

FORT NELSON FIRST NATION



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION PLAN

HR-OHS-004-209

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1.0 COMMITMENT TO PREVENTING THE EXPOSURE AND SPREAD OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

- 1.1 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. Examples of communicable disease that may circulate are COVID-19, norovirus, and seasonal influenza (*WorkSafe BC, Communicable Disease Prevention: a guide for employers, 2021*).
- 1.2 Fort Nelson First Nation (“FNFN”) is committed to preventing the spread of communicable diseases, and as such, in addition to this *Communicable Disease Prevention Plan* (“the Plan”) the Employer has implemented a *Communicable Disease and Illness Control Policy* for its employees and any other persons working for the FNFN.
- 1.3 FNFN commits that it will monitor announcements from the Provincial Health Officer, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), WorkSafe BC, and Provincial and Federal Governments. FNFN will also consider information made available by the World Health Organization (WHO). FNFN is committed to keeping workers and clients safe by preventing the exposure and spread of communicable diseases.
- 1.4 In the event of a pandemic FNFN will implement its emergency office closure (lockdown) and safe operations plans.
- 1.5 This Plan has been developed in consideration of advice outlined by WorkSafe BC, the British Columbia Public Health Act, and in collaboration with our employees and the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee, supervisors, and management, and may be updated from time to time as necessary.
- 1.6 The purpose of the Plan is to speak to the measures necessary to manage the workplace, workforce, and workforce planning, in preventing the exposure and spread of communicable diseases.
- 1.7 This plan will be made available on the employer’s common share for employees, and on the employer’s website for the public. Any future revisions will be posted in the same digital locations.
- 1.8 All employees, and other workers, at FNFN must familiarize themselves with this Plan and follow the related guidelines, policies, and protocols set out by FNFN.
- 1.9 The Executive Director shall ensure supervisors have been trained in training and monitoring workers and the workplace to ensure measures are being followed. The Executive Director shall have authority over this Plan.

2.0 ASSESSING WORKPLACE RISK OF EXPOSURE

- 2.1 Adhering to the FNFN ***Risk Assessment Policy***, managers and employees will assess their buildings and workplaces/jobsites and work tasks, in order to identify places and tasks where the risk of exposure and transmission of communicable disease may be introduced. This process will also involve the Joint Occupational Health & Safety (JOHS) committee. Hereafter, managers, employees, and JOHS may be referenced as “the Parties.”

- 2.2 The Parties shall assess the workplace on an ongoing basis ensuring risks for exposure are identified, documented, and managed.
- 2.3 Communicable diseases spread in several ways, including but not limited to, through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, or from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face. To understand the risks in the workplace, the Parties will consider the following questions:
- (a) Where do workers congregate, such as break rooms, copy rooms, or meeting rooms?
 - (b) What job tasks or processes require workers to come into close proximity with one another or members of the public?
 - (c) What tools, machinery, and equipment do people come into contact with in the course of their work?
 - (d) What surfaces are touched often, such as doorknobs, light switches, equipment, and shared tools?
- 2.4 The Parties will identify areas and job tasks and processes where there may be a risk of exposure, and exposure control plans will be implemented.

3.0 EXPOSURE CONTROL MEASURES

- 3.1 Following the identification of any risks for exposure to a communicable disease, prevention measures specific to our industry will be selected and implemented, and protocols will include seeking information, input, and guidance from the following sources:
- (a) Orders, guidance, and notices issued by the Provincial Health Officer.
 - (b) Industry-specific protocols on worksafebc.com. Protocols specific to our sector(s) will be implemented to the extent that they are applicable to the risks in the workplace. Additional protocols will be implemented if the posted protocols do not address all the risks to workers.
 - (c) Frontline workers, supervisors, and the joint health and safety committee (or worker representative) will be consulted.
 - (d) Health and Safety Association or other professional and industry associations.
- 3.2 Different protocols will offer different levels of protection (first, second, third levels, fourth). Wherever possible, the protocol that offers the highest level of protection will be implemented.
- 3.3 One control measure may not completely control the risk for exposure, and when such is the case workers will incorporate controls from various levels to address the risk(s) in workplace.
- 3.4 During an exposure/outbreak, all FNFN workers and staff will adhere to the FNFN's **Physical Distancing Policy**, and **Daily Health Checks**, and the overall number of workers at the workplace at one time will be set out in accordance to maintaining physical distance. This may be done by:
- (a) implementing work-from-home schedules and virtual meetings, and/or
 - (b) rescheduling workers (which may include opposite shift work), and/or
 - (c) rescheduling work tasks, and/or

