

SFRS COVID-19 RESPONSE PROTOCOLS AND POLICIES

The following safety protocols have been developed for SFRS staff, contractors, volunteers and clients in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. These protocols follow the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Health and the Public Health Officer (PHO), WorkSafe BC and BC Centre for Disease Control. These protocols may change and will be updated as new information is made available by the PHO. As well, the following policies are revised to align with current response protocols:

- [3.28 Social Media policy](#)
- [5.20 Communicable Disease](#)
 - Note: these protocols specific to the COVID-19 pandemic are in addition to SFRS policy 5.20.
- [6.29 Sick Leave Benefit](#)
- [6.36 Work at Home](#)
- [7.2 Use of Personal Vehicle for Work](#)
- Additional program policies as needed for safe provision of services, or as required by regulations governing SFRS programs. Program Managers will determine the program level policy changes.

Also see the following guidelines for specific service areas on the SFRS shared drive:

- [PHO - Guidance for Social Service Providers](#)
- [Worksafe BC - Child Care Safety Plan](#)
- [Worksafe BC - Covid-19 Safety Plan](#)

As we continue to review how services can be offered safely, implementing the SFRS COVID-19 Response Protocols, along with revised SFRS policies, is mandatory for employees, contractors and volunteers.

Sharing information about SFRS protocols

1. SFRS Covid-19 protocols and policies information is available on the Shared Drive [Y:\WorkSafeBC COVID 19 information](#), as well as in hard copy at SFSR work locations: Wadams Way, Wale Rd, Bryn Maur Rd and SFRS Thrift Shop.
2. Each employee will receive a copy of the SFRS Covid-19 Response Protocols and relevant policies.
3. Each SFRS program area (including shared spaces) will have a posted copy of the listed SFRS Covid-19 Response Protocols and relevant policies.
4. Managers will complete training on protocols and policies for each employee, contractor and volunteer working in their area of responsibility.
5. Managers are responsible, but may delegate responsibility to employees, to train clients receiving services.
6. SFRS office and program spaces will have the following WorkSafe BC signage posted:
 - Visitor screening questions
 - Hand hygiene information
 - Cough/sneeze etiquette information
7. Common and public spaces will have the following WorkSafe BC signage posted:

- Visitor screening questions
 - Hand hygiene information
 - Physical distancing information
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Screening to determine wellness for work or service

Employees, contractors, volunteers, clients, and visitors entering SFRS work locations or vehicles must be screened before entering. Screening must be done each time staff, clients and visitors enter a work location or vehicle.

If employees, contractors, volunteers, clients, or visitors have any of the following screening symptoms, please go to the BC CDC at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19> or the provincial online health assessment tool at <https://bc.thrive.health/> and follow the recommendations.

Screening questions to be asked each time are as follows:

1. Do you have any of the following symptoms?

- Fever
- Chills
- new or worsening cough
- shortness of breath
- sore throat
- new muscle aches or headache

If you are sick, or if you become ill at work with any symptoms of a communicable disease (such as common cold, influenza or COVID-19), you will stay/go home and follow the recommendations set out by the BC CDC or local public health authority (Island Health). You may use your sick time benefit, vacation time, or request a Record of Employment (off work due to illness), for access to other government benefit options.

2. Have you been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19?

If you have reason to believe you have been exposed to a person with COVID-19, follow the recommendations set out by the BC CDC and/or local public health authority (Island Health). Employees who need to self-isolate will have the option to work from home, as planned with their manager, or use sick time or vacation time benefits.

3. Have you or anyone in your household travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days?

Those who have travelled outside of the country must follow the Covid-19 recommendations for travel as set by the Government of Canada <https://travel.gc.ca/>

4. For employees working in client/family homes, ask: Is anyone sick or in self-isolation in your household?

You may refuse service if client/family homes have sick or self-isolating persons in the household.

Employees may refuse service to clients or visitors who are not willing to follow SFRS guidelines regarding screening. See SFRS policy 5.2 Safety Away from Worksites.

Staff **MUST** complete the screening protocol before working each day, and inform their manager, or designate, if they are not well, if they have infectious symptoms, and their plan for confirming their infectious status to return to work.

Hand Hygiene

Maintaining good hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways of reducing the spread of the Covid-19 infection. The SFRS policy 5.20 Communicable Disease has been revised to include Hand Hygiene procedure.

- Wash your hands often with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- When soap and water is unavailable, alcohol-based hand rubs (ABHR) can also be used to clean your hands as long as they are not visibly soiled. If they are visibly soiled, use a wipe and then ABHR to effectively clean them.
- ABHR must contain at least 60% alcohol content.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

You must clean your hands each time:

- Before and after preparing, handling, serving, or eating food.
- After personal body functions (e.g., using the toilet, sneezing, coughing).
- Before and after using a mask.
- After disposing of garbage or dirty laundry.
- Whenever hands look dirty

SFRS work locations will be equipped with soap dispensers in washrooms, kitchens, and staff rooms. Where soap and/or water is not available, staff will be provided with hand sanitizer and/or wipes (ABHR).

Physical Distancing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

When the appropriate physical distancing requirement of 2 metres (6 feet) is not attainable, staff are required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE). For SFRS services PPE consists of:

- Gloves, where there is no access to water and soap for hand hygiene
- Masks (cloth, disposable) or face shields.

SFRS will provide PPE to staff who require equipment to maintain service delivery components of their jobs. When there is no PPE available from SFRS, employees may purchase PPE and be reimbursed on an expense sheet, after approval from the program manager.

When seeing clients in the community, staff must wear PPE if they are in any setting that does not permit appropriate physical distancing (2 metres/ 6 feet), such as coffee shops, stores, malls.

When working in client homes or transporting clients in vehicles, PPE must be used.

Specific program-level protocols may be required for use of PPE. Managers will determine the program level protocols.

As per the December 3rd, 2021 Public Health Office order, all SFRS employees must wear a mask in the workplace as follows:

- in any location where they are in a shared workspace
- in any area where physical distancing cannot be maintained
- in any area where workers are not separated by a barrier
- in any area where services are provided (programs with specific guidelines will follow the current provincial guidelines for that sector ie: Child Care settings)

If you have a medical condition or other reason that prohibits you from wearing a mask, you must discuss this with your program manager.

As required by WorkSafe BC, SFRS will enforce the mandatory mask policy with both workers and clients.

Service to clients

For clients who are unable to wear a mask, SFRS will offer options for accommodation to the best of our ability. If clients refuse all accommodation options, employees may refuse to provide services.

SFRS employees may refuse service to clients and families who are able to wear masks and refuse to do so.

Please note: Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two. Children 5 and over must wear a mask unless they are exempt.

This amendment will be reviewed as PHO mandates are updated.

Please refer to the WorkSafe BC guidelines on the Shared Drive.

- Selecting and Using Masks
- How to Wear a Mask

Transporting clients

- As much as is possible to support service delivery, appropriate physical distancing rules will apply when transporting clients in SFRS or employee vehicles.
- If the appropriate physical distancing requirement of 2 metres (6 feet) is not possible within a vehicle, PPE must be worn by staff and clients. Clients may provide their own PPE or staff may provide it for them.
- As much as is possible, each child will use their own car seat.
- Where it is not possible, an agency car seat may be used, but must be cleaned between each child's use. Sanitizing the car seat is the priority. The cover will be washed as needed.
- Personal and SFRS vehicles must be cleaned after each use (see cleaning protocol below). SFRS will supply cleaning products. If necessary, employees may purchase PPE and be reimbursed on an expense sheet, after approval from the program manager.
- Refer to SFRS policy 7.2 Use of Personal Vehicle for Work for more information.

Client meetings in SFRS spaces

If the appropriate physical distancing requirement of 2 metres (6 feet) is not possible within the office, staff will arrange an alternate room of appropriate size for meetings.

- To book rooms Sem 1, Sem 2, CASA room and the Early Years room contact main reception
- To book rooms at Bryn Maur Rd contact Kelly Walker
- To book rooms at Wale Rd contact Daphne Raymond
- To book the Family room contact MCFD in Sooke

Client home visits or home meetings

- All staff visiting clients in their homes must pre-screen clients before entering the home, using the screening protocol.
- Where possible, meetings are to be conducted outside.
- Staff are to keep physical distance at all times, whether outside or inside a client home.
- Where possible, staff should refrain from touching anything in the client's home.
- If the appropriate physical distancing requirement of 2 metres (6 feet) is not possible within a home PPE (face mask) must be worn by staff.

- If discovered, any undisclosed illness in the client's home must be reported to the program manager. The manager, in consultation with the impacted SFRS employee, will determine a safe course of action for service.

SFRS workspaces

- When the appropriate physical distancing requirement of 2 metres (6 feet) is not possible within a shared office, staff can arrange alternate use of the space with their direct supervisor (e.g. working from home, working in shifts/rotating)
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Public, Common, and partner program spaces

Public and common spaces in facilities where SFRS services are provided will comply with WorkSafe and PHO guidelines. Working with partner agencies, SFRS will ensure appropriate protocols are in place. When working in partner program spaces, SFRS employees will comply with SFRS COVID-19 protocols.

- Screening
- Hand Hygiene
- Social distancing
- Cleaning

Appropriate signage will be in place in the public and common spaces.

Food Preparation and Handling

- All surfaces are to be sanitized after use (counter tops, taps, fridge door handles, etc.) SFRS will provide bulk supplies.
- Staff will follow hand hygiene protocols at all times when handling food

Staff will wear masks at all times when preparing food for consumption.

Cleaning protocols for all SFRS spaces

Cleaning protocols will comply with WorkSafe and Island Health licensing requirements. Staff must clean office spaces, kitchens, vehicles, and transport items (bins, boxes, etc.) after each use. It is important to follow directions on cleaning supply labels. Safety Data Sheets for cleaning products will be filed on our SFRS Shared drive for staff to review.

- **Kitchens and shared eating areas**
All surfaces are to be sanitized after use (counter tops, taps, fridge door handles, etc.) SFRS will provide bulk supplies.
- **Meeting spaces**
If you have booked a room for a physically distanced meeting, please follow the cleaning guidelines posted in the room. Paper towels and cleaning supplies will be provided in all available bookable rooms
- **Offices**
All surfaces are to be sanitized at the end of the day regardless of whether you are sharing an office or not.

****Please ensure your computer and monitor is off before wiping down. Do not spray cleaner onto your keyboard or monitor.**

- **Vehicles**

All surfaces inside the vehicle must be wiped down with cleaner provided. Only disposable paper towels or sanitized wipes are to be used for wiping down surfaces in vehicles.

Working at home

Employees will plan with their manager if working at home is an option, and how their home office will provide a safe, private, and functional workspace. SFRS policy 6.36 is revised to reflect new working at home rules.

- Staff must review the following WorkSafe BC guidelines (on the Shared Drive) to help make informed decisions about working from home
 - Working From Home
 - Setting Up Home Workspace
 - SFRS policy 6.36 Work at Home

Returning to work after non-essential travel

Employees will discuss out-of-province or out-of-country travel prior to departure and upon return with their program manager. All employees are to refer to the Government of Canada for recommendations and restrictions on travel and implement the required actions prior to returning to work.

<https://travel.gc.ca/>