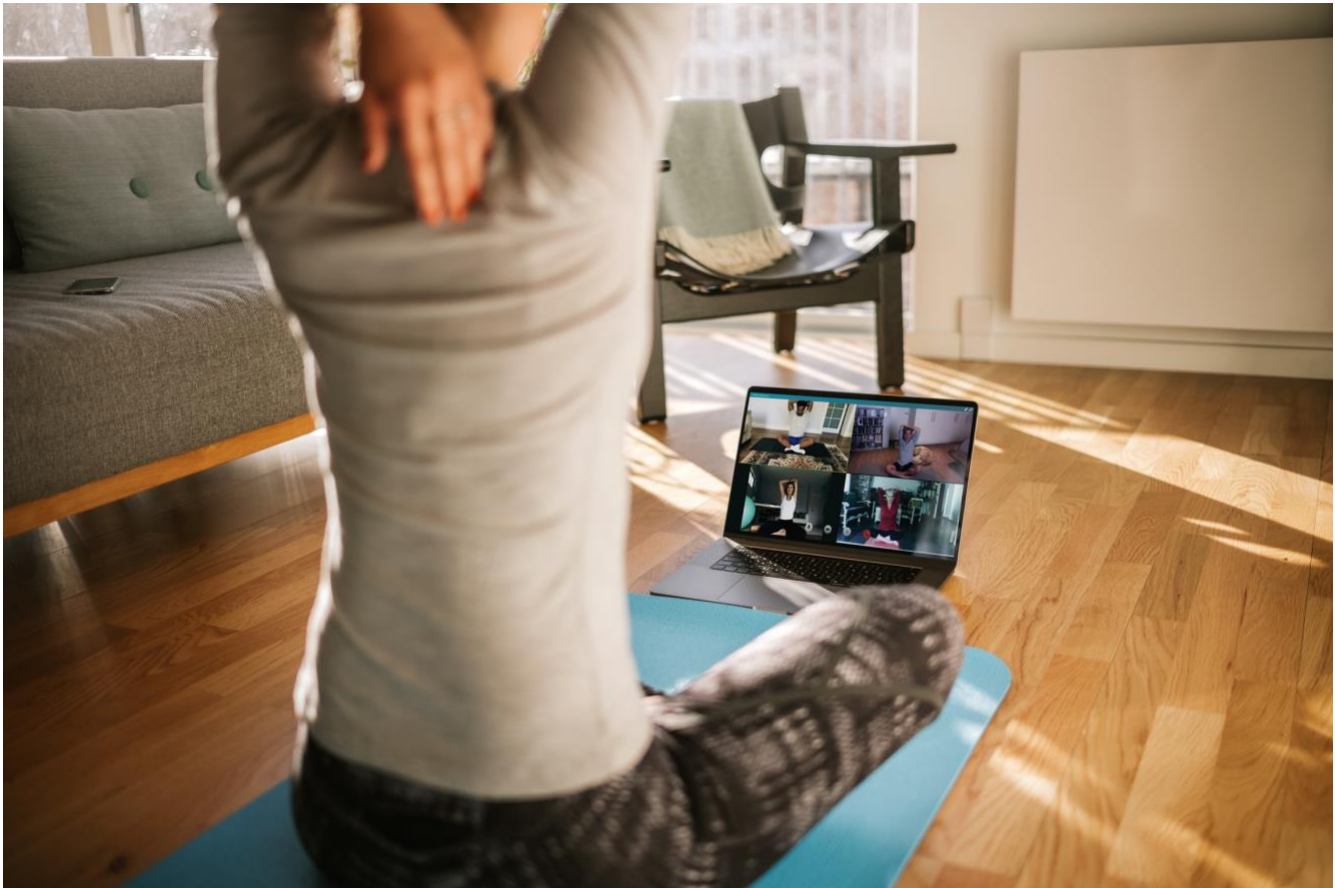


## BACKGROUND

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CSEP Certified Personal Trainers® (CSEP-CPTs) and CSEP Clinical Exercise Physiologists™ (CSEP-CEPs) are an integral part of the primary healthcare community. With the continued easing of restrictions in work and public spaces, many Canadians will be permitted to resume 'new normal' activities, including in-person physical activity and lifestyle counselling from their qualified exercise professional. To ensure the safety of our members as well as their clients, the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) is providing guidance for its certified members regarding safe practices for return to work during the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis.

