



Pandemic Continuity Plan for South Vancouver

Family Place March 2020

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South Vancouver Family Place and Kids Care Preschool	
Policy Subject: Unscheduled Closure Policy	Policy Level: Operational/Personnel Approved: March 9, 2020 Approved by: Board of Directors
Scope: Executive Director and Staff	
<p>Policy:</p> <p>In the event of it becoming necessary to close the South Vancouver Family Place and Kids Care Preschool facilities due to unexpected circumstances, events resulting from inclement weather, or emergency events, the Executive Director may decide to close the drop-in room and corresponding offices and cease operations until further notice. This may or may not, depending on the situation, involve an evacuation. In the absence of the Executive Director, the decision to evacuate and close, or remain closed, devolves to the person in charge of the programs at the time that the decision becomes necessary. Weather related closures will be based on the decisions of the local school district.</p> <p>In the event of a closure of South Vancouver Family Place/Kids Care Preschool premises, the following procedure will be followed regarding paying staff for the hours that facility is closed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff will receive scheduled wages for the closure day. ● If staff are unable to get to work, but the facility remains open, sick or vacation hours may be used. ● If the facility remains closed beyond one day, the staff will be notified of the closure by the Executive Director or a Board Member representative and will not report to work until notified by the Executive Director or a Board Member representative that the facilities have been reopened. ● In the event of a full facility closure, staff will be paid their regular hours. ● Staff displaying acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever- reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick. Staff who are quarantined or are self- quarantined must use their regular sick or vacation leave allotment. 	

PURPOSE

This Pandemic Continuity Plan is to facilitate the continuation of essential services and/or functions

during a pandemic emergency.

BACKGROUND

“Influenza” refers to a family of virus-caused diseases that result in respiratory infection with predictable symptoms. An influenza pandemic may affect a significant number of employees at any given time, removing them from the workforce for a variety of reasons.

Those who become ill are expected to be incapacitated for days or weeks. Other employees will choose to stay home to care for sick family members or may have difficulty with childcare due to schools and daycare closures. As a result, the South Vancouver Family Place could be unable to maintain services during this period which places vulnerable persons at risk.

CRITICAL BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

Critical Business Functions | South Vancouver Family Place does not hold any public critical functions if there is a CONFIRMED case of the pandemic virus at our facility.

Internal critical functions include:

- Monitoring communications including phone, email and social
- Insurance required regular check ins of facility maintenance

STAFFING PLAN

- In the event of a CONFIRMED case of the pandemic virus the facility will close until the following protocols are completed
 - The Executive Director will be in charge of the critical business functions above
 - The Executive Director (or designate) will follow the protocols outlined by Fraser Health and the ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING below
 - The Executive Director will communicate with staff, Public Health, and funders as to the scheduled business recovery time

INFECTION COUNTERMEASURES AND EDUCATION

Communications to Staff and Strategic Stakeholders

Immediately upon the alert to a confirmed or suspected case, contact **Fraser Health – Public Health Unit** to determine the nature of the outbreak, who or what is affected, what is being done about it, and what we need to do. Communicate the appropriate information to employees, volunteers, and other key stakeholders.

INFLUENZA EDUCATION/COMMUNICATIONS FOR STAFF

Hand washing – Hands can play a significant role in acquiring and in transmitting a virus from one person to another. Good hand washing habits are more likely to prevent infections than excessive cleaning and disinfection. Most people do not wash their hands for long enough or in the correct

manner. See the following hand washing guidelines:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/slide-shows/washing-hands-saves-lives>

Wash your hands often, especially:

