



RESOURCES TO PREVENT PANDEMIC SPREAD & HARMONY IN ACTION RE-OPENING PLAN

Employers have legal duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect the health and safety of the workers, including from the transition of infectious disease in the workplace.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

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Resources to Prevent Pandemic Spread

These safety guidelines are intended to protect participants, staff, management, and others from being infected with COVID-19 and to prepare for the gradual reopening of Harmony In Action.

Posters for employees and participants - Stop the Spread and other visual aids will be posted throughout the building

Ministry/Government guidelines and recommendations for Harmony In Action about keeping people safe at the agency by offering advice on preventative actions, including physical distancing and workplace cleaning and disinfecting.

We have used the following recourses and assistance to build our plan from;

- The World Health Organization
- The local Health Unit.
- Sister Agencies
- Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA)

Your Rights

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, employers must take precautions to keep workers safe. As a worker, you also have the right to refuse unsafe work situations.

As a program participant Harmony In Action will take precautions to keep you safe while attending our services.

Workers should raise any concerns to their:

- Supervisor
- Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Health and Safety Representative

Emergency Leave Due to COVID-19

There is a new unpaid, job-protected infectious disease emergency leave. You can take this leave if you are not able to work due to COVID-19. Learn more about the Employment Standards Act and if you are eligible for emergency leave.

Suspected or Confirmed Case in the Workplace

- If a person at Harmony In Action develops signs & symptoms, they will be asked to return home and self-isolate immediately. If they cannot leave immediately the person will be isolated in a specific space until they are able to leave.
- If the person is very ill, 911 will be called immediately and inform the operator that the person may have COVID-19 signs & symptoms.
- If the person does not have severe symptoms, he/she should use Ontario's Self-Assessment Tool and seek assessment and testing. For example: an assessment centre if indicated to do so. They can also contact their health care provider or **Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000**.
- Any person who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by the local public health unit. The public health unit will perform case management and contact tracing that may require additional infection prevention and control measures to be put in place in the workplace, which could include additional testing, self-isolating, etc.
- People who have tested positive must self-isolate at home for 14 days.
- Surfaces that were touched by the ill person will be disinfected as soon as possible in accordance with enhanced environmental cleaning procedures and protocols. See Public Health Ontario's [cleaning and disinfection for public settings](#).

Occupational Health and Safety

- Harmony In Action has legal duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to protect the health and safety of its workers, and it includes transmission of infectious diseases in the workplace.
- If COVID-19 symptoms are suspected or diagnosed in a person, he/she resumption of work should be determined in consultation with their health care provider and the local public health unit. Detailed occupational health and safety guidelines for COVID-19 symptoms are available on the MOH (Ministry of Health) and the MLTSD (Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development) website.
- If the person's illness is from an exposure at the workplace, in accordance with OHS (Ontario Health and Safety Act) and its regulations, an employer must provide a written notice within four days of being advised that a worker has an occupational illness, including an occupationally acquired infection, or if a claim has been made to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board by or on behalf of the worker with respect to an occupational illness, including an occupational infection to the
 - a. Ministry of Labour, training and skills development;
 - b. Joint Health and Safety Committee or health and safety representative
 - c. trade union, if any.
 - d. The information required in a notice outline and sector-specific regulations made under the OHS.

For more information, please contact the Ministry of Labour, training and skills development; Employment Standards Information Centre; toll free; **1-800 531 5551** Health and Safety Contact Centre; Toll free; **1-877-202-0008**.

The Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide basic information only. It is not intended to replace medical guidance, diagnosis, therapy, or legal assistance.

The purpose of this document is to assist in the minimization of COVID-19 transmission at Harmony In Action and the community.

The purpose of this document is to identify specific hazards and health risks and to implement appropriate preventative measures. This information will be used to guide our agency through the re-opening process.

The goal is to lower the potential risk of contracting and spreading Covid-19 amongst staff and people attending our programs.

What We Need to Do

- Protect the people we support and the staff that provides the supports.
- Provide the essential services to the people who are most in need.
- Provide services to most in need while minimizing the risk of catching and spreading Covid-19 among staff and people attending the programs.
- Implement organizational pandemic and/or business continuity plans, including when people are unwell or when they are not able to work due to other circumstances.
- Develop communication policies and procedures about what to do if Harmony In Action staff and or participants are ill.
- Have people work from home, whenever possible, and equip them with the means to do so.
- Upon returning to work there needs to be a review of infection prevention and control/occupational health and safety policies and procedures with all Harmony In Action participants and staff.
- Review COVID-19 guidance from the Province of Ontario, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer, The World Health Organization and MCSS to determine the steps people need to take to be properly prepared for the agency (HIA).