These recommendations are relevant at the time of writing and will continue to evolve as more information becomes available. It must be understood that each provincial Ministry of Health / Provincial Health Officer and Workers' Compensation Boards will have unique considerations and requirements regarding safety protocols and return to work plans. While CSEP is providing a general overview of recommendations, **CSEP certified members are responsible to know and follow and/or exceed their respective provincial or regional regulations and use appropriate professional judgment as to whether and how to implement additional measures specific to the practice setting and to individual clients' needs.**



## UNDERSTANDING COVID-19

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It is important for all Canadians to understand COVID-19, how it is transmitted and the symptoms. CSEP encourages members to familiarize themselves with up-to-date resources through the Government of Canada and/or your provincial Ministry of Health.

### Provincial and Territorial Ministry of Health Links

[Government of Canada](#)

[Alberta](#)

[British Columbia](#)

[Manitoba](#)

[New Brunswick](#)

[Newfoundland and Labrador](#)

[Northwest Territories](#)

[Nova Scotia](#)

[Nunavut](#)

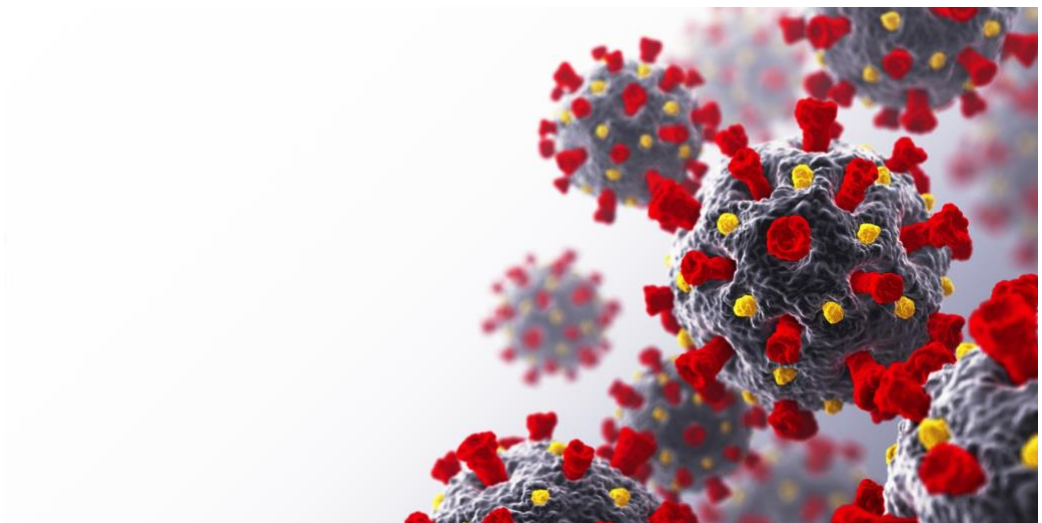
[Ontario](#)

[Prince Edward Island](#)

[Quebec](#)

[Saskatchewan](#)

[Yukon](#)



## COVID-19 PRE-SCREENING / SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLS

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Pre-screening and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 are critical to managing the spread of the virus. Each province and territory has a self-assessment tool for COVID-19 which should be referenced when planning to meet with clients.

Individual regions and/or workplaces may require healthcare workers to pre-screen for COVID-19 symptoms daily, within 2 hours of your shift. This may include completing a provincial self-assessment tool and taking body temperature. If a person is feeling unwell, they should not go to work or leave their home. Individual provinces and/or workplaces may require clients to also follow the same pre-screening protocols prior to an appointment.