- Before, during, and after you prepare food
 - Before you eat, and after you use the washroom
 - After handling animals or animal waste
 - When your hands are dirty, and
 - More frequently when someone in your home is sick
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- **Touching your eyes, nose, or mouth** – Try to refrain from touching your face unless you have just washed your hands. It is especially important when using contact lenses that your hands have been washed well.
 - **Cough etiquette** – Turning your head and coughing or sneezing into a disposable tissue or the inside of your elbow will assist in reducing the spread of germs. Remember that you are contagious and spreading germs before you ever start feeling the symptoms of the flu. Also, use disposable tissues once and ensure that you place them in the garbage right away so that they do not contaminate surfaces.
 - **At the washroom sink** - Use a paper towel to turn off the tap in the washroom after you have washed your hands so that you do not contaminate your hands again. Use the same paper towel to open the door of the washroom and other doors that you may have to open to get back to your work area.
 - **Hand Sanitizer** – use alcohol based waterless sanitizers where water basins are not possible. Hand sanitizers do not clean visibly soiled hands, but they do kill germs on hands. Hand sanitizers should not be confused with anti- bacterial soaps, where concerns have been raised about their possible role in antibiotic resistance. Alcohol based hand sanitizers do not pose this risk.
 - **Shared work areas** – If you share a workspace with others, ensure that you clean telephones, keyboards and other surfaces that may be touched by many people. Office Services provides wipes that can be used for this purpose.
 - **Getting an annual flu vaccination** – It is a good idea to get your annual flu vaccination and ensure your family members do as well. While this will not protect from the pandemic new virus strain, it will prevent other forms of influenza in 70% of the healthy population.
 - **Maintain a good diet** – Try to get adequate sleep, a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water.
 - **Knowing the difference between a cold and the flu** – You will likely know the difference between A cold and the flu. Most flu symptoms typically appear so quickly that people can recall the exact moment they first felt sick. Know the similarities and differences in symptoms of the flu and a cold as noted below:

SYMPTOM	INFLUENZA	COMMON COLD
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Fever	Usual, sudden onset 38° - 40° and lasts 3-4 days	Rare
Headache	Usual and can be severe	Rare
Aches and pains	Usual and can be severe	Rare
Fatigue and weakness	Usual and can last 2-3 weeks or more after the acute illness	Sometimes, but mild
Debilitating fatigue	Usual, early onset can be severe	Rare
Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea	In children < 5 years old	Rare
Watering of the eyes	Rare	Usual
Runny, stuffy nose	Rare	Usual
Sneezing	Rare in early stages	Usual
Sore throat	Usual	Usual
Chest discomfort	Usual and can be severe	Sometimes, but mild to moderate
Complications	Respiratory failure; can worsen current chronic conditions; can be life threatening	Congestion or earache
Fatalities	Well recognized	Not reported
Prevention	Influenza vaccine; frequent handwashing; cover your cough	Frequent handwashing, cover your cough

Hand Sanitizing Stations

Consider setting up hand sanitizing stations for staff at all the office facilities and provide front-line staff with their own bottles of sanitizer. Hand sanitizer gel would not be provided to staff to replace hand washing with soap and water. However, there are times when it may not be convenient or practical to get to a sink to wash your hands and the hand sanitizing stations will allow staff to kill germs without water.

PANDEMIC PROTOCOL

Influenza is a contagious disease.

There is currently an increase in the numbers of people in British Columbia with influenza. To

reduce the spread in this workplace, the following actions are required from all employees:

DO NOT COME TO WORK if you have:

- Chills, shivering and a fever (temperature above 38° C).
- Onset of muscle aches and pains.
- Sore throat.
- Dry cough.
- Trouble breathing.
- Sneezing.
- Stuffy or runny nose.
- Tiredness.

If some of the above apply to you, please go home, and wait until you have recovered before returning to work.

If you have recently arrived from overseas or returned from overseas, please advise your Manager/Supervisor.

If you start to feel ill at work, PLEASE DO NOT leave your work area. Call your Manager/Supervisor and advise them that you are feeling unwell.

WORKPLACE CLEANING

During a pandemic, you will need to implement additional measures to minimize the transmission of the virus through environmental sources, particularly hard surfaces (e.g., sinks, handles, railings, objects, and counters). Transmission from contaminated hard surfaces is unlikely but influenza viruses may live up to two days on such surfaces.

Influenza viruses are inactivated by alcohol and by chlorine. Cleaning of environmental surfaces with a neutral detergent followed by a disinfectant solution is recommended.