- Instruct staff to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever (38°C or higher), dry cough or difficulty breathing. If there are concerns about some symptoms use Ontario's self-assessment tool or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000). Staff need to stay home if they are unwell.

Prevention

1. STAY home as much as you can
2. KEEP a safe distance
3. WASH hands often
4. COVER your cough
5. AVOID rubbing your eyes/face/nose
6. SICK? Call ahead

Provide access to handwashing and have available alcohol-based hand sanitizers greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol at multiple, prominent locations at Harmony In Action. Example: Near client entrances/exits to building and program areas, bathrooms, etc.

- Ensure there are enough supplies on hand for proper hand hygiene, including pump soap, warm running water and paper towels.
- Ensure there is enough personal protective equipment and that they are used properly.
- Provision of self-scanning thermometers at buildings entrance/exit.
- Implement physical distancing (2 meters/6 feet, or more) from other people.
- Using telephone, video conferencing, or the internet to conduct business, including appointments, as much as possible within the same building, instead of in-person meetings. At home services.
- Permitting flexible hours and staggering start times, breaks, and lunches or staggering days that workers are in the workplace.
- Providing physical barriers, such as plexiglass dividers in office areas.
- Marking out 2 meters or 6 feet between seats and seating areas to ensure physical distancing in common or shared spaces and lines i.e. eating areas, meeting rooms, kitchenette, washrooms, offices, program area's and other spaces, including outside.
- Admitting fewer people at a time at the agency (HIA). Parents, caregivers, group homes, deliveries, etc., should not have to enter the building. If the participant requires assistance caregivers are asked to wait at their cars and staff will come out to meet them.
 - a. Plan a traffic and pick-up route and stagger pick-up times.
 - b. People should remain in their vehicle to wait for participant, unless participant needs assistance and staff will bring them out.
- Discourage the use of multi-use bags, please pack lunches in disposable bags

- When physical distancing cannot be maintained, employers may implement the use of a mask as source control,
- Contactless methods of payment (tapping credit or debit cards, e-transfer etc.) instead of cash. (Wash your hands every time you handle cash.)
- In addition to routine cleaning, services that have frequent contact with hands will be cleaned and disinfected three times per day and when visibly dirty.
- Special attention will be paid to commonly touched surfaces in the workplace such as doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, counters, handrails, touchscreen surfaces comma and shared materials equipment, workstations, keypads, etc-
- Place clear, visible signage at all entrances and within the workplace reminding staff and participants about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, what to do if they feel unwell and how to protect themselves. Example, hand hygiene etc.
- If the risk of COVID-19 cannot be sufficiently reduced by other methods, PPE may be required. If PPE is to be used, employers must provide adequate training on the care, use and limitations, including how to put on and take off; and when to perform hand hygiene.

Additional Guidance

- If essential work in workplaces can be delayed, it should be.
- Where it is not possible to delay work, Harmony In Action needs to inquire from care-providers and participants whether anyone at their premise is unwell, including themselves. (It needs to be clear that if anyone should feel ill at the participants residence, Harmony In Action needs to be notified as soon as possible!)
- Whenever possible, staff will work with the same set of participants.
- To minimize contact with surfaces at the agency, staff should open doors and turn on lights before participant enters the area.
- All items/tools that were used during program related activities will need to be disinfected and then perform hand hygiene.

Optimizing the Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment consists of gowns, gloves, masks, facial protection (i.e., masks and eye protection, face shields or masks with visor attachment) or respirators that can be used to provide a barrier to help prevent potential exposure to agents of infectious disease.

Personal protective equipment, including devices such as NIOSH N95 respirators, gowns, masks, gloves & face shields, are medical devices in Canada and are subject to requirements under the *Medical Devices Regulations*.

Harmony In Action staff will be trained on the safe use, care, and limitations of PPE, including putting on and taking off PPE, as well as proper disposal. Staff should ensure that gloves have no pin holes or tears and fits securely around their hands. ***Gloves should be removed first and hand hygiene should be performed immediately after removing gloves. Then masks should be removed, and hand hygiene performed again.***

BEST PRACTICES TO KEEP STAFF & PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS SAFE

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL PLAN

The goal is to lower the potential risk of contracting Covid-19 amongst staff and people attending the program.

All measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were developed to follow the requirements under the OHSA and its regulations, and applicable public health directives issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Basic Rules to Avoid Getting Sick

Maintain physical distancing of at least 2 meters (6 feet) or more between persons, including clients and co-workers.

Wash your hands often with soap and water when hands are visibly soiled, before and after any breaks, at the beginning and end of their shift, and before preparing food or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with greater than 60% alcohol content) if hand washing is not possible.

Sneeze and cough into your sleeve.

- If you use a tissue, discard immediately and wash your hands afterward.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid high-touch areas, where possible, or ensure you clean your hands after.

General Advice

Collaboration with other organizations is important in developing strong local, sector plans.

In order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, only staff and essential visitors who have no symptoms associated with COVID-19 and pass a screening test, will be permitted in the agency program areas setting.

New resident admissions should be screened appropriately.

An operational definition of an essential visitor should be developed and defined in the policy. This may include a person performing essential support services, such as health care services, a parent/guardian, or a maintenance worker.

Summary

Our re-opening strategy will be one that minimizes the risk of acquiring and spreading Covid-19 amongst staff and people attending the programs. It will be a gradual building process that can be scaled back as a safety and precautionary measure. The plan will have the input of many and will be continually monitored and evaluated. Although the agency is built on respecting people's rights in a time of pandemic crises safety will supersede rights. Our agency will seek the guidance of the Local Public Health unit to guide the process of the operations of Harmony In Action during the pandemic.

Harmony In Action Day Program

Re-Opening Operational Guidance

Considerations for Individuals Requiring Services:

- People requiring immediate supports will be looked at first.

Other Contributing Factors to Considered:

- Living situation – SIL/Community home/family/other
- If living with family, do both parents work?
- If both parents work, can the person remain at home? If so, for how long?
- Can the individual follow Covid-19 instructions or rules?
- Does the person wander?
- Is the individual a senior?
- Does the individual have health risks?
- Minimal # of individuals at one time.
- Individuals whom can abide by key preventive measures. (distance/washing hands)

Recommended Prevention – Suggested Consideration for Entry During Pandemic:

- **STAY home as much as you can** – Who has the ability to remain at home for virtual programs and services
- **KEEP a safe distance** – What individuals will be able to abide by the flooring distance marking?
- **WASH hands often** – Which individuals do we know exhibits good personal hygiene?
- **COVER your cough** – Which individuals will/won't use their elbow to cough in?
- **SICK? Call ahead** – Who will stay home if they are not feeling well?

PRE-PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS -

Communication with Families

- Harmony In Action communication with families and community partners regarding the enhancement of health and safety measures facilitates transparency of expectations. New policies will be shared with anyone receiving services, for their information and to ensure they are aware of these expectations, including keeping individuals at home when they are sick, and is intended to keep all program participants and staff safe and healthy.
- Harmony In Action priority/waitlist policies will be continuously updated and will account for limited capacity when re-opening. Any changes to our policies will be communicated to families and community partners. An equitable approach will be implemented to assess priority for care.

Staff Planning

- Limit exposure to each other. Individuals receiving services will remain with the same staff person for the number of hours of service per day and when possible per week.
- Staff will not be permitted to work at other establishments.
- Supervisors and staff should limit their movement between rooms, doing so when absolutely necessary.
- Supply/replacement staff should be assigned to specific groups.
- Staff upon entering the building will take their temperature at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day and record it. All staff will complete the screening questionnaire. Any staff having any symptoms of Covid-19 will not go to work and will inform their supervisor from home.
- All staff will wear PPE in the presence of participants. All staff will receive professional training on the use and disposal of PPE.
- Staff should only use their own equipment in their personal spaces.
- Office space- No two staff in same office

Staff Training

1. In collaboration with local public health, Harmony In Action will ensure that training is provided to all staff on the health, safety and other operational measures outlined in this document plus any additional local requirements in place prior to re-opening.
2. This will include instruction on how to properly clean the space and equipment, how to safely conduct daily screening and keep daily attendance records, and what to do in the case that someone becomes sick.