- (d) where practical, at least 5 square meters of unencumbered floor space per person (workers and clients) will be maintained.
- 3.5 Worker's working alone or in isolation will adhere to the FNFN **Working Alone Policy**.
- 3.6 Worker's working from home will adhere to the FNFN **Working from Home Policy**.
- 3.7 During an exposure/outbreak, only the posted occupancy will be permitted in each building. Building occupancy limits shall be established taking into consideration the layout of the building, the number of entrances in the building, the number of washrooms in the building, and the ability to reconfigure office furnishings. Building occupancy limits shall be posted at entrances, and in restricted spaces within the building.
- 3.8 During an exposure/outbreak, control measures will be implemented to ensure workers can maintain necessary physical distancing when serving or working with or near members of the public, and this may include one or more of the following measures:
- (a) First level protection (elimination controls): limit the number of people at the workplace and ensure physical distance whenever possible. Employees will adhere to the FNFN **Physical Distancing Policy**; and where physical distancing cannot be maintained,
 - (b) Second level protection (engineering controls): Barriers and partitions. Workers will make a request for the implementation of a physical guard - separating people with partitions or plexi-glass barriers; and where this measure is not achievable or sufficient,
 - (c) Third level protection (administrative controls): The implementation of clearly communicated rules and guidelines for how workers should conduct themselves, as well as the provision of training and workplace signage.
 - (d) Fourth level protection (in addition to other control measures): Using Masks. Workers will adhere to the FNFN **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy**, understanding that PPE has limitations.
- 3.9 Adequate hand-washing/hand-sanitization stations will be implemented on site for all workers ensuring the location is visible and easily accessed.
- 3.10 Workers are required at all time to adhere to the employer's **Hand Cleaning Policy** and wash their hands in accordance with the policy. Clients must avail themselves of hand sanitization measures.
- 3.11 During periods of elevated risk/outbreak the employer will implement face mask measures.
- 3.12 Cleaning protocols are implemented daily for all common areas and surfaces, including washrooms, equipment, tools, common tables, desks, light switches, and door handles, and during elevated risk/outbreak deep cleaning measures are in place. All employees must adhere to FNFN cleaning policies, such as the **Workstation Cleaning and Disinfecting Policy**.
- 3.13 Cleaning protocols are implemented for all FNFN vehicles and equipment, and all employees must adhere to the FNFN Fleet **Vehicle Cleaning and Disinfecting Policy**. Employees must check out and use sanitization vehicle kits at the time of checking out vehicle keys. Supervisors will ensure workers are orientated on properly cleaning and disinfecting of fleet vehicles.

- 3.14 During an exposure/outbreak, unnecessary tools and equipment that may elevate the risk of transmission, including items like coffee makers and shared utensils and plates will be removed from common areas and placed in storage (in/on the same worksite where possible).
- 3.15 FNFN has implemented a ***Violence Prevention Program Policy***, to address any risk of violence that may arise as a result of workplace restrictions or modified operations.
- 3.16 At all times of active operations, all employees will self-assess their 'fit-for-work' state prior to determining to attend work. Employees who are not 'fit-for-work' are required to remain at home for at least 24 hours, or until symptoms no longer persist. In the case of persistent symptoms, employees must adhere to the FNFN's ***Medical Leave Policy*** which outlines 'fit-to-return-to-work' requirements.
- 3.17 During an elevated risk, exposure/outbreak, all employees who are responsible for booking appointments will ensure their clients complete a self-assessment screening tool prior to entering the workplace; and,
 - a. Non-worker admittance into the workplace will be limited to those individuals registered in programs and registered for appointments only; and,
 - b. No employee shall admit any individual to the workplace who is not scheduled to attend the workplace.

4.0 COMMUNICATION PLANS

- 4.1 Every person entering any FNFN workplace or jobsite, including workers from other employers (i.e. contractors), must know how to keep themselves safe while at our workplace/jobsite; this will be accomplished through workplace orientation.
- 4.2 Every manager and supervisor shall ensure that:
 - (a) workers under their authority are trained on the measures put in place and the policies around staying home when sick;
 - (b) signage will be clearly posted at entrances, and the information indicates who is restricted from entering the building (including visitors and workers with symptoms), as well as building occupancy limits and effective handwashing practices.
- 4.3 Ongoing workplace updates will be provided directly from supervisors to their employees, as necessary.
- 4.4 Ongoing workplace information of a general and specific nature related to public health, and training and education, will be distributed to supervisors and in the staff bulletin that is delivered daily into each employee's email inbox.
- 4.5 Notification to employees, in the event of a communicable disease outbreak in the workplace, will be provided directly to workers from their supervisors. The Public Health Authorities will be notified when such is required. WorkSafe BC will be notified when required through proper reporting channels.

4.6 Notification to the public will be provided as necessary and directed by the Public Health Authorities.

5.0 MONITORING THE WORKPLACE

5.1 All managers and supervisors will monitor their workers and the workplace to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.

5.2 When risk of exposure concerns are identified, or if it seems like the Plan isn't working, employees will consult with their supervisors/managers (and managers will consult with the Executive Director in consultation with Human Resources and the JOHS committee) to take necessary steps to update policies and procedures. Workers will be involved in this process.

5.3 Managers and employees will monitor workplace risks daily, including risk of exposure of a communicable disease.

5.4 Changes to policies and procedures will be implemented as necessary to eliminate or reduce workplace risks.

5.5 Workers will report health and safety concerns to their supervisors, and/or their building representative on the JOHS committee.