Surfaces that are frequently touched with hands should be cleaned often, preferably daily. The table below suggests the appropriate choice and concentration of disinfectants:

Disinfectants	Recommended Use	Precautions
1000 parts per million of available chlorine, usually achieved by a 1 in 5 dilution of 100 % disinfectant bleach (e.g. Clorox Bleach or Javex Bleach)	Disinfection of material contaminated with blood and body fluids	Should be used in well-ventilated areas. Protective clothing required while handling and using undiluted

		bleach. Do not mix with strong acids to avoid release of chlorine gas. Corrosive to metals.
Granular chlorine: e.g. Det-Sol 5000 or Diversol, to be diluted as per manufacturer's instructions.	May be used in place of liquid bleach, if it is unavailable	Same as above.
Alcohol: E.g. Isopropyl 70%, ethyl alcohol 60%.	Smooth metal surfaces, tabletops and other surfaces on which bleach cannot be used e.g. wood surfaces.	Flammable and toxic. To be used in well-ventilated areas. Avoid inhalation. Keep away from heat sources, electrical equipment, flames and hot surfaces. Allow to dry completely, particularly when using diathermy, as this can cause diathermy burns.

When a person with suspected influenza is identified and has left the workplace, it is important that her/his work area/office, along with any other known places s/he has been, are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

COMMUNITY BASED PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

Self-Isolation

Individuals who are ill will be asked to stay home from public locations. Adults recommended for self

isolation should remain home for a minimum of five days after onset of symptoms (seven days for young children) or until symptoms have resolved, unless they need to visit a health care provider. During this period people should avoid close contact with unexposed household members. “Close contact” is defined as face to face exposure within one metre (three feet) of another individual. Frequent disinfection of household surfaces should be practiced.

Quarantine

At the early stages of a pandemic, contacts and individuals linked to exposure sites may be quarantined to slow transmission in the community. This measure would only be applied if there were sporadic infections or clusters in the Region and not if there was efficient virus spread in the general population.

School/Daycare Closure

Children are known to be efficient transmitters of influenza. Closing schools and daycare facilities may reduce transmission or delay the spread of the disease, particularly if the pandemic is causing high attack rates in school aged children. This control measure will have an effect on the parents and caregivers and could divert essential workers to child-care responsibilities. School boards or daycare administrators may choose to independently close their facilities based on their own criteria for safe facility operation.

Restriction of Large Gatherings

This would involve closing of indoor gathering places for people. Gatherings may include sporting events, theatre, conferences as well as mass public transportation services. Because the effectiveness of this measure is not documented and the difficulty with sustainability of cancelling or restricting indoor gatherings, this measure is not recommended in the Canadian pandemic plan as a broad public health measure. However, this measure remains an option for targeted events to reduce transmission.

Social Distancing

Once a pandemic has arrived in a community, people should use “social distancing” to reduce the risk of being exposed. The Health Authorities will provide advice. Some strategies for social distancing include:

- Avoid “close contact” with individuals (i.e. within 1metre).
- Minimize visitors to homes.
- Cancel family gatherings.
- Avoid shaking hands, hugging, or kissing people as greetings.
- Stock up on groceries and shop less frequently.
- Work from home if possible.
- Minimize contact at work by teleconferencing.
- Utilize means other than public transit.

Use of Masks by Healthy Individuals

This measure is not recommended in the Canadian Pandemic Plan as a community-based intervention. It is assessed that it is not likely to be effective in reducing disease spread in the general population. It is recognized that wearing a surgical mask properly at the time of an exposure may provide a barrier, if used with other infection control measures. If masks are used, they should only be used once and must be changed if they become wet (because they become ineffective when wet). As well masks must be

removed properly to avoid contaminating the wearer. It is not feasible to wear masks for the duration of a pandemic wave and there may be supply problems. Again, advice will be provided by the Health Authorities.

Hand Sanitizing Stations in Public Settings

Frequent hand washing is an effective infection control measure. However, the Canadian Pandemic Plan does not recommend establishing sanitizing stations in public settings such as public transit stations. It is assessed that this would not be effective in significantly reducing the spread of the disease in the general population.

Compliance would not be assured, and these stations would require human and financial resources to maintain. Hand washing must be encouraged, and existing public washrooms should always be appropriately stocked with supplies. People should consider carrying their own travel size bottle of hand washing gel.

Environmental Cleaning

Because the virus can survive on environmental surfaces (up to 48 hours on hard surfaces) frequent cleaning can reduce the spread of the virus in the home or at workstations. Cleaning should take place using common household disinfectants. In office settings, the building cleaners should not be relied upon to do this level of cleaning. It is best to allocate time for staff to thoroughly clean their own areas, especially if they share workspaces or work in areas where the public are served.