

FAMILY CENTRED PRACTICES GROUP

COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies Policies and
Procedures





FCPG COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies Policies and Procedures

The purpose of this manual is to outline mitigation strategies Family Centred Practices Group (FCPG) is requiring staff, clients and their families follow to slow the transmission of COVID-19 in order to best protect all parties.

The information outlined in this manual is intended to provide detailed policies and procedures, as well as relevant resources to caregivers and staff as they resume in-person contact in families' homes. The mitigation strategies outlined below detail out protocols and guidelines for preventing the transmission of COVID-19. This manual will be updated as the pandemic evolves over time.

Mitigation Strategies for Families and Staff in the Family Home

FCPG will continue to follow updates from federal and provincial government and health authorities on how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. At the present time, in order to resume in-home services there are a number of protocols that must be followed by staff and caregivers that are outlined below:

Respiratory Etiquette

- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. Wash your hands immediately after touching your face.
- If you need to cough or sneeze, do so into a tissue and/or your elbow. Immediately dispose of tissue in a covered receptacle. Wash hands immediately after coughing or sneezing.
- During play, avoid toys that involve using your mouth like balloons and bubbles to limit spread of saliva.

Hand Washing

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Families should provide staff with access to a sink and soap to wash their hands immediately after arrival and throughout the session.
- Handwashing should occur for both staff and clients as follows:
 - Upon entry into the client's home, the middle of session, and at the end of the session (caregiver is to assist client with handwashing rather than the staff member assisting client)
 - After personal body functions (e.g., using the toilet, sneezing, coughing).
 - After touching any part of your face.
 - Before and after consuming food or drink.
 - After disposing of garbage or laundry.



- Whenever hands look dirty.
- If you are travelling to your session using public transit, please ensure you have an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands immediately after leaving vehicle.
- If client resides in an apartment building, staff should take precautions when touching keypads for entry to the building and elevator buttons. This may include covering your hands using gloves or a disposable tissue when touch these surfaces. Dispose of tissues immediately after use.
 - Alternatively, staff can arrange with caregiver to meet them in the front entry to avoid using the keypad for entry.

Cleaning

Regular cleaning and disinfecting is important prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- *General tips and strategies for effective cleaning*
 - Apply firm pressure while cleaning.
 - Use a store bought disinfectant or diluted bleach solution (one-part bleach to 9 parts water) and allow the surface to remain wet for one minute.
 - Ensure the safe use of cleaning products. This may include the use of gloves, good ventilation, etc. and other precautions advised by the manufacturer's instructions on the product label.
 - Clean surfaces and items to remove visible debris from visibly soiled surfaces before disinfecting, (unless otherwise stated on the product instructions).
- *Regularly touched household surfaces*
 - Consider limiting the use of frequently-touched items that cannot be cleaned easily.
 - Clean surfaces that are touched often at least twice a day. These include but are not limited to:
 - Counters
 - Tabletops
 - Doorknobs
 - Light switches
 - Toilets
 - Sinks
 - Taps
 - Handrails for stairs
 - Clean doorknobs immediately after staff enters the home and leaves the home.
- *Toys*
 - Staff are not to bring in their own toys to client's homes. Families must provide reinforcers to be used during the session. All toys and materials should be disinfected



and sanitized immediately after the session by the staff member and, if possible, kept in a sealed container until the next session. If toys are removed from container before session, they must be disinfected again prior to staff's arrival by the caregiver.

