ORGANIZATIONS WORKING WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS CHECKLIST
SAFE RETURN TO BUSINESS

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.*

In addition to this checklist, if your organization houses vulnerable populations in group settings, review the Ontario Ministry of Health's **COVID-19 Guidance: Congregate Living for Vulnerable Populations** and Public Health Ontario's **Checklist for COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Congregate Living Settings** for more detailed recommendations. The Government of Canada's **Vulnerable Populations and COVID-19** guidance document provides further information on how organizations can support vulnerable populations during COVID-19 outbreaks.

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 clients 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 clients 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 your facility that clearly communicate procedures for physical distancing between staff and clients. This include posters and floor markings such as instructional tape/stickers that direct the flow of people or customers waiting for services, including 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 <u>limited supply</u> 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 staff and clients 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 staff or clients 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 in alignment with the **Considerations of Workers in Non-Healthcare settings**. Medical masks should not be used as these are being conserved for health care workers. Print and display posters describing **proper usage**.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS AND OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ It is strongly recommended that all individuals wear a face covering in all indoor spaces, public spaces and in outdoor spaces where physical distancing may be a challenge.

  ☐ Local municipalities may have enacted by-laws with stricter requirements for all indoor settings, in addition to the Section 22 class order mandating the use of face coverings in commercial establishments. **Refer to WECHU's 'Face Masks and Coverings' webpage or your local municipality's webpage for more information about the requirements for your facility**.

☐ Consider providing brief communication materials about COVID-19 and your related organizational polices in plain language and in multiple languages. This could be provided to clients and partners so that they have a better understanding of your operational changes. If you have a website, consider including this information on your website and sharing the information with clients prior to their visit.

☐ Communicate that some cultural practices might not be appropriate at this time due to physical distancing requirements. Provide this information in multiple languages based on your clientele.

☐ Adopt a cashless no touch method of payment (where applicable/appropriate). If handling physical money, provide easy access to hand sanitizer and other clean solutions, so that hands can be washed or disinfected right after handling cash.

☐ Where possible/appropriate, provide virtual interactions to assist your clients without requiring their physical presence.

☐ Consider transportation needs/requirements for individuals seeking your services. If you are able to provide transportation services, transport only one customer per ride and ensure they are seated as far as possible from the driver. Review the WECHU guidance document

for "**Taxi and Rideshare Services during COVID-19**" for more information on safely offering transportation services.

☐ Consider language requirements when providing virtual or in-person services, ideally pre-arranging for translation done through a means that does not require interacting physically with a device (e.g., use of an onsite translator or speakerphone solution). If a device is used for communication, be certain to clean the device with an appropriate disinfectant solution/wipe between uses.

☐ Provide areas for client interactions that provide a minimum of 2 metres of distance and note your reason for doing this prior to your interaction. In some cultures, communication usually occurs in closer physical distance, explaining the reason for this distance could assist in making the client more comfortable in the interaction.

☐ For interactions that require groups of individuals, consider virtual communication methods. If these methods are not possible, ensure at least 2 metres of space between individuals at all times. Ensure there are clear markings as well as a room setup that clearly indicates and implements the 2 metre separation requirement. Communicate to the group the importance of this spacing and provide opportunity for questions/concerns related to cultural experiences.

☐ Increase cleaning frequency of cleaning of shared and high touch equipment (e.g., keyboards, mouse, touch screens) and frequently touched objects (e.g., door handles, taps, railings). 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.

☐ 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

Government of Canada
Vulnerable Populations & COVID-19

Government of Canada
COVID-19 and people with disabilities in Canada

Government of Canada
Guidance for providers of services for people experiencing homelessness (in the context of COVID-19)

Public Services Health & Safety Association
Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 For Employers of Office Settings

Workplace Safety & Prevention Services
Guidance on Health and Safety for Office Sector during COVID-19