

# GUIDANCE FOR SENIORS' CENTRES AND SENIORS-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

## Overview

Under current Chief Medical Officer of Health's Public Health Orders, businesses and entities are required to:

- Implement practices to minimize the risk of transmission of infection among attendees;
- Provide procedures for rapid response if an attendee develops symptoms of illness;
- Ensure that attendees maintain high levels of sanitation and personal hygiene; and
- Comply, to the extent possible, with the [COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance](#), this guidance, and any other applicable Alberta Health guidance found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

This document has been developed to support seniors' centres and other seniors-serving organizations operators, in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees (including workers, volunteers, patrons, and the general public). The guidance provided outlines public health and infection prevention and control measures, specific to these settings. It includes information on:

1. How to prevent the spread?
2. When can seniors' centres and seniors-serving organizations reopen?
3. What to consider before reopening?
4. What personal protective equipment is needed, and where to get them?
5. What to say to concerned individuals?
6. How to learn more?
7. What funding and other resources are available to organizations?


This document and the guidance within it is subject to change, and will be updated as needed. Current information related to COVID-19 can be found: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-information.aspx>.

For information and standards for Licensed Supportive Living and Long-Term Care see [CMOH Order 23-2020](#).

## COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

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| <b>How to prevent the spread?</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Albertans have a responsibility to <a href="#">help prevent the spread</a>. Take steps to protect yourself and others.</li><li>• Practice <a href="#">physical distancing</a> by keeping at least two metres (about the length of a hockey stick) from others.</li></ul> |
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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice good hygiene by washing hands often, for at least 20 seconds, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoiding touching your face.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor for <a href="#">symptoms of COVID-19</a> and if you exhibit any of these symptoms, you should complete the <a href="#">COVID-19 self-assessment tool or call 811</a> to access testing.</li> <li>If you have been out of your home and have touched a surface other people have also touched, wash your hands and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth until you wash your hands.</li> <li>Albertans are encouraged to wear non-medical masks in public when it's difficult to maintain physical distancing of 2 metres at all times. Guidance around mask use is available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>Additionally, be aware of the bylaws on mandatory masking.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>When can seniors' centres and seniors serving organizations reopen?</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seniors' centres and seniors-serving organizations vary in the functions and services they provide, so your relaunch strategy will also vary. Like all organizations, you must follow provincial relaunch guidelines according to your <a href="#">area and sector-specific guidance, and continue to follow mandatory public health measures</a>. Check Alberta's <a href="#">Relaunch Strategy for more information regarding which facilities and activities may resume</a>.</li> <li>Mandatory public health measures:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandatory isolation of individuals with symptoms (cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat) for 10 days from onset of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</li> <li>Mandatory quarantine for 14 days of close contacts of cases, and individuals who have travelled internationally.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Some seniors' centres that provide medical and essential social supports have continued operations throughout the pandemic response. More information is available at <a href="#">COVID-19 info for Albertans</a>, Alberta's <a href="#">Relaunch Strategy</a> and on <a href="#">Alberta Biz Connect</a>.</li> <li>Seniors-serving organizations should also refer to and follow the <a href="#">Workplace Guidance for Business Owners</a>.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>What to consider before reopening?</b></p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is important to take measures to protect yourself, your clients, staff and volunteers during the relaunch.</li> <li>Information on health and safety guidelines for general workplaces, and sector-specific guidelines, to ensure your organization can reopen safely during the COVID-19 pandemic is available on <a href="#">Alberta Biz Connect</a>.</li> </ul>  |

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- A [template](#) is available to help businesses and nonprofit organizations, to determine steps to take when reopening and includes considerations to help guide you as you plan to open. These considerations pertain to distancing measures, cleaning and disinfecting, screening for symptoms, PPE, and your responsibilities to ensure that your precautions are followed.
- Reducing the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission is critical. Some tips include:
  - Consider providing portable hand sanitizers to staff and volunteers, including those making deliveries such as meals or groceries;
  - Regularly clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces and objects, such as equipment and doorknobs using [approved disinfectants](#); and
  - Organizations relaunching home support services, such as light housekeeping, should discuss new safety measures with their clients before initiating services.
  - Prudent safety measures for all services include:
    - Performing hand hygiene (including hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer) on entry and exit from home;
    - Having staff and clients wearing a mask if the two-metre physical distancing cannot be maintained; and
    - If the client is physically able, consider asking the client to leave the room that is being cleaned to reduce the likelihood of respiratory droplets passing between the client and staff.
  - Other measures could include proactively planning “social time” for the client and their home support worker. Consider planning for staff to visit with a client outside, such as on their front porch or balcony, with both the client and staff wearing masks and maintaining physical distancing. Proactively planning to honour a client’s desire to visit with their home support staff will encourage them to do so in a safe way. See [CMOH Order 29-2020](#) for more information on the Visitor Policy.
- Services involving delivery of items should include staff performing hand hygiene, leaving items at the front door (no contact drop off), and staff moving to a safe distance before engaging in conversation with the recipient and wearing masks, if the two-meter physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- If you provide services in a public facility, you may need to co-ordinate your return to business with other organizations. For example, shops, daycares and restaurants that share a multi-use facility and are now open may want to stagger their hours of service, to avoid large gatherings of people.

