



COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy

Policy Title

Category:	Health, Safety and Wellness
Policy Number:	Pending
Responsible Authority:	Director, Dir, HR Cons. & Emp. Exp
Approval Authority:	Vice President, People and Culture
Related Policies:	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Related Procedures:	COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines Donning and Doffing COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment Donning and Doffing a Face Covering Respiratory Protection Program
Storage Location:	Insite
Date of Original Policy Approval:	2020-08-19
Last Reviewed:	2022-09-09
Mandatory Review Date:	2023-09-09

PURPOSE

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic. The Public Health Agency of Canada has indicated that taking necessary health and safety and infection control measures can help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The purpose of this policy is to outline and communicate COVID-19 prevention protocols to the George Brown College community.

POLICY STATEMENT

George Brown College (GBC) is committed to the health, safety and wellness of our employees, students, and members of the public that access our campuses and learning spaces. Together, we strive to protect the College community from physical injuries, psychological injury, and occupational illness by making every reasonable effort to provide a healthy and safe work environment, in accordance with legislated requirements and industry best practices.

The protocols outlined in this document must be followed to protect the GBC community and reduce the spread of COVID-19 on campus.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees in the GBC community.

DEFINITIONS

Coronavirus (CoV) – a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

COVID-19 – COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.'

Supervisor – an administrative employee responsible for managing an area, or who has direct reports.

Worker – an employee, including students on Work Integrated Field Placements (WIFP), who exercise non-managerial functions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Management

- Provide the administrative and financial resources necessary to ensure that effective response measures are in place.
- Provide leadership and direction regarding college wide decisions and communicate expectations to employees and students, including requirements established within this policy.

Dean/Director/Chair/Manager/Supervisor

- Ensure all aspects of this guideline are reviewed and implemented within their areas of control.
- Ensure that controls for COVID-19 are widely communicated to staff, students, contractors and clients throughout their divisions, departments and/or programs.
- Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) as required based on the work process and risk.
- Ensure that workers use appropriate PPE where applicable (e.g., gloves, eye protection, and respiratory protection).
- Supply cleaning and disinfecting supplies to clean shared equipment.
- Ensure that all employees are educated and trained on the risk associated with COVID-19 and the recommended controls for their protection including but not limited to PPE.
- Respond to reports of hazards from employees or students. Investigate all accident/incidents/near-misses, and report to Health, Safety & Wellness as required.
- Promote information sharing and two-way communication within department to ensure all employees are aware of health and safety requirements and are provided an opportunity for questions and feedback to help ensure workers feel safe at work.
- Ensure any contractors they hire are advised of this policy in advance.

Health, Safety and Wellness

- Maintain this COVID-19 Health and Safety policy in accordance with updates in Public Health protocols.
- Conduct environmental scans/worksites inspections to ensure all provincial guideline requirements are in place. Identify and communicate gaps in guidelines requirements to Facilities and the department Manager to ensure appropriate corrective actions are identified and implemented.
- Consult with the Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) on the development of policies and procedures.

Facilities Management

Facilities Management includes Campus Management, Capital Projects, and Environmental Services.

Campus Manager

- Ensure adequate handwashing stations are available.
- Identify signage and way finding requirements and arrange installation.

Environmental Services

- Perform frequent cleaning and disinfection of GBC facilities.
- Conduct enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces, frequently used spaces, and in the area where a suspected or known COVID-19 source has been.
- Coordination of personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements with Procurement.

Workers

- Stay home, if unwell and communicate to supervisor.
- Follow established safe work practices and procedures as directed by the employer or supervisor.
- Report hazards, and all accident/incidents/near-misses to your supervisor when they occur.

Students

- Stay home, if unwell.
- Follow safe work practices and procedures as established by the College.
- Report hazards, and all accident/incidents/near-misses to an employee onsite or Public Safety & Security.

Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC)

- Be consulted in the review of workplace policies, procedures and training related to COVID-19.
- Identify situations that maybe unhealthy or unsafe for workers and advise on effective systems for responding to those situations.
- Make recommendations to the employer for the improvement of the health and safety.
- Conduct scheduled workplace inspections.
- Participate in pre-occupancy environmental scan/workplace inspections with Health Safety and Wellness (optional).

COVID 19 HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

COVID-19 Exposure Screening

- GBC has removed the COVID-19 screening and training requirements to access campus, in keeping with the Ontario Health recommendations. Currently, all campus entrances are open without in-person screening or verifications.

Cleaning and Disinfection of the Work Area, Equipment, Devices, Tools, Materials and Supplies Handled

- Work areas and commonly touched surfaces, should be cleaned frequently, using a hospital-graded disinfectant to clean common areas and work surfaces
- Cleaning is recommended prior to work on site, between classes and labs, and at the end of day.
- When equipment, devices, tools, materials, or supplies will be shared, they should be disinfected between use.
- Disinfecting spray and cloths are provided by Facilities – Environmental Services, for employees and students to wipe down shared equipment.

Social and Physical Distancing

- GBC has lifted all physical distancing protocols at this time.

Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment

- GBC has lifted its mask mandate as of June 20, 2022, with some exceptions in specific academic programs.
- In addition, some students may be requested to wear PPE (personal protective equipment, e.g., masks, eye protection, face shields) in certain learning spaces.
- When worn, face covering must cover the nose, mouth, and chin.

Infection Prevention Behaviors

- Hand washing facilities or sanitization stations are accessible, to enable frequent hand washing and sanitizing.
- Hand washing should occur frequently throughout the day, during work, after handling used personal protective equipment, before eating, and before touching their face.
- Everyone is reminded to practice cough and sneeze etiquette, coughing, and sneezing into a tissue or their sleeve. Waste receptacles must be available to dispose tissues.

Personal Protective Equipment

- The requirements for PPE may vary based on the work being done, proximity to others, and advice from Toronto Public Health. It can include a mask, face shield, gloves, and gown.
- Employees must be trained on the safe and proper use of PPE. Improperly putting on, removing, and handling PPE can lead to infection.

General Safety

- Supervisors must communicate health and safety protocols regularly with employees, such as during the “Take 5 for Safety”.
- Employees must report all accidents to Public Safety and Security.
- Supervisors must investigate all accidents, following the accident investigation procedure.

GOVERNING LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Occupational Health and Safety Act

NON COMPLIANCE IMPLICATIONS

Failure of employees to comply with this policy may lead to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Contractors who do not comply with George Brown College’s COVID-19 Health and Safety policy other relevant health and safety legislation or college policies and procedures face removal from the College premises, termination of contract, and disqualification from bidding on future contracts or work at George Brown College. Clients who do not comply with this policy face removal from GBC premises.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be posted on the GBC Intranet.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed by Health, Safety and Wellness on an annual basis, or sooner in light of changes to legislation, specific direction by senior management, and/or an agreed to recommendation by the Joint Health and Safety Committee. The Joint Health and Safety committee will be consulted on changes to the policy.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Change	Author	Date of Change
2	Inclusion of accommodation process for those unable to wear a facecovering.	Jacqueline Abel	September 25, 2020
3	Clarification of mandatory face covering requirements.	Jacqueline Abel	December 4, 2020
4.	Inclusion of eye protection requirements	Jacqueline Abel	May 28, 2021
5.	Updated to reflect the Ontario removal of mask mandate and self-isolation.	Lesley-Anne Hudie	September 9, 2022