### Provincial and Territorial Self-Assessment Links:

[Alberta](#)

[British Columbia](#)

[Manitoba](#)

[New Brunswick](#)

[Newfoundland and Labrador](#)

[Northwest Territories](#)

[Nova Scotia](#)

[Nunavut](#)

[Ontario](#)

[Prince Edward Island](#)

[Quebec](#) (directs to Government of Canada self-assessment)

[Saskatchewan](#)

[Yukon](#)

## REDUCING THE RISK OF PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSMISSION

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The Hierarchy of Controls is a summary of the levels of protection from COVID-19. Wherever possible, CSEP professionals are expected to operate at the highest level of protection: Elimination or Substitution.

Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is recommended when all other levels of Control are not possible, and when physical distancing of at least 2 meters is not possible

### Hierarchy of controls

1. **Elimination or Substitution:** Removing the risk of exposure entirely from the workplace. This could involve postponing, re-organizing, or planning work in such a way that workers are not exposed to any risk. Providing telehealth (remote/virtual training) instead of in-person sessions.
2. **Engineering controls:** These are physical changes in the workplace, such as installing plexiglass barriers at reception and between equipment. Eliminating non-essential services, such as showers, water fountains or towers, or installing touchless technology in high-contact areas.
3. **Administrative controls:** This involves altering work practices to reduce person-to-person exposure, such as minimizing the numbers of clients in a gym/studio/lab, staggering work shifts, making virtual appointments, working from home etc.
4. **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** PPE should never be considered as a replacement to the previous control measures, but rather, employed when the above cannot be avoided and where 2-metre distancing cannot be avoided. PPE needs for each workplace may vary, and careful consideration should be given to utilize the most appropriate equipment for your healthcare setting.

Source: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/health-and-safety/covid-19-faqs>

## PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE (PLI) CONSIDERATIONS

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Your Professional Liability Insurance broker, BMS Canada Risk Services Ltd. (BMS), has provided a number of resources and recommendations around return to work and your PLI coverage.

Consent to Treatment	<a href="#">Link</a>
Considerations When Resuming Practice	<a href="#">Link</a>
Webinar/Podcast – Wellness/Legal/Financial Considerations Webinar for Health-related Professionals	<a href="#">Link</a>
Business Continuity Planning	<a href="#">Link</a>
Risk Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic	<a href="#">Link</a>
Workplace Safety Rights of Allied Health Professionals to Refuse Work	<a href="#">Link</a>
Webinar: Insurance Considerations for COVID-19 & Telehealth	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ethical Issues for Regulated Health Professions in the era of COVID-19	<a href="#">Link</a>
Informed Consent	<a href="#">Link</a>
Protecting Privacy in a Pandemic	<a href="#">Link</a>
Virtual Health Care Services Ensuring Continuity of Care	<a href="#">Link</a>
Remote Training and Consultation	<a href="#">Link</a>



## VIRTUAL TRAINING

Whenever possible and appropriate for the client, CSEP recommends the delivery of telehealth services (remote/virtual training) in lieu of in-person. When remote services are not appropriate AND your province or territory allows, the guidelines for in-person delivery must be followed.

[CSEP Practice Guidelines for Remote Training and Counselling](#)



## GUIDANCE FOR CSEP-CPTS AND CSEP-CEPS PREPARING TO RETURN TO WORK

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The following measures should be implemented by all CSEP certified members when cleared to return to work in their province or region. Each province or territory may have specific and individual requirements that must be implemented/met before you can return to work. At all times, CSEP members are required to meet the specific requirements of their provincial Ministry of Health/PHA prior to providing in-person services.