5.6 When resolving safety issues, the JOHS committee will be involved.

6.0 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

6.1 The training plan to introduce new polices and protocols will adhere to the following:

(a) Managers and supervisors, and the JOHS committee, will receive training in administrative protocols, policies, practices, and procedures or changes to the operations, such as new equipment, processes, or products due to a communicable disease, prior to all other workers; and,

(b) Managers, or supervisors, or a member of the JOHS committee (as determined) will train all other workers in administrative protocols, policies, practices, and procedures or changes to the operations, such as new equipment, processes, or products due to a communicable disease.

6.2 Managers shall ensure a training plan is implemented for new employees, and employees who have been out of the physical workplace during the period where there was an exposure to, or outbreak of, a communicable disease, as well as for employees taking on new roles and responsibilities.

6.3 Managers, supervisors and employees shall have adequate training on risk assessment.

6.4 Managers, supervisors and employees shall have adequate training on monitoring the workplace.

6.5 Any employee who has been laid-off and recalled to work, or recalled to the physical workplace from a work-from-home arrangement, shall receive a workplace orientation.

- 6.6 Managers shall be responsible to ensure that their workers are apprised of all employer policies and protocols.

WORKER TRANSPORTATION

- 6.7 During an exposure/outbreak, whenever possible, workers should travel alone in their vehicles in order to practice physical distancing. Employees must adhere to the safeguards related to working alone or in isolation, to ensure safety (see ***Working Alone Policy***).
- 6.8 When travel alone in vehicles is not possible, measures must be taken to ensure:
- (a) appropriate distance including having workers sit one to a seat/bench seat,
 - (b) passengers are staggered to allow maximum distance between them,
 - (c) adjust the number of workers transported per trip,
 - (d) increase the total number of trips needed to transport workers to a worksite, or clients to appointments.
- 6.9 When possible use larger vehicles to ensure maximum spacing, or use multiple vehicles.
- 6.10 When it is not possible to ensure physical distancing between workers in a vehicle through these measures, other control measures, such as PPE must be implemented.
- 6.11 Employees must adhere to a process that allows for physical distancing when loading and unloading vehicles. Employees waiting for loading/unloading should maintain physical distancing while remaining safely away from traffic.
- 6.12 Employees must ensure that they follow the employer's ***Vehicle Sanitization Policy***.

7.0 PROTECTING MENTAL HEALTH

- 7.1 During an elevated risk, exposure/outbreak employees and clients may be affected by the anxiety and uncertainty created by an exposure/outbreak of a communicable disease. It's important to remember that mental health is just as important as physical health, and FNFN will take measures to support mental well-being.
- 7.2 Employees may access the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) offered through Canada Life, and additional resources that may be offered from time to time regarding maintaining mental health in the workplace will be published in the staff bulletin as they become available.
- 7.3 Client's affected will also be provided with resources, as applicable and possible.

8.0 SYMPTOMS AND PRECAUTIONS

- 8.1 Workers and clients who experience symptoms of a communicable disease must remain at home and seek medical attention; symptoms may include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and new muscle aches or headache.

- 8.2 Workers and clients displaying symptoms of a communicable disease are prohibited from entering the workplace, and this includes:
- (a) Anyone who has had symptoms of a communicable disease, and symptoms may include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache;
 - (b) Anyone directed by the Public Health Officer to self-isolate.
- 8.3 Workers, who start their shift and later may start to feel ill at work, should report symptoms to their supervisor. Sick workers will be asked to:
- (a) wash or sanitize their hands,
 - (b) don a mask,
 - (c) and may be asked to go straight home and seek medical attention.
 - (d) Pending severity of symptoms, if the sick worker is severely ill (e.g., difficulty breathing, chest pain), an ambulance will be dispatched.
- 8.4 Environmental services will be dispatched to the building/vehicle to commence a deep cleaning and disinfecting of all surfaces that the sick worker came into contact with during their shift.

9.0 PROHIBITING AND LIMITING VISITORS

- 9.1 During an elevated risk exposure/outbreak, all services with clients will be scheduled by appointment.
- 9.2 The ***Physical Distancing Policy*** will be implemented during an outbreak.

10.0 RESOLVING CONCERNS ABOUT UNSAFE WORK

- 10.1 Any employee can raise safety concerns; concerns may be brought forward to the direct manager/supervisor, or through the JOHS committee.
- 10.2 Workers have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. All employees are encouraged to learn about worker rights, and more information can be found at <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/for-workers>
- 10.3 Additional information can be found on the WorkSafe BC website under Occupational Health and Safety Guideline G3.12.

This Policy will be reviewed as needed and may be updated from time to time as needed.

---Signature page follows---

Dated at Fort Nelson, British Columbia, this 03rd day of August, 2021.

Approved, Signed, Sealed and Delivered by the Fort Nelson First Nation Chief and Council.

Signatures on file.

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