- Toys can be cleaned using hot soapy water with a brush for hard-to-reach areas prior to disinfecting; rinse thoroughly.
- To disinfect toys:
 - Use a store-bought disinfectant that is safe for children
 - Dishwasher-safe, hard plastic toys can be cleaned and disinfected in a dishwasher with a hot rinse cycle
- *Electronics*
 - Frequently touched electronics like phones, tablets, remotes, keyboards, mice and gaming consoles should be cleaned and disinfected regularly using the following procedures
 - First, remove visible dirt, grease, etc.
 - Check the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting.
 - If no manufacturer guidance is available, use disinfectant wipes or sprays with at least 70% alcohol.
 - Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.
 - Do not immerse devices in liquids and do not use hydrogen peroxide or vinegar as they do not work and may damage screens.
 - Consider using plastic covers or screen protectors to make cleaning and disinfection easier.
- *Laundry*
 - If laundering items, wash items according to manufacturer's instructions.
 - If possible, wash with detergent at the warmest water settings possible for the items and dry completely.
- *Garbage*
 - Be careful when touching waste.
 - All waste can go into regular garbage bins.
 - When emptying wastebaskets, take care to not touch used tissues with your hands. Lining the wastebasket with a plastic bag makes waste disposal easier and safer.
 - Clean your hands with soap and water after emptying the wastebasket.

Avoid Sharing Household Items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with others.
- Food items must be handled and delivered by the caregiver
- After use, these items should be washed with soap or detergent in warm water. No special soap is needed. Dishwashers and washing machines can be used.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing refers to a range of measures aimed at reducing close contact with others. Physical distancing is used as a prevention measure because COVID-19 tends to spread through prolonged, close, face-to-face contact.

- Whenever possible Behaviour Consultant tasks will be done via online via *Telehealth*. This will include team meetings and overlaps whenever appropriate.
- Wherever possible, provide separate space for sessions to occur (i.e. away from siblings and other family members) to limit person to person contact during sessions.
- When staff member arrives to the home, practice safe greetings (i.e. waves, smiles) and avoid physical greetings (i.e. handshakes).
- Open windows and doors whenever possible to make sure the session area is well ventilated.
- Where possible, run sessions or activities outside.
- Programming will be modified whenever possible to incorporate social distancing measures (e.g., with physical prompting use least amount of prompting necessary).
- Staff and families will not be expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) during sessions and/or visits to the families homes, but if physical distancing is not possible between adults (including any adults in the household and staff members), they are **required** to wear a mask for those interactions.

Environment

- Outdoor spaces are ideal when weather permits; when possible, choose to have play time, snacks or meal breaks, and learning activities outdoors.
- Indoors, apply basic principles of good indoor air quality, including supplying outdoor air to replenish indoor air (e.g., open windows when weather permits), and ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are working properly.
- In homes, increase ventilation by keeping bathroom fans or ceiling fans running continuously. If an air cleaner or purifier is available, place it in the area where people spend the most time and direct the airflow so it does not blow directly from one person to another. Forced air system should be run as much as possible with the "FAN ON" setting.

Limit Visitors, Gatherings and Movement in the Community

- Limit the number of family members in the home (e.g. no extended family to be visiting during session times)
- Limit the number of visitors in your home.
- Only have visitors who you must see and keep the visits short.
- Maintain physical distancing outside your household



- No handshaking or hugging
- Maintain small numbers of contacts
- Keep a safe distance (i.e. 2 meters apart) from others in the community when you must go out.

What To Do When Someone is Sick or Showing Symptoms of Illness

The protocols outlined above are important actions everyone can take to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. The procedures below outline further strategies to prevent COVID-19 from being introduced into the work environments for children, families and staff and members.

Generally, the protocols are as follows:

- Self-isolate if required by law or public health.
- Perform ongoing health screening and risk assessments prior to each in-person visit (see Appendix)
- Stay at home and cancel in-person BI sessions when you are sick.
- Call 8-1-1 or use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine if a COVID-19 test is needed.

Self-Isolation:

Families and staff members must stay home and self-isolate:

- They are experiencing key symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Cough
 - Difficulty breathing (in small children, this can look like breathing fast or working hard to breathe)
 - Loss of sense of smell or taste
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- They are waiting for results of a COVID-19 test;
- They are confirmed by public health as a case of COVID-19;
- They are confirmed by public health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19;
- They have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

Additional information about self-isolation is available from the BCCDC (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>)



Ongoing Health Screening & Risk Assessment

The initial and ongoing health screening and risk assessments are important tools to use to reduce the risk of an in-person session occurring when the child, household member or staff members are potentially infectious.

- Initial Health Screening and Risk Assessment Forms are to be filled out by FCPG staff, contractors and families. Based on the risk assessment, families and staff members can determine whether or not they will do in-person services.
- Ongoing Health Screening and Risk Assessment Forms are to be completed by staff member planning on going to the family's home for a session or appointment. The staff member is to call the caregiver one hour prior to each in-person meeting.
 - Staff member calls the family to go through the form in an interview format where they respond to the questions and ask the caregiver to respond to the questions as well as they read them out. The staff member fills it out with both the family's answers and their own.
 - If both parties and their household members are free of key COVID-19 symptoms and they agree to do the in person appointment despite any risk factors then it is noted that the appointment is agreed upon and the staff member then travels to the family home for the appointment.
 - If either party or any of their household members have key symptoms of COVID-19 the appointment is cancelled. If either party is not comfortable with risk factors disclosed they can inform the other that they will not be attending the in-person appointment. If there will not be an in-person appointment as scheduled that day, the BI reports to the BC who informs HR about the detailed reason of why the session got cancelled. The following protocol is then instated:
 - Health related issue: the symptomatic party contacts 8-1-1 to receive directions and follows up with the rest of the team. It is that party's responsibility to keep in contact with the team. Copy HR on correspondence.
 - Risk assessment related issue: BC will check-in in 1 week to see if we can continue sessions in-person. Copy HR on correspondence.
 - Ongoing Health Screening and Risk assessment forms are emailed to the BC who stores them on our secure server with the date noted in the title in the client's file.
 - If a client or FCPG staff develops symptoms of illness or becomes ill during the appointment, the appointment will end early and they will self-isolate at home. Staff or contractors who were in contact with the client will also need to self-isolate as outlined under "**Direct Contact with Person Diagnosed with Covid-19**" and "**Sick Reporting/Suspected Cases**". The consultant and HR are to be contacted and informed immediately.



Staying Home When Sick and When New Symptoms Develop

Staying home when you are sick is important to reduce the potential transmission of COVID-19. In-person sessions should not occur when children or staff members develop new symptoms of illness, such as:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing (in small children, this can look like breathing fast or working hard to breathe)
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What to do if Symptomatic

For mild symptoms without fever, children and staff, and contractors should stay home and monitor symptoms for 24 hours. If symptoms improve and the child/staff member feels well enough, they can resume in-person sessions without further assessment or doctor's note.

During the fall and winter seasons, it can be quite common for young children to exhibit cold symptoms. According to provincial health authorities, a single, mild cold-like symptom in a child does not represent a significant risk of COVID-19. If a child is showing only one of the mild symptoms other than fever or difficulty breathing, caregivers should cancel the in-person session and monitor the child for 24hrs and keep the rest of the team informed. If the child's symptom does not get worse and no other new symptoms arise, the caregivers and staff members can make the decision to resume in-person sessions when the child is well enough to participate.

If symptoms include fever or difficulty breathing, or if symptoms last for more than 24 hours or get worse, staff members, contractors and families should seek a health assessment by calling 8-1-1 or a primary care provider. If a COVID-19 test is recommended as a result of the health assessment, self-isolate while waiting for result.

- If the COVID-19 test is positive, self-isolate and follow the direction of public health.
- If the COVID-19 test is negative, resume in-person sessions once well enough to participate.
- If a COVID-19 test is recommended but not done, self-isolate for 10 days after the onset of symptoms and return when feeling well enough to participate.

If you are unsure, call 8-1-1 for advice.

See the [BCCDC website](#) for more information on when to seek emergency care.

If a COVID-19 test is not recommended, staff and children may return when well enough to participate.

Sick Reporting/Suspected Cases

- Use the self-assessment tool: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>



- Stay home. Isolate yourself and call your local public health authority or 8-1-1.
- Inform FCPG office and consultant as soon as possible, so that they can begin going through the steps of FCPG's COVID-19 response plan to inform other families and staff members, as needed (i.e., if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 or suspected exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is showing symptoms that may be related to COVID-19).
- A doctor's note is not required where self-isolation and sick leave occurs due to suspected COVID-19.

Direct Contact with Person Diagnosed with Covid-19

- Those exposed to a case of COVID-19 continue to self-isolate for 14 days from your last contact with a case of COVID-19.
- Inform FCPG office and consultant as soon as possible, so that they can begin going through the steps of FCPG's COVID-19 response plan to determine if other families and staff members need to be informed.
- If you develop symptoms, continue to self-isolate for as long as your health care provider advises you to.
- If your symptoms worsen, contact your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

Tested Positive

- If your result is positive for COVID-19, you will be contacted by Public Health and you will be required to follow any and all procedures they outline for you.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 please self-isolate for as long as your healthcare provider advised you it is necessary.
- Inform FCPG office and consultant immediately, so that they can begin going through the steps of FCPG's COVID-19 response plan to determine which families and staff members need to be informed.

Contact tracing

- Case finding and contact tracing are measures conducted by public health. If a staff member or child is a confirmed case of COVID-19 through testing or investigation (i.e., case finding), public health will identify who that person has been in recent close contact with (i.e., contact tracing) to determine how they became infected and who else might be at risk of infection. Additional information is available [here](#).
- If it is determined that a person with COVID-19 was in a child care setting when they may have potentially been infectious, public health will work with staff in the child care setting to understand who may have been exposed and will notify everyone considered a close contact.



- To support the right to personal privacy, public health will only provide the information required to support effective contact tracing. Staff should not notify others about potential or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the child care setting unless specifically directed to by public health. If necessary, public health will provide notification to the broader community if it is determined that not all potential close contacts can be reached directly.

Self-Isolation After Trips Abroad

- International travellers returning to Canada and travellers returning from out of province: You must continue to isolate for 14 days from the day you landed back in Canada or British Columbia. If you develop symptoms, you must follow the procedures outlined above under “**What to do if Symptomatic**”.
- **Go directly to the place where you will isolate** without delay, and stay there for 14 days from the date you arrive back into British Columbia.
- **Do not isolate** where you have contact **with vulnerable individuals**, including those who have an underlying medical condition, compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment, or are 65 years of age or older.
- **Ensure** you have a suitable place of isolation that has the **necessities** of life.
- Ensure you **wear an appropriate mask or face covering**, especially while in transit.
- **Practice physical distancing** at all times.
- **Do not take public transport.** Use private transportation only, such as your private vehicle.
- **Avoid contact with others** while in transit and do not make any unnecessary stops:
 - Remain in the vehicle as much as possible;
 - Do not stay at a hotel;
 - If you need gas, pay at the pump;
 - If you need food, use a drive through;
 - If you need to use a rest area, put on your mask and be mindful of physical distancing and good hygiene practices.

Violation/Incident Reporting

- Any breach of the above noted policies and procedures are to be documented on an Incident Report form by the family or staff member witnessing the violation. The form is to be submitted to HR.

Meetings and Telehealth

- All types of group meetings should happen virtually or over the phone.



- Overlap sessions between BIs and BCs should also happen virtually with the BC monitoring the BI conducting a session (either in-person or via telehealth) through telehealth, whenever possible.
- The use of telehealth services is highly recommended whenever possible.

For the Latest Updates on COVID-19 Reference:

- BC Center for Disease Control: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data>
- BC Centre for Disease Control: Guidance for Childcare Settings: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance_Child_Care.pdf
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Appendix A (Initial Health Screening & Risk Assessment Form)

Appendix B (Ongoing Health Screening & Risk Assessment Form)