### Back to Work Tools and Guidelines:

#### International -

- [World Health Organization](#)

#### National -

- [Government of Canada](#) :
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)

#### Provincial -

##### Alberta

- [Return to work guide: Health Care worker](#)
- [CMOH Order – COVID-19](#)
- [Biz Connect Guidance](#)

##### British Columbia

- Return to work/safe operations – health professionals
- [Worksafe BC – COVID 19 updates](#)
- [BC Restart Plan – Getting back to work](#)
- [Worksafe BC – Returning to safe operations of gym and fitness facilities](#)

##### Manitoba

- [Restoring Safe Services](#)

##### New Brunswick

- [Embracing the new normal](#)
- [Operational plan for workplaces \(template\)](#)
- [Employer scorecard](#)

##### Newfoundland and Labrador

- [Guidance for workplaces](#)
- [Risk informed decision-making guidance for employers operating during COVID-19](#)
- [PPE guidance for employers](#)

##### Northwest Territories

- [Services Employers/Employees](#)



## Nova Scotia

- [Prevention plan checklist](#)
- [Working during COVID-19](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety](#)
- [Reopening Nova Scotia](#)

## Nunavut

- [Reopening Nunavut](#)
- Nunavut (<https://nu.thrive.health/covid19/en>)

## Ontario

- [Infographic for Patient intake](#)

## Prince Edward Island

- [Health and Wellness – Fitness Facilities Guidelines](#)

## Quebec

- [Reopening economic sectors](#)
- [Resumption of activities](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Tools](#)

## Saskatchewan

- [Workplace information](#)
- [Gym and Fitness facilities guidelines](#)

## Yukon

- [Operating businesses and services safely during COVID-19](#)
- [Personal Service Establishment Guidelines COVID-19](#)

## SELF-MONITORING

CSEP-CEPs and CSEP-CPTs should monitor themselves for signs of illness.

As per Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) Guidelines, anyone who is experiencing [symptoms of COVID-19](#), is required to stay home and isolate for 14 days. If you or your client begin to experience symptoms while at work, immediately put on a medical/procedure mask and leave the premises and take appropriate steps to self-isolate. Where testing facilities exist, it is advisable to seek testing and remain isolated until results are confirmed. If you or your client believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19, or travelled outside of your province or region within the last 14 days, notify your supervisor immediately and complete your provincial online self-assessment before contacting your doctor.

## HAND HYGIENE AND INFECTION PREVENTION CONTROL

Hand-washing is widely recognized as one of the most effective methods of preventing the transmission of disease. All CSEP-CPTs and CSEP-CEPs must wash their hands thoroughly before and after each client contact, before putting on personal protective equipment (PPE), after taking off PPE, and after contact with potentially contaminated surfaces.

CSEP-CPTs and CSEP-CEPs must promote and have sufficient means for frequent and proper hand hygiene for staff and clients. This can be done by washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Recommendations include:

- Providing handwashing and sanitization stations
- [Providing signage instructing proper hand washing techniques \(many provincial and territorial websites and the government of Canada provide posters you can print for your business\)](#)
- Requiring everyone, including staff, patients/clients and visitors, to wash/sanitize their hands upon arrival
- NOTE: Gloves alone are not a substitute to hand hygiene. Hands must be cleaned after removing gloves.

**REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.  
WASH YOUR HANDS.**

- 1**  
Wet hands with warm water
- 2**  
Apply soap
- 3**  
For at least 20 seconds, make sure to wash:  
palm and back of each hand  
between fingers  
under nails  
thumbs
- 4**  
Rinse well
- 5**  
Dry hands well with paper towel
- 6**  
Turn off tap using paper towel

1-833-784-4397 @ canada.ca/coronavirus phac.info.aspc@canada.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada / Agence de la santé publique du Canada

Canada

## INFECTION CONTROL TRAINING

CSEP recommends completion of an Infection Prevention and Control course. These are offered online in most provinces and territories.

