

Employer Guidance for Developing Self-Isolation Plans for Workers from Outside the Country

On April 24, 2020, the Chief Medical Officer of Health issued a Special Measures Order requiring employers of workers from outside the country to submit self-isolation plans for those workers. This document outlines the expectations for employers to prepare self-isolation plans of workers, such as seasonal farm workers, trades workers, food service workers, health care workers, and retail industry workers. These plans are complementary to typical workplace health and safety plans and procedures required under provincial occupational health and safety legislation.

Like other individuals entering Newfoundland and Labrador, workers are required to self-isolate for 14 days. Exemptions to self-isolation only apply to asymptomatic workers in certain sectors arriving in NL from other provinces or territories in Canada, however these workers must self-isolate while not at work (see the Special Measures Orders at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/public-health-orders/> to learn more).

All workers entering the province must self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival and prior to beginning work in Newfoundland and Labrador. Employers must not prevent workers from meeting those requirements in any way.

The guidance document as outlined is subject to change and will remain in effect until further notice.

Representatives of the Occupational Health and Safety Division of Digital Government and Service NL will review employer self-isolation plans in consultation with the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS).

Summary of Requirements to be met by Employers

Requirements prior to arrival

Manifest

The manifest is to include the name of each worker, the date of arrival of each worker into NL, the method of transportation into NL, information on where each worker is coming from, the location where each worker will be staying in NL, and the name and contact information of the employer. See Appendix C – Passenger Manifest.

Approved Housing and Accommodations

Employer plans for housing and accommodating workers during the 14-day self-isolation period must be approved in advance of their arrival. Effective April 27, 2020, employers must submit a pre-screening checklist to Service NL Occupational Health and Safety representatives. Preferably, this would be submitted at least one week in advance of the scheduled arrival of the workers. See Appendix A for the required pre-screening checklist.

While the preferred deadline for submitting these plans is at least one week before the scheduled arrival of the worker, earlier submission will ensure that the employer has sufficient time to address any identified issues in the plan before the worker's arrival.

COVID-19 Awareness

The employer is to provide information to the worker on COVID-19, including current self-isolation requirements (such as distancing, etc.) related to Covid-19 in Newfoundland and Labrador, on or before their first day of arrival. The Department of Health and Community Services has created a resource page where employers can access material on COVID-19 (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/resources/>). Information must be provided in a language the worker understands.

Similar information and graphics need to be provided before workers arrive at their accommodation. These posts should include local contact numbers and resources including 811 and 911.

Supplies

Employers are required to ensure workers have, or know how to safely access, all the necessary supplies during the 14-day self-isolation period, including appropriate accommodations, food, cleaning and personal supplies, a potable water supply, and access to wifi.

Health Monitoring Plan

Employers must have a health monitoring plan in place prior to the arrival of all workers. The plan is to clearly indicate how employees will be monitored daily for symptoms during the 14-day self-isolation period. The plan would include instructions to staff and workers on how to self-monitor.






Illness Response Plan

The employer must have an illness response plan in place prior to the arrival of all workers. The plan is to outline the procedures to follow should a worker become ill while waiting for the employer at the pick-up location, during travel to their accommodation, and during the 14-day self-isolation period.

Information on what to do if someone has symptoms can be found on the COVID-19 webpage (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/>). The site also includes a self-assessment tool to determine if someone should be tested for COVID-19.

Requirements upon arrival

The following table illustrates the pathway of workers upon entry into Canada and into NL.

Stage of Process	Components	
Arrival in Canada	Canada Border Services health screening upon entry	
	No Symptoms	Symptomatic
		Isolated
Transfer to Newfoundland and Labrador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air transfers to a NL airport Private ground transport 	
		
14-Day Self-isolation	<p>Employers must ensure the following are provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodations Food/water Information/IT Health Monitoring Wages (but workers will not be allowed to work during this time) <p>Employers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report symptoms to public health 	
	No Symptoms	Symptomatic
		Individual Isolation
Place of Employment	Employer follows public health and OHS protocols for worker health and safety	

	Signage
	Log/Checklist

Arrival Point

If arriving via air, workers are to be met by the employer representative in the “baggage” area. Alternatively, an employer may choose to contract private transportation services to pick-up workers.