Community Programs/Outings/Transportation

- In Phase 1 of Harmony In Action opening, there **will not** be any community outings or participation in community outings. This includes previous places like bowling, Spa Day, WETRA etc.
- We will not be transporting any individuals to and from agency programs in Phase 1.
- Our Outdoor facilities will be utilized.

Entrance Area(s) and Screening for Symptoms

- All individuals including individuals attending day program, staff and personal staff care providers, parents/guardians, and visitors must be screened each day before entering the building, including daily temperature checks.
- Entrance(s) areas will have a stop station where a hand sanitizing station will be set up. Temperatures will be checked and recorded. A series of Covid-19 screening questions will be administered.

- Staff will be near the entrance area to open the doors and make sure there is not crowding. Supervise social distancing. Screen and sanitize people and the handrails on the outside ramp.

Attendance Records

- All staff are responsible for maintaining daily records of anyone entering Harmony In Action and the approximate length of their stay (such as cleaners, people doing maintenance work, people providing individual supports, those delivering food). Records are to be kept on the premises.
- Records (e.g. name, contact information, time of arrival/departure, screening completion/result, etc.) must be kept up-to-date and available to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

Building Modifications

- Floor decals measuring and marking physical distance
- Outdoor waiting areas will have tape on cement floor with spatial markings at two meters.
- Multiple posters & signs reminding people to wash hands and cough into elbows
- All entrances will have a stop sign reminding people not to come in if they have any signs or symptoms of Covid-19.
- Congregated areas will be blocked off. I.e. couches, double chairs and computer stations.

Welcome Back Orientation

- A welcome back client handbook/orientation package explaining Covid-19 related protocols will be reviewed frequently until it is understood and practiced.

Changes and Modifications to Program Space

Program Areas; The same staff interact with the same clients only – No Cross Contamination

- Large Rec Room 10 - 15 participants in the room, 6 feet apart.
- Toldo Recreational Centre 10 – 15 participants in the room, 6 feet apart.
- Classrooms 4 participants in the room, 6 feet apart.
- Individuals and staff will have lunch in their program space.

Washrooms and Sanitization

The following question was raised to a local health unit,

Does the washroom need to be completely sanitized (except for floors and walls) after each use? The reply stated; ***“Although there is no exact number of times the washrooms must be cleaned/sanitized we recommend increased cleaning. Ideally each patron should wash their hands thoroughly after the use of the facilities and the high touch areas such as door handles and counters are sanitized as often as possible.”***

- In Phase 1 we will use a staff to clean and sanitize the bathroom after each usage.
- The cleaning staff will either cover the staff person who is assisting their individual to the bathroom or be called to assist the person to the bathroom.
- There will only be two washrooms in the front hallway open as well as the one in the hygiene room. The washrooms in the Toldo building will remain open with a cleaner assigned to them as well. The washroom will need to be cleaned after each use so this would be easier to control. The staff that escorts them to the washroom will go in after usage and sanitize the toilet sink, handles, light switches and door.
- We will have one emergency bathroom ready in case of an immediate need.
- Washrooms- one person at a time.
- A bathroom cleaning & disinfecting chart will be posted in the washroom.
- After someone leaves the bathroom, they will be asked to sanitize their hands.

Coat & Boots & Locker Areas

- During Phase One, there will be no access to personal lockers. You may bring your coat and lunch to your program space.

Water Cooler

- Will be temporarily shut off. Water bottle will be available in program areas.

Program Supplies

- Individual containers for each participant i.e.: bingo dabbers, pencils, crayons, coloring books, puzzles etc. will be provided.

Personal Protective Equipment

- All staff must wear PPE in the presence of participants
- All staff must be trained on the use and disposal of PPE and sign off.
- There will be PPE for program participants, and they will be encouraged to wear it, but it will not be mandatory
- Anyone entering the building will be screened and then have to wear PPE.

Cleaning/Sanitizing

- Procedures are in place for sanitization of the space, program supplies and equipment.

- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day, as they are most likely to become contaminated (for example, doorknobs, light switches, toilet and faucet handles, electronic devices, and tabletops).
- Following local public health advice regarding best practices for cleaning and disinfecting, including: Staff person will make sure all our sanitizer spray bottles are kept full and constantly roam the building with my spray bottle disinfecting doorknobs, light switches, computes, tables, chairs, etc.
- The agency will use approved cleaning products listed at Health Canada; <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
- There will be hand sanitizing stations set up wherever there are doors that need to be opened and closed.
- Checking expiry dates of cleaning and disinfectant products and following manufacturer's instructions.
- A record of cleaning and disinfecting log to track and demonstrate cleaning schedules.

