



# LIBRARIES CHECKLIST

## SAFE RETURN TO BUSINESS



WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL  
Chamber of Commerce

For more detailed recommendations and links to additional helpful resources, please review the **“Safe Return to Business: A Public Health Toolkit for the Windsor-Essex Business Community”** document from the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit. *This checklist is meant to be a guide for businesses and should not take place of any legal advice or rules put in place by any governing body or legislation.*

Stay updated on the latest federal actions, current provincial restrictions, and local orders by visiting WECHU’s **Restrictions & Guidance webpage**; and visit WECHU’s **Workplace Specific Webpage** to find other Safe Return to Business Checklists providing specific guidance to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

*\*\*This document is subject to change and is current as of September 22, 2020*

### COMMUNICATION TO STAFF AND CUSTOMERS

- Inform customers about your re-opening timeline and changes to how your business will operate. Use as many methods of communication as possible, such as subscribed email lists, direct customer phone calls for urgent matters, social media, and your website.
- Encourage staff and customers to download the **COVID-19 Alert App** so that they may receive notifications if they were in close contact with someone who was tested positive for COVID-19.
- Post signage at entrances and throughout the building that clearly communicate procedures for physical distancing between staff and customers. This include posters and floor markings such as instructional tape/stickers that direct the flow of people or customers waiting for services indoors and in any outdoor waiting areas. Examples of signage can be found in Appendix B in the **Toolkit** or the **Resources & Signage** section of the WECHU website.
- Displaying **“Stand Here”** and **“Do Not Enter...If You Are Sick”** signage can serve as important components of a broader communication strategy to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spread between employees, staff, and customers. The two signs noted above (i.e., floor sticker and window cling) are available in English in limited supply by completing the **“Business Reopening Signage Order Form.”**
- Post signage to communicate entry procedures such as **hand sanitizing, sneeze and cough etiquette**, wearing of cloth masks, and/or screening for symptoms.

- Ensure employees are aware of common **COVID-19 symptoms** and instruct them to complete a daily **COVID-19 self-assessment** before reporting to work.
- Ensure customers and staff know to stay home if they are sick.
- Provide training to employees on effective **hand hygiene practices** and if required, the **proper way to put on and remove PPE** such as masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Create policies and procedures that outline roles and responsibilities of the employer and the employee, including **cleaning and disinfection of the workplace**, how workers can report signs of illnesses, how to handle potentially high levels of employee absenteeism, staff return to work after COVID-19 illness, and how work will be scheduled.
- Create a response plan to handle an employee or customer who becomes ill while at work or in your business.
- Decide which staff will be returning to work and what job function they will be assigned to. Consider staggered staff return dates and times to minimize large groups arriving at once.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Order an adequate supply of approved disinfecting solution or wipes, and an alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer) with a minimum of 60% alcohol content, liquid hand soap, and paper towels. These should be easily accessible to employees.
- Print and display posters describing proper methods of hand washing and hand sanitizing.
- If a building has been shut down for an extended period of time, it is important to perform a general building inspection that includes:
  - Security system checks.
  - First aid supply checks.
  - Ensuring all tools and equipment are in good working order.
  - Discarding any expired or spoiled inventory.
  - Checking for evidence of pest/rodent infestation such as droppings.
  - Checking the HVAC system to ensure it is in good working order and replace filters if necessary.
  - Flushing all drinking water taps for at least 5 minutes.
  - Performing a deep cleaning and disinfection throughout the business.
- Complete any needed modifications in areas where there will be staff and/or customers, to assist with physical distancing and proper cleaning and disinfection. For example:
  - Installing Plexiglas barriers at check-outs and/or between workers who must work in close proximity to each other.

- Replacing fabric/plush furniture with hard surfaces that can be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Providing additional garbage bins for safe disposal of used PPE, tissues, and paper towels.
- Choose your information sources wisely. Check the [WECHU website](#) regularly for updates and helpful resources and bookmark official municipal, provincial and federal government websites.
- If required, order [supplies](#) including disposable masks for customers and disposable or reusable masks for staff. Medical masks should not be used as these are being conserved for health care workers. Print and display posters describing [proper usage](#).

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Employees and community members at any library branch, regardless of municipality, are mandated to wear face coverings under the [Section 22 class order](#) issued by the Medical Officer of Health. **Refer to WECHU's 'Face Masks and Coverings' webpage for more information.**
- Libraries may reopen for all on-site services, as long as materials that are circulated, returned or accessed within the library are disinfected or quarantined before being recirculated.
- Based on the size of your establishment and the space available, limit the number of people in the library so that physical distancing of at least 2 metres can be maintained by people who are from different households or social circles/bubbles.
- Encourage the use of 'holds' to reserve materials to reduce the amount of time people spend in the library. Continue to offer curbside pickup for on hold items.
- Any books that have been handled by patrons in the library should be left in a dedicated quarantine area for a 24-hour period prior to recirculating. Follow library cleaning routines for visibly contaminated books or other returns.
- For DVDs or other materials with plastic covers, wipe them down with alcohol wipes if not quarantined for 72 hours.
- Promote alternatives such as accessing e-books and other virtual library borrowing services and encourage browsing library catalogues online at home.
- If community members are inside the library, encourage the use of a self-serve checkout and return services as much as possible. Place hand sanitizer stations and sanitizing wipes near each station. Monitor use and frequently disinfect high touch surfaces.
- For adult in-person group programming such as book clubs or workshops:
  - Limit the number of participants in each session and ensure physical distancing is maintained for participants who do not belong to the same household.
  - Host online or virtual activities in place of regular in-person programming. This option is the most preferable.

- Clean high-traffic areas, checkouts (self-serve or staffed) and high-touch surfaces more frequently.
- Keep washrooms (staff and public) clean and well-stocked with soap and paper towels.
- Provide ample waste disposal options in both public and staff-only areas. Line waste containers with plastic bags for safer garbage disposal.
- Ensure library hours allow for adequate cleaning each day. Computers used by the public should be cleaned and disinfected between each use. Consider options to book an assigned computer time to an individual, scheduling cleaning time between users. Place hand sanitizer stations and sanitizing wipes at each computer.
- Consider adjusting hours of operations to accommodate vulnerable populations (e.g., older adults, those with chronic health conditions) at dedicated times.
- If water fountains in your facilities are not touchless, consider shutting them down and encouraging attendees to bring their own water bottle or provide single-use water bottles. Limit drinking directly from the water fountain and instead encourage the filling of water bottles only. Ensure that the water fountain is cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout the day.

## RESOURCES

**Public Services Health & Safety Association**

[Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 For Employers of Office Settings](#)

**Public Services Health & Safety Association**

[Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 for Library Employers](#)

**Workplace Safety & Prevention Services**

[Guidance on Health and Safety for Office Sector during COVID-19](#)