

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION PLAN

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LANGARA COLLEGE
VERSION 3.1

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INTRODUCTION

Langara College's Communicable Disease Prevention Plan supports the health and safety of our staff, faculty, and students. The Plan provides information to stop or reduce the spread of a communicable disease and respond to an emergency if one occurs.

PURPOSE

To provide general measures to reduce the risk of communicable disease and to provide additional measures when there is an elevated risk of communicable disease.

SCOPE

Diseases covered by this plan are those typically caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites and spread from one person to another through indirect or direct human contact. Examples of communicable diseases include:

- COVID-19
 - Seasonal Influenza
 - Hepatitis A
 - Norovirus
 - Measles
 - Meningococcal Meningitis
 - Mumps
 - Rubella
 - Tuberculosis

DEFINITIONS

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

As defined by WorkSafeBC, a communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from one person to another.

Signs and symptoms will vary depending on the disease, but common characteristics associated at the onset of most communicable diseases typically include fever and other flu-like symptoms: achiness, upset stomach, fatigue, fever, and headaches.

SUPERVISOR

Any person, who instructs, controls, or directs a staff member, faculty, student, or contractor, in the course of their work, regardless of title.

RESPONSIBILITIES

EVERYONE has a responsibility to prevent and protect oneself and others from the transmission of communicable diseases. Implementing the following measures at work, school and home can limit the spread of communicable disease:

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.
- Use proper cough sneeze etiquette.
- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces.
- Practice a healthy lifestyle; exercise, eat a balanced diet, and get sufficient sleep.
- Handle and prepare food safely: keep food at a correct temperature, cook foods (especially meat) thoroughly, wash produce, and observe expiration dates.
- Follow universal precautions when working with blood borne pathogens.
- Avoid public places, work, or school when sick.
- Maintain appropriate immunizations and vaccinations.
- Personal protective equipment may be used as an added layer of protection to reduce transmission of airborne disease.
- Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of communicable diseases.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Faculty or staff diagnosed with, or believe that they have symptoms of a communicable disease should:

- Seek medical attention, if required.
- Inform their supervisor, stay home and avoid close contact with others.
- Do not return to work unless directed by a health care provider OR
- If medical attention is not sought
 - Stay home for the duration of the illness, and symptoms have subsided for at least 24 hours, or as long as public health officials advise¹.
- Avoid travelling and reschedule College business, as required.
- Use medicines and treatments appropriately and as directed.
- Follow official communications from the College, the Health Authority, and the Government.
- **To support employees**, department leaders should follow the sick leave provisions as per College procedures, and contact their Human Resources Consultant if advice is required.
- Instructors should follow established protocols to support student absence due to illness, and contact the leader of their academic unit (Chair/Director/Dean/Associate VP) if advice is required.
- Please refer to the [Langara website](#) (students) or [Employee FAQ](#) for additional information, current updates and frequently asked questions.

STUDENTS

Any student diagnosed with, or believes that they have symptoms of a communicable disease should:

- Seek medical attention from a health care provider, if required.
- Inform their Instructor.
- Stay home and avoid close contact with others.
 - Stay home for the duration of the illness, and symptoms have subsided for at least 24 hours, or as long as public health officials advise¹.
- Avoid travelling or attending events.
- Use medicines and treatments appropriately and as directed.
- Follow official communications from the College, the Health Authority, and the Government.

¹**NOTE:** Illness effects will vary by each individual and disease type.

Those with illness symptoms should follow BCCDC guidelines in the [Communicable Disease Control Manual \(bccdc.ca\)](https://www.bccdc.ca) or the direction of a health care provider.

SUPERVISORS

Supervisors should incorporate plans within their business unit or department in order to respond to staffing or business issues that arise when staff/faculty are unable to attend to work due to illness or communicable disease emergency. Supervisors should plan to:

- Identify employment positions that will be required to work onsite during a communicable disease emergency.
- Identify critical positions and cross-train staff to provide backup.
- Provide support to staff and faculty so they can avoid coming to campus when sick.
- Train staff/faculty on contingencies during a communicable disease emergency.
- Arrange work from home if appropriate.
- Connect with their respective Human Resource Consultant for advice when managing staff and faculty leaves, accommodation requests, etc.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Review and update the communicable disease prevention plan as necessary.
- Support the development of support resources (such as Langara support resources).
- Assist with the risk assessment process and consult on risk controls, as needed.
- Ensure a system for documenting instruction, and training, is in place.

PREVENTION

Ongoing measures, practices and policies are required to prevent or reduce the risk for communicable disease transmission in the workplace. It also involves implementing additional measures when advised to do so by Public Health during periods of elevated risk.

Langara has implemented the following control measures:

COLLEGE COMMUNITY HEALTH SUPPORTS

- Encouraging vaccination.
- All staff, faculty, and students are requested to stay home when sick.
- Frequent review of Provincial Health and WorkSafeBC communications ensuring that current information and best practices to prevent disease are implemented and communicated.

REGULAR INSPECTIONS

- Ongoing air filter maintenance and enhancements, increasing air exchange indoors (as stated below).
- Ongoing inspections and maintenance of building systems.
- Ongoing inspections of contracted work

ENGINEERING CONTROLS

- After risk is assessed, engineering controls may be used to minimize transmission (e.g. installation of plexi-glass barriers at high traffic, client-facing locations).

PROMOTING GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES

- Providing handwashing facilities and hand sanitizer throughout the College. Frequent communication reminders via signage and social media.

REGULAR CLEANING

- Clean environment maintained through routine cleaning processes.
- Increased cleaning of high traffic areas and touchpoints (such as washrooms, door handles and elevator buttons).

EMERGENCY PLANNING AND RESPONSE

During a period of elevated risk, the Medical Health Officer (MHO) or Provincial Health Officer (PHO) will provide information and guidance about the risk and how to reduce it. Measures implemented will be dependent on the type of disease and methods of transmission.

Upon notification of elevated risk, the College will:

- Activate an Emergency Operations Centre when notified by MHO and/or PHO (if necessary).
- Follow all orders, issued by the PHO (relevant to College operations).
- Assess areas or activities that may pose a risk to staff, faculty and students and implement appropriate control measures.

See Appendix A for Flow Diagram.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Medical information is private and confidential. If shared with the College, it is managed in compliance with the [Ethical Conduct Policy B3003](#).

Becoming aware of a staff, faculty, or student who has or may have a communicable disease, must not share the person's name, identifying information, or other information about the disease with other College Community Members.

RESOURCES

Additional information about specific communicable diseases including symptoms, prevention, treatment, and outbreaks can be obtained via:

BCCDC: [Communicable Disease Control Manual \(bccdc.ca\)](http://bccdc.ca)

WorkSafeBC: [Communicable Disease Prevention Guide for Employers](#)

CDC: [Stay Home When Sick Guidelines](#)

APPENDIX A PREVENTION