### Infection Control Training

#### National -

- [Infection Prevention and Control Canada](#)
- [Saint John Ambulance](#)

#### Provincial (where available) -

[Alberta](#)

[British Columbia](#)

[Manitoba](#)

[Northwest Territories](#) (not a course, but a manual)

[Nunavut](#) (not a course, but a manual)

[Ontario](#)

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Thorough cleaning and disinfecting should be employed on all equipment and surfaces before and after each use as well as all shared contact surfaces (door handles, light switches, keyboards, shared materials, washrooms, etc.). Health Canada has approved several hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers for use against COVID-19. Ensure proper WHMIS protocols, including required PPE, are followed for the product you are using and consult the manufacturer's instructions for directions on proper equipment cleaning methods.

A pre and post-use cleaning routine for all public / shared spaces as well as all equipment should be established and posted in a visible area. The cleaning responsibility should fall to the staff/practitioner and not the client to ensure safe protocols and thorough cleaning.

Reducing contact points in shared spaces is a preventative measure. This may include completing forms electronically prior to appointment, removing waiting room access, removing water stations, closing showers/change rooms, and discouraging use of public washrooms.

Clothing and fabric items should be laundered and dried on the highest temperature setting possible. Ensure items are thoroughly dried. It is recommended to keep a dedicated pair of shoes at work.

**Refer to your manufacturer regarding safety of and cleaning requirements for specialized equipment (E.g. Metabolic cart)**

Link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

## **APPOINTMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

Where telehealth services are not possible or appropriate, consideration for outdoor training and counselling environments should be given. Sessions held outdoors are subject to the same pre-screening and precautionary measures as those held in a typical gym/fitness facility environment.

For all in-person sessions:

- Review and follow professional liability insurance requirements.
- Inform your client of new procedures and policies prior to or at the time of booking. This includes use of PPE, check-in policies, washroom policies, pre-screening policies and [informed consent](#) – the link to a sample consent form has been provided in the chart on page 6.
- Clients should be pre-screened for symptoms of COVID-19 at time of booking and within 2 hours of appointment. This step must be documented in the client’s intake chart.
  - Clients should not attend their appointment if any positive responses to pre-screening. Clients should be instructed to self-isolate immediately and to complete their [provincial/regionally approved self-assessment tool](#) before contacting their physician.
  - CSEP-CPTs and CSEP-CEPs may want to consider relaxing their cancellation policy to ensure honesty and compliance with pre-screening questions.
- Clients must understand the risks and consent to treatment (i.e. risk of infection weighed against risk of not receiving in-person service at the clinic). Informed consent must be documented.
- In some provinces and regions and in some workplaces, clients may be required to wear a mask during the appointment. While clients are encouraged to bring their own masks, businesses should have disposable masks available.

**Group Classes:** CSEP-CPTs and CSEP-CEPs should check with their provincial or regional health authorities regarding group sizes in their region before considering group classes. Minimum two-metre distancing measures will need to be in place where group classes resume (including outdoor spaces). Circuit-style classes with shared equipment is not recommended.

## PREPARING THE WORKPLACE FOR IN-PERSON TRAINING OR COUNSELLING

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Most provincial and territorial workers' compensation boards will require a Safety Plan be in place before consideration for re-opening.

Considerations may include:

- Create and adhere to a cleaning schedule
- Addition of plexiglass barriers at reception or high traffic areas
- Addition of hand-washing stations at entrance and throughout space
- Recommendation / requirement (depending on provincial/regional guidelines) of client to bring own mask or provide masks for clients
- Addition of COVID-19 pre-screening for all staff and all clients
- Addition of COVID-19 consent to treatment
- Removal of reception area seating. Establish check-in from outside and await invitation into workplace
- Removal of shared contact items (magazines, pens/clipboards, paperwork)
- Removal of towel services and water fountains / coolers
- Increase signage regarding COVID-19 and hand-washing
- Provide dedicated, covered, clearly marked receptacles for disposal of masks, tissues, gloves, paper towels, etc
- Encourage clients to use washrooms/showers at home
- Discourage bringing others to the appointment
- Adjust the schedule to reduce the of number of practitioners working at a given time, thus reducing the number of people in the clinic
- Dedicate spaces for each practitioner (gym are / treatment rooms)
- Increase time between clients to ensure less traffic in common spaces and appropriate time for cleaning
- Provide traffic flow directions within the workplace to maximize physical distancing
- Reduce common staff / practitioner spaces (break room, printer, charting area) and no shared items (pens, timers, phones, etc.)
- Remove non-essential equipment from your space
- Remove all equipment that cannot be disinfected (ex. fabric BP cuffs, foam grips on equipment, fabric chairs, carpeted areas, etc.)
- Paperless charting, online intake forms, online programs (email or links)
- Paperless payment (tap & paperless receipts)
- Develop an outbreak procedure checklist in the event a patient/client becomes infected after attending your place of practice