As part of the employer Illness Response Plan, the employer must have a process established to manage workers who become ill while at the pick-up location. Part of the plan should include screening workers for symptoms at the pick-up location (see Appendix B for symptom checklist).

If washrooms are available, workers should be advised to use the washroom and wash their hands before proceeding to the vehicle transporting them to their housing accommodation. The driver is to advise workers to load their own luggage into the vehicle.

Throughout this process it is important that the driver and workers remain at least 2 meters away from each other and continue to follow good personal hygiene practices.

Transportation to Self-Isolation Accommodation

As part of the employer Illness Response Plan, the employer must have a process established to manage workers who become ill during transportation to the self-isolation accommodation. Drivers should have a supply of non-medical masks that can be provided to workers to wear during the journey.

The following are actions that can be taken to help prevent spread of illness:

- Maintain social distancing of 2 meters when transporting passengers. **Each worker must be seated based on the physical distancing requirement at all times.**
- Transportation should avoid all unnecessary stopping during transit.
- Drivers should have a supply of non-medical masks that can be provided to a worker.
- All passengers and driver must wear non-medical masks for the duration of the drive.
- Advise workers that if coughing and sneezing, that they do so into their arm or a tissue. The vehicle should have a container for garbage for the disposal of tissues. A hand sanitizer is to be used afterwards.
- Advise workers to keep their hands away from their face and mouth.
- Upon arrival to the destination, workers are to be guided directly to their accommodation.
- Wash hands (with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds) or use a Health Canada approved hand sanitizer (these often contain at least 60% alcohol) after each transport.
- The employer is to ensure vehicles are cleaned and disinfected upon arrival at the worker’s accommodation (self-isolation facility). Pay careful attention to high touch surfaces such as door handles, armrests and seatbelts.
- Use an appropriate disinfectant (Link to cleaning and disinfection resource on COVID-19 webpage <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-NL.pdf>).

Requirements for self-isolation

The requirements under self-isolation apply to those under the 14-day self-isolation period.

Upon arriving at the self-isolation accommodation, or to an off-site housing facility the employer plans to use during the 14-day self-isolation period, workers are required to self-isolate for 14 days following their arrival. They are not allowed to work during this period. For information on self-isolating refer to the “How to Self-Isolate” resource on the COVID-19 webpage (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-1.pdf>). Workers must be available for contact by Public Health officials during their 14-day self-isolation.

Housing and Accommodations

- The employer must house workers that are self-isolating in accommodations that are separate from those not subject to a 14-day self-isolation.
- If new workers are housed for self-isolation in the same accommodations as other workers who are self-isolating, and cannot be separately isolated from the other workers, then the clock resets to the day the most recent worker arrived. This is to account for the potential exposure from the new worker from outside of the province to those already here.
- Owners of facilities such as hotels and motels that house workers are to be notified that workers are self-isolating.
- The employer must ensure that the physical spacing of 2 meters can be maintained in the facility.
- Shared sleeping facilities are permitted assuming that social distancing requirements are followed. Beds must be a minimum two meters apart.
- Shared facilities (e.g. bathroom, kitchen, living space) are allowed, provided there is sufficient space for workers to respect the self-isolation requirements.

Food and Supplies

- Employers to ensure there are groceries in the house, or arrangements have been provided for delivery of food, upon workers arriving.
- Employers and business owners (e.g. motels/hotels) must put into place or have systems to ensure workers are able to access food and personal supplies without leaving the accommodations (e.g. access to wifi, telephones, etc.).
- Employers are responsible for any required shopping for workers while in self-isolation.
- Workers may prepare their own meals, if infrastructure is in place and the social distancing requirements can be maintained. If this is the case, meal times may need to be staggered.
- Workers have the option to order food online and have it delivered for their own individual use.
- If the employer provides meals to workers, meal times should be set.
- If meals are delivered or prepared on site by the employer, meals may be delivered to the workers bedroom door (or door of hotel/motel room) or placed at a designated location in the kitchen for each worker to pick up if the layout permits.
- Self-service buffet lines are not permitted.
- Employers are encouraged to use only pre-packaged snacks.

- Do not allow shared food containers, such as shared pitchers of water, salt and pepper shakers, etc. in dining areas.
- For accommodations with kitchens, unless the employer has a staff member managing the kitchen, workers will be responsible for washing their dishes. It is recommended that each worker have their own designated dishes and utensils.
- For accommodations without kitchens, workers will leave their dirty dishes outside their room for pick up by the employer.
- Ensure that staff handling food practice good hand hygiene and do not work in food handling areas if they are ill.