Client Issues

- The people who cannot/will not follow the new rules re: physical distancing, hands off policy, and hygiene.
- Those individuals with known allergies causing them to cough or sneeze a lot.
- People who wander.

Arrivals, Breaks, Lunch and Leaving Time

- Staggered breaks and lunches.
- Staggered starting and leaving times
- Outside – drop off – pick up area – ensuring proper markings
- Staff must be present to ensure distancing.

Protocols When a Program Participant or Staff Demonstrates Symptoms of Illness or Becomes Sick

- Staff or program participants, parents and guardians must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.
- Symptoms to look for include but are not limited to fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, headache, and a general feeling of being unwell
- If a program participant or staff becomes sick while in the program, they will be isolated and family members contacted for pick-up.
- If a separate room is not available, the sick person should be kept at a minimum of 2 meters from others.
- The sick person should be provided with tissues and reminded of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and proper disposal of tissues.
- If the sick person is attending the program a staff should remain with the person until a parent/guardian arrives. If tolerated the person should wear a surgical/procedure mask. The staff should wear a surgical/procedure mask and eye protection at all times and not interact with others. The staff should also avoid the program participant's respiratory secretions.
- All items used by the sick person should be cleaned and disinfected. All items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.
- Public health should be notified, and their advice should be followed and their advice on next steps should be followed (including closing the program and notifying all families if necessary).
- Follow public health advice on notifying others using the space of the suspected illness.
- Where a program participant or staff is suspected of having or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, Harmony In Action must report this to the ministry as a serious occurrence.

Visitors

- There will be no non-essential visitors at the program.
- The provision of special needs services may continue. Should questions arise in respect of which service providers are permitted to enter the premises, we will consult with our local public health unit.
- Use of video and telephone interviews should be used to interact with families and support staff where possible, rather than in person.
- Ministry staff and other public officials (e.g. fire marshal, public health inspectors) are permitted to enter and inspect Harmony In Action, at any reasonable time.
- As much as possible, parents and support staff should not go past the screening area.
- Harmony In Action will ensure that there are no volunteers or co-op students at the program.

Space Set-Up and Physical Distancing

- Harmony In Action recognizes that physical distancing between program participants in our setting is difficult and encourages staff to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for service users.
- When setting up the activity space, physical distancing of at least 2 meters must be maintained between program participants and should be encouraged, where possible, between program participants within the same group:
- Incorporating more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between program participants; and using visual cues to promote physical distancing.
- In shared outdoor space, each staff will coordinate a time slot for their program participants. When outside each program participant must maintain a distance of at least two (2) meters between each person
- Outdoor program space will be used as much as possible.

Equipment and Program Usage and Restrictions

- Harmony In Action will provide program supplies and equipment which are made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected (e.g., avoid plush).
- Equipment and program supplies will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Harmony In Action will have designated program supplies and equipment (e.g., balls, loose equipment) for each area of the building. Where program supplies and equipment are shared, they will be cleaned and disinfected prior to being shared.
- If sensory materials (e.g., playdough, water, sand, etc.) are offered, they should be provided for single use and available to the program participant for the day and be labelled with the program participants name.

Other Resource Information

World Health Organizations - Getting Your Workplace Ready for COVID-19

Simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace

1. The low-cost measures below will help prevent the spread of infections in your workplace, such as colds, flu and stomach bugs, and protect your customers, contractors and employees. Employers should start doing these things now, even if COVID-19 has not arrived in the communities where they operate. They can already reduce working days lost due to illness and stop or slow the spread of COVID-19 if it arrives at one of your workplaces.

Make sure your workplaces are clean and hygienic.

2. Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly.

Why? Because contamination on surfaces touched by employees and customers is one of the main ways that COVID-19 spreads.

3. Promote regular and thorough handwashing by employees and participants.

Put sanitizing hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace. Make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled.

Display posters promoting handwashing.

Combine this with other communication measures such as offering guidance from occupational health and safety officers, briefings at meetings and information on the intranet to promote handwashing.

Make sure that staff and participants have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and water.

Why? Because washing kills the virus on your hands and prevents the spread of COVID-19.