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially, you may experience backlog issues and, as a result, may only be able to serve fewer clients at a time. This may lead to extended wait times for some services. It is important to communicate this clearly with clients.</li> <li>You may also consider adapting your services during COVID-19, by offering virtual options for programs and services including online ordering, curbside pickup or delivery services, and visits or classes by reservation only.</li> <li>Posters to 'help prevent the spread' are available <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>For more information on workplace guidance and supports to help businesses and nonprofits affected by COVID-19 begin to reopen and resume operations safely, consult <a href="#">Alberta Biz Connect</a>.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>What personal protective equipment is needed and where to get them?</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves, are a very important component of PPE for health care workers. For the public, in most circumstances, like running errands or delivering items, wearing gloves is not necessary.</li> <li>Medical masks include N95 masks and surgical or procedure masks. These should be kept for health care workers, and others providing direct care to COVID-19 patients.</li> <li>Homemade cloth masks or non-medical face masks are another way to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 in areas where physical distancing (two-metres distance between individuals who are not from the same household) may be challenging or not possible, and should only be used in addition to <a href="#">other prevention steps</a>.</li> <li>Wearing a mask can be an additional measure you can take to protect others around you by preventing your respiratory droplets from contaminating people, surfaces and/or objects.</li> <li>Depending on the services provided, non-medical masks should be sufficient for use by most clients, staff, and volunteers in seniors-serving organizations. Here is some <a href="#">guidance for wearing non-medical face masks</a> and <a href="#">videos</a> on the proper use of non-medical masks and how to choose one.</li> <li>The <a href="#">Canadian Red Cross</a> is providing Preventing Disease Transmission Training and PPE, to support frontline workers responding to COVID-19.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>What to say to concerned individuals?</b></p>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can help reassure older Albertans, staff, and volunteers by listening to them and sharing what you know.</li> <li>Notify older Albertans, staff, and volunteers of the steps you are taking to prevent the risk of transmission of infection.</li> <li>Washing your hands, not touching your face, and staying home when you are sick are the best ways to help you, and others, stay healthy.</li> <li>Some groups of people may need more or new supports. Albertans can call the Mental Health Help Line at 1-877-303-2642, or the Addiction Help Line</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p>at 1-866-332-2322, anytime. Both lines are open 24-hours a day, seven days a week, for confidential support, information, and referrals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If your staff are also caregivers at home or have child care responsibilities that have been impacted by the pandemic, consider flexible work arrangements until respite or alternate care is available.</li></ul>  |
| <p><b>How to learn more?</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <a href="#">Alberta Biz Connect</a> web page provides business owners with information on health and safety guidelines for general workplaces, and sector-specific guidelines for those able to open in Stage One of relaunch to ensure businesses can reopen safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have questions about how the restricted or non-restricted services list may apply to your business, please contact the Biz Connect team. <a href="mailto:BizConnect@gov.ab.ca">BizConnect@gov.ab.ca</a></li><li>• <a href="#">CORE Alberta</a> is a newly launched knowledge hub for Community-Based Seniors Serving (CBSS) organization staff, volunteers, and allied professionals engaged in efforts to support and promote healthy aging. This web-based platform and associated sector-building initiatives are designed to foster connections, communication, co-ordination, collaboration, and capacity building to help strengthen individual organizations and the CBSS sector at large. Members can join a discussion forum to discuss COVID-related topics, relaunch, or other seniors-focused questions.</li></ul> <p><b>Register and get involved!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit <a href="https://corealberta.ca/">https://corealberta.ca/</a></li><li>• Sign up for a free membership and create a profile.</li><li>• Once your account has been validated by the CORE Alberta team within one business day, you'll be able to log in, explore the full site, access groups that you can join, and register for upcoming discussions.</li><li>• Subscribe to the bi-weekly <a href="#">CORE Alberta newsletter</a>.</li></ul> |
| <p><b>What funding and other resources are available to organizations?</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This website for <a href="#">nonprofit and community organizations support</a> provides information on grant funding programs and charitable donation matching programs, for organizations supporting vulnerable Albertans during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li><li>• A number of websites offer information on fundraising, volunteering and human resources, crisis communications resources, policy updates at the provincial and federal levels, peer connection opportunities, and mental health supports. These include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <a href="#">Alberta Nonprofit Network</a></li><li>○ <a href="#">Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations</a> (ECVO)</li><li>○ <a href="#">Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations</a> (CCVO)</li></ul></li></ul>   |

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|                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <a href="#">211 Alberta - Resources for COVID-19 in Alberta</a> or dial 2-1-1, text INFO to 211 or visit <a href="http://www.ab.211.ca">www.ab.211.ca</a> and click “live chat.”</li></ul>   |
| <b>Going forward</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● As the COVID-19 pandemic is an evolving situation, this document and the guidance within are subject to change, and will be updated as appropriate. We recommend that you:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Keep informed with the most current information on <a href="#">COVID-19 info for Albertans</a>; and</li><li>○ Share your promising practices, feedback and questions with others through <a href="#">CORE Alberta</a>.</li></ul></li></ul> |