

OHS/ES eNews

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, you will receive special editions of eNews with the latest developments in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Employment Standards (ES).

COVID-19: a workplace health and safety concern

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that can be spread either directly or indirectly.

- Direct infection can happen if:
 - Someone coughs or sneezes on you.
 - You shake hands with someone who is sick and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Indirect spread can happen from contaminated surfaces, tissues, cloth or paper.

The OHS Resource Portal has a [COVID-19 coronavirus](#) section with bulletins related to minimizing risk from respiratory viruses.

Counterfeit respirators

Counterfeit respirators are products that are **falsely** marketed and sold as being approved by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or approved to some other acceptable standard, and may not be capable of providing appropriate respiratory protection to workers. NIOSH has identified a number of red flags including:

- No NIOSH markings
- NIOSH spelled incorrectly
- Presence of decorative fabric or other decorative add-ons

Additional information regarding counterfeit NIOSH approval can be found [here](#).

KN95 respirators not meeting performance standards have also been identified. The Centre for Disease Control is testing many of these and the results are available [here](#). If an employer suspects that a mask is fraudulent or uncertified, stop using it and report the information to [Health Canada](#).

Go [here](#) for information on many of the current issues related to the safe use of disposable respirators.

Contact OHS

1-866-415-8690 (toll-free)
780-415 -8690 (Edmonton)
TTY: 1-800-232-7215
TTY: 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)
[Report a serious incident](#)
[Online incident reporting service](#)

Contact ES

1-877-427-3731 (toll-free)
780-427-3731 (Edmonton)
[Ask an Employment Standards question](#)

Moving towards a relaunch

Alberta's [Relaunch Strategy](#) puts safety first while gradually reopening businesses, resuming activities and getting people back to work.

- [Guidance and resources for workplaces](#)
- [Restricted and non-restricted services](#)

[Alberta Biz-Connect](#) provides industry-specific supports to help businesses and non-profits begin to reopen and resume operations.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health has issued Orders [18-2020](#), [19-2020](#), and [21-2020](#), which rescinds Orders 01-2020, 02-2020, and 07-2020. Appendix A of 18-2020 contains a list of businesses, entities and schools closed to the public.

For links to specific ministerial orders, orders in council and legislation that have been implemented related to COVID-19 visit [Alberta.ca](#).

Quick links

- [COVID-19 info for Albertans](#)
- [Alberta OHS legislation](#)
- [Employment Standards](#)
- [Partnerships in Injury Reduction](#)

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Employment Standards

Job-protected Leaves

There are two unpaid job-protected leaves that employees impacted by COVID-19 can access: the COVID-19 Leave and the Extended Personal and Family Responsibility Leave.

- The COVID-19 Leave provides 14 days leave for employees required to self-isolate or self-quarantine. Information can be found [here](#).
- The Extended Personal and Family Responsibility Leave is flexible in length and is for employees who are caring for children affected by school and daycare closures and/or employees caring for a child or dependent adult who is required to self-isolate.
 - Employees are eligible regardless of their length of service and can take the leave more than once.
 - Employers may ask employees to provide other documentation to verify their need to access the leave such as school or daycare enrolment.
- The regular Personal and Family Responsibility Leave allows an employee up to five days of leave in each calendar year to attend to personal or family responsibilities (for example, a medical appointment or an ill child).
 - Employees are eligible for Personal and Family Responsibility Leave if they have been employed at least 90 days with the same employer.

Information on the rules regarding Personal and Family Responsibility Leave can be found [here](#).

Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta (WCB)

WCB has developed a "[COVID-19 at work](#)" [fact sheet](#) for employers. This fact sheet provides information about workplace outbreaks and answers questions about when and why claims need to be reported to WCB. Visit WCB's [COVID-19 web page](#).

COVID-19 information

Visit [Temporary workplace rule changes](#), [Supports for businesses](#), [Open to public businesses](#) and [Restrictions on businesses](#) for up-to-date information.

- [COVID-19 Chief Medical Officer health care PPE guidelines](#)
- [COVID-19 publications by industry](#)
- [Guidance for managers and operators of industrial work camps](#)
- [Hazard assessment and control](#)
- [Working from home during a pandemic](#)

Alberta Health Services

- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Mental Health Help Line](#)

Other resources

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

- [COVID-19 tip sheets for high-risk and essential occupations and industries](#)
- [Reopening for business](#)

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If in doubt with respect to any information contained within this material, or for confirmation of legal requirements, please refer to the current edition of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* and *Occupational Health and Safety Code*, *Public Health Act* Order, or other applicable legislation. Further, if there is any inconsistency or conflict between any of the information contained in this material and the applicable legislative/*Public Health Act* Order requirement, the legislative/*Public Health Act* Order requirement shall prevail.

This material is current to May 29, 2020. The information, law, requirements, and policies are constantly changing during this unprecedented global pandemic. It is important that you keep yourself informed of the current requirements.

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