NOTE: Workers that have been individually isolated because of developing symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19 must have meals dropped off outside their room, with meal delivery times set. It is recommended that designated or disposable dishes and utensils be used by ill workers. If designated, dirty dishes and utensils are to be left outside the room for pick-up. Disposable gloves can be used by the staff who are picking up and handling these items.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- The employer is responsible to provide the cleaning materials (e.g. paper towels, household cleaning and disinfection products, dish soap, laundry soap, etc.).
- Regular household cleaners, disinfectant wipes or diluted bleach solution can be used according to the label directions. Information on cleaning and disinfection can be found on the COVID-19 website.
- The employer is to ensure that all common areas are cleaned and disinfected twice daily, or more often if required. Items such as countertops, kitchen tables and chairs, furniture, light switches and doorknobs, may need to be disinfected more frequently.
- Unless the services of a professional cleaner are used, workers will be responsible for garbage collection and removal from the building. For workers staying in hotel/motel-like settings then garbage will be picked up outside the room.

Shared Laundry Facilities

If laundry facilities are not provided, linen changes will be arranged through a drop off at the door with towels and sheets once per week or more often if requested.

If laundry facilities are provided, the following is required:

- Keep a 2 meter distance from others. Consider scheduling laundry time.
- Wash hands before and after doing the laundry.
- Wipe down controls and handles before and after use.
- Don't leave soiled clothing or baskets on top of machines or tables.
- Don't shake dirty laundry before putting it in the machine.
- Wash with soap and the warmest water possible. Do not overload the machine.
- Don't leave dryer door open when not in use.
- Dry items at highest temperature possible and dry them completely.
- Disinfect your hamper before filling with clothes.

Personal Hygiene

- Avoid touching the face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover the mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of the elbow when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of used tissues immediately.
- Hand washing must be encouraged
 - before and after preparing or eating food
 - after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
 - after touching dirty surfaces such as taps, doorknobs, phones, remotes
 - after using the bathroom
- The employer must ensure that all workers have the tools needed to practice good hygiene. This includes access to facilities that enable them to wash their hands often with soap and warm water, and providing a Health Canada approved hand sanitizer (these often contain at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled.
- Signage on personal hygiene etiquette is to be posted throughout the facility. This would include common areas, kitchen preparation area, washrooms and laundry rooms. Information can be found on the COVID-19 webpage under “Resources”.

Requirements for monitoring

Employers must perform daily check-ins to monitor the health of workers, and to ensure that the worker does not leave the self-isolation site at any time. If monitoring in person, social distancing of 2 meters must be maintained, and the use of a non-medical mask is required.

Employers must ensure that workers are tested for COVID-19 through Public Health near the end of the 14-day self-isolation period, ideally at day 12. Public Health is responsible for releasing tested workers from self-isolation, based on the following criteria: workers are asymptomatic throughout the quarantine period, their COVID-19 test is negative, **and** the 14 days of quarantine are completed.

Prior to entering into NL, employers are to advise workers that they are required to self-monitor for symptoms during the 14-day self-isolation period. When self-monitoring, workers must monitor for symptoms of respiratory illness. A daily self-assessment questionnaire to monitor symptoms can be found in Appendix B. Workers who develop symptoms must stay in their housing unit, isolate from others as quickly as possible, contact their employer, and call the NL HealthLine at 811.

Once the employer becomes aware that a worker has become ill, the employer must isolate the worker. The worker must contact the NL HealthLine (811) and, if a test is required, the employer and worker must coordinate next steps such as arranging transportation for testing, and the worker must remain in isolation until the worker is released by Public Health. If a Public Health official contacts the worker to inform of a positive test result, the worker must remain in isolation and immediately inform the employer and follow the Public Health advice. Isolating means avoiding contact with others, which could result in removing the worker from the current accommodation to another location as outlined in the employers Illness Response Plan.

Personal privacy of workers must be protected.

Appendix A

Pre-Screening Checklist for Out-of-Country Worker Self-Isolation Facility

Business Name: _____

Date: _____

14-Day Self-Isolation Facility Address: _____

The employer is responsible for completing a Pre-Screening Checklist for each self-isolation facility. The employer is responsible for attaching photos or drawings to support their assessment. The pre-screening checklist is to be submitted to your local Service NL Occupational Health and Safety representative.

	Yes	No	Comment
The employer has reviewed the following documents:			
Employer Guidance for Developing Self-Isolation Plans for Out-of-Country Workers (Note: COVID-19 testing requirements on page 7)			
The following documents are available at the self-isolation unit, including any necessary directions:			
COVID-19 Daily Self-Assessment Questionnaire (See Appendix B)			
How to Self-Isolate			
Self-Isolation: Guide for Caregivers, Household Members and Close Contacts			
The following personal hygiene communication and supplies are available at the self-isolation unit:			
Hand Washing Poster			
Washroom Door Poster			
Best Way to Prevent Poster			
Guidance on Cloth Masks			
Thermometer (1 per worker)			
Disposable Gloves			
Hygiene Supplies – soap, water, hand sanitizer, towels, toilet paper and female hygiene products			
Laundry Facilities and Supplies			

	Yes	No	Comment
The following cleaning and disinfecting communication and supplies are available at the self-isolation unit:			
Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures			
Cleaning and Disinfection Information Sheet			
Cleaning supplies – cleaners, disinfectants, cloths			
The following guidelines are met in the bedrooms:			
Furniture position allows for physical distancing of 2 metres			
Bed Spacing – a minimum of 2 meters apart			
Bed Linens and Pillows – weekly washing schedule			
The following communication, supplies and logs are available in the kitchen facilities:			
Grocery supply available			
Procedure for workers to request supplies			
Space to prepare meals			
Pots, pans, and utensils to prepare meals			
Dishes, cutlery, and cups available			
Kitchen cleaning and disinfecting supplies			
Hand Washing Poster			
Waste & recycling receptacles with bags			
If a Worker is Sick the following is available:			
COVID-19 Daily Self-Assessment Questionnaire (See Appendix B)			
	Yes	No	Comment
Alternate space or accommodation plan in place for sick worker to isolate from others.			

Access to the On-line COVID-19 Self-Assessment Form and accessibility to phone to contact 8-1-1			
Consulate Contact Information (if applicable)			

I certify to the best of my knowledge the information documented in the assessment checklist is true.

Signature: _____

Enterprise Name: _____

Date: _____

14-Day Self-Isolation Facility Address:

The employer is responsible for completing a Pre-Screening Checklist for each individual housing unit. The employer is responsible for attaching photos and/or drawings to support their assessment. The Pre-Screening Checklist will be submitted to Service NL Occupational Health and Safety representatives and may be shared with other appropriate government officials as necessary.

Appendix B

COVID-19 Daily Self-Assessment Questionnaire

COVID-19 Daily Self-Assessment Questionnaire	
<p>1. If you answer “yes” to any one of the following symptoms call 9-1-1 immediately. If too ill to contact your employer, advise a co-worker to contact you employer immediately.</p>	
<p>Do you have any 1 of the following symptoms?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> severe trouble breathing (struggling for each breath, can barely speak)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> severe chest pain</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> having a hard time waking up</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> feeling confused</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> losing consciousness</p>	
<p>2. Contact your employer and call 8-1-1 if you have the following symptoms (any one from list A, or two or more from list B)</p>	
<p>List A - Do you have any one of the following symptoms?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> fever</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> cough (new or worsening)</p> <p>List B - Do you have two or more of the following symptoms?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sore throat or difficulty swallowing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> headache</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> unusual fatigue or lack of energy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> new onset of muscle aches</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> loss of appetite</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> vomiting or diarrhea</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> loss of sense of taste or smell</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> runny, stuffy or congested nose</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> small red or purple spots on hands and/or feet in a child/young adult</p>	
<p>3. Do you have any other symptoms?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, if yes please list symptoms below. <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

Appendix C

Passenger Manifest – land/ferry and airports

Driver Information			
Driver Name:		Driver's Licence No.	
Address:		Telephone:	
Vehicle Type/Make/Model:		Licence Plate No.	Color:
Destination:		Arrival Date/Time at ferry terminal/airport or NL border:	

Passenger Information						
No.	Name of Passenger	Sex	Address (Location coming from)	Destination	Employer Name	Employer Telephone
1						
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