[REFER TO THE PROVINCIAL RETURN TO WORK LINKS FOR SAFETY PLANS](#)

## IN-PERSON APPOINTMENTS

Before and after each appointment, wash your hands or use an alcohol-based sanitizer. Ensure your client also washes hands or uses an alcohol-based sanitizer upon arrival and departure.

When the client arrives and before you begin service, you or another staff member must screen the client to ensure their symptoms have not changed from the pre-booking screening. This must be documented. If upon this second screening the client exhibits signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you must cancel the appointment and recommend the client self-isolate and immediately and complete the self-assessment tool before calling their doctor.

During your appointment, best practice includes:

- When possible, establish and maintain a safe physical distance of two meters
- Where distance of two meters from the client is not possible, CSEP recommends the use of appropriate PPE for both the practitioner - ideally procedural or surgical mask - and the client. [Please check your provincial/regional recommendations and proper use.](#)

After each appointment, best practice includes:

- Thoroughly washing hands with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cleaning and disinfecting anything used during the appointment including equipment, door handles, washrooms, change rooms, etc.

CSEP-CEPs and CSEP-CPTs who provide in-person, home-based services must use their professional judgement given that service delivery will take place in an environment outside of their control. Practitioners are recommended to review their provincial Ministry of Health's guidance for home and community care providers.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

CSEP-CEPs and CSEP-CPTs must follow the latest advice from their provincial authorities regarding the use of PPE. Consideration of the workplace requirements must also be considered as these may exceed provincial guidelines.

If providing service in-person to a client who screens negative for COVID19 and physical distancing (i.e. two-meters) cannot be maintained, CSEP highly recommends that CSEP-CEPs and CSEP-CPTs wear a surgical/procedure mask. Where two-meter distancing can be maintained, it is also highly encouraged that CSEP-CEPs and CSEP-CPTs wear a surgical/procedure mask. While provincial and regional health recommendations may vary, these steps are widely considered best practice.

Use of other PPE (eye protection, gloves, isolation gowns) may be recommended in some provinces, workplaces or with higher risk clients. Any activity that involves a risk of aerosol infection requires use of eye protection PPE (goggles or face shield). As exercise-specific research is very limited at present, CSEP encourages best practice decisions. I.e. If the client is not tolerating a mask while exercising



indoors, the practitioner should consider wearing eye protection PPE as well as a mask if there is need to get within the 2 meters of the client.

Clients should be advised to wear a mask (cloth or other) to the appointment, if they have one. It is the responsibility of the CSEP-CEP or CSEP-CPT to address the issue of mask use in your workplace (by practitioner, by staff, by client, or all). Respect a client's individual personal boundaries and support their request for PPE to be worn by either individual. Disposable or single-use clean cloth masks should be available for clients if they do not have one.

**Ensure that you are following protocols around putting on and taking off PPE.**

### Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health

## How to Wear a Face Mask

- 1** Wash your hands with soap and water for 20-30 seconds or perform hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand rub before touching the face mask.
- 2** Check the new mask to make sure it's not damaged.
- 3** Ensure colour side of the mask faces outwards.
- 4** Locate the metallic strip. Place it over and mold it to the nose bridge.
- 5** Place an ear loop around each ear or tie the top and bottom straps.
- 6** Cover mouth and nose fully, making sure there are no gaps. Pull the bottom of the mask to fully open and fit under your chin.
- 7** Press the metallic strip again to fit the shape of the nose. Perform hand hygiene.
- 8** Do not touch the mask while using it, if you do, perform hand hygiene.
- 9** Replace the mask if it gets wet or dirty and wash your hands again after putting it on. Do not reuse the mask.

### Removing the Mask

- 1** Perform hand hygiene.
- 2** Do not touch the front of your mask. Lean forward, gently remove the mask from behind by holding both ear loops or ties.
- 3** Discard the mask in a waste container.
- 4** Perform hand hygiene.

**If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.**

Non-medical inquiries (ex. travel, physical distancing): 1-888-COVID19 (1888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300

## WORK REFUSAL

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The decision to return to practice is a matter of individual judgement; there is no duty or obligation to return to practice if the Practitioner has assessed that the risk of practice outweighs the benefit to either themselves or the client.

While measures to mitigate risks of COVID-19 transmission are recommended in this document, until an effective treatment or vaccine is developed, an implied and unavoidable risk will continue to exist. It should be understood that both the Practitioner and the client are placing trust in each other's screening and hygiene practices.

A respectful workplace environment includes either party requesting increased use of PPE during an appointment or refusal of services.

### Back to Work Tools and Guidelines:

#### National -

- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Your rights and responsibilities as an employee](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)

#### Provincial -

##### Alberta

- [Workers' Compensation Board of Alberta](#)

##### British Columbia

- [WorksafeBC](#)

##### Manitoba

- [Government of Manitoba: Right to Refuse Dangerous Work](#)
- [Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba](#)

##### New Brunswick

- [WorksafeNB](#)

##### Newfoundland and Labrador

- [WorkplaceNL](#)

##### Northwest Territories

- [Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut](#)

##### Nova Scotia

- [Worker's Compensation Board of Nova Scotia](#)

## Nunavut

- [Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut](#)

## Ontario

- [Workplace Safety and Insurance Board](#)

## Prince Edward Island

- [Government of PEI: Right to Refuse Work](#)
- [Workers' Compensation Board of Prince Edward Island](#)

## Quebec

- [Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail \(CNESST\)](#)
- [Regional Offices of CNESST](#)

## Saskatchewan

- [Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board](#)

## Yukon

- [Yukon Workers' Compensation, Health and Safety Board](#)



## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

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If a client alleges that they contracted COVID-19 from you or while in your facility, CSEP recommends the following:

- Immediately call public health/provincial reporting line for COVID-19 cases, providing all information around the alleged transmission and client contact information
- The certified member should not provide any further training to anyone until public health has investigated and has provided direction
- The certified member should self-isolate until the matter has been investigated and public health direction has been provided
- If the certified member is working in a team setting and has worked with additional clients since last contact with the client, the certified member should immediately inform their colleagues and other clients of the transmission risk
- The certified member should contact their insurance broker, BMS, to notify the incident under their insurance policy. For more information about how professional liability and/or commercial general liability insurance may respond please review the [Considerations when Resuming Practice](#) document.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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These recommendations are relevant at the time of writing and will continue to evolve as more information becomes available. It must be understood that each provincial Ministry of Health / Provincial Health Officer and Workers' Compensation Boards will have unique considerations and requirements regarding safety protocols and return to work plans. While CSEP is providing a general overview of recommendations, **CSEP certified members are responsible to know and follow and/or exceed their respective provincial or regional regulations and use appropriate professional judgment as to whether and how to implement additional measures specific to the practice setting and to individual clients' needs.**

CSEP would like to acknowledge the volunteers without whom this document could not have been completed. As well, in addition to provincial and territorial Ministries' of Health and Public Health Authorities' websites, this document could not be completed without the foundational work done by our partners in allied health:

- The College of Kinesiologists of Ontario
- WorksafeBC
- College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia