



## IUOE Local 793 Endorsed Safety Protocol for JOBSITE MEASURES to Protect Against COVID-19

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### WHY THIS PROTOCOL IS IMPORTANT

This protocol has been developed because of the urgent need to ensure that construction workers on a project are able to go to work and come home again safely in this time of international health crisis.

The COVID-19 virus is highly contagious and, although symptoms are mild in the majority of cases, it is serious and can even cause death.

Construction employees moving from project to project or employer to employer have a right to a consistent, predictable, and very high level of care for their health and safety throughout the industry.

“Community transmission” is now a reality in Ontario and elsewhere. Because early stages of COVID-19 infection often have few to no symptoms, people who have no idea they may be infectious may well be present on a worksite. The only safe response to such a situation is to assume that infectious individuals do exist in the workforce and to create a plan that will protect workers even working on the same site as an unknowingly infectious person.

For that reason, this is a very stringent and necessary protocol. Every protective measure contained in it is based on advice from provincial, national and international experts, including information/publications by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Public Health Ontario, Health Canada, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States and the World Health Organization.

### HOW THIS PROTOCOL WORKS

This protocol divides the process for creating a safe workplace into the Four Ps:

**Preparation – Prevention – Protection – Policing**

The first step is **Preparation**. All work sites must be prepared to meet the new reality of working during a pandemic. Layouts must be adjusted. Shift schedules and crew arrangements must be modified to allow all workers to follow Health Official guidelines for social distancing and health hygiene while continuing to work. New cleaning processes and procedures must be put in place and enforced.

The next step is **Prevention**. Anything that increases a risk to workers on site must be prevented from getting onto the site. This step requires strict screening and monitoring of all individuals coming onto the site and behaviour on and off the site.

The third step is **Protection**. Every resource necessary to ensure the safety of all workers on site must be present and used by all workers. This includes appropriate PPE, handwashing, and other resources to allow all workers to meet Public Health guidelines while at work.

The final step is **Policing**. Without adequate enforcement the best planned safety measures are ineffective. All employees must be engaged in the process of identifying and correcting unsafe workplace practices.

The details of this protocol's requirements at each step are set out further below.

**STEP 1:      PREPARATION**

1. Schedule Adjustments
2. Work Process Assessments
3. Social Distancing On-Site Rules

**STEP 2:      PREVENTION**

1. Restricted Site Access
2. Daily Health Review
3. Encouragement of Self-Reporting – Access to Income Replacement
4. Rules Regarding Off-Site Conduct

**STEP 3:     PROTECTION**

1. Regular Cleaning of Equipment and Surfaces
2. Use of Protective Eyewear, Gloves and Masks
3. Disinfectants and Sanitizers
4. Toilet Facilities
5. Reinforcement of Basic Hygiene Rules

**STEP 4:     POLICING**

1. Enforcement

## **STEP 1    PREPARATION**

The Public Health Officials of Ontario and Canada are unanimous that effective social distancing is a key component to avoiding infection.

Maintaining a safe distance from all other individuals is of high importance. Changes to the way the workplace is set up to make it possible for workers to work at a safe distance from each other as much as possible will be necessary.

### **1. SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS**

Fewer people on-site at the same time will mean fewer opportunities for too-close proximity. All worksites must review their staffing policies to reduce the number of workers on-site at any given time to levels which will enable effective social distancing.

Preparing the Job site by adjusting schedules may mean:

- Reducing the number of crews on-site at any one time;
- Extending work deadlines to allow tasks to take place at separate times rather than all at the same time;
- Staggered work start and work end times to avoid gathering at entry and exit ways and other pinch points;
- Staggered break and lunch times to avoid gatherings; and
- Building in time to appropriately sanitize worksites and materials into the daily schedule

### **2. WORK PROCESS ADJUSTMENTS**

Fewer tasks requiring employees to work close beside each other will also enable effective social distancing.

Preparing the job site by adjusting work processes may mean:

- Rearranging the physical site to ensure proper ventilation in all work spaces;

- Imposing limits on the total number of workers allowed on site or in a hoist to enable social distancing, and limits of one person to a vehicle or in or on the cab of other equipment;
- Creation of designated work areas for certain tasks to reduce unnecessary gatherings;
- Rearrangement of the site to eliminate 'pinch points' such as narrow entry and exit ways, cramped site trailers, narrow pathways;
- Elimination of unnecessary areas of gatherings such as food trucks or indoor cafeterias; and
- Removal of objects likely to be shared from hand to hand by employees like commonly available reusable mugs or bottles

Finally, tasks which require employees to work in close proximity to each other and which cannot be postponed must be stopped until a work plan can be developed to find the safe way of performing that task.

Such a work plan may include:

- Alternatives ways of completing the task;
- Ways to complete the task with fewer people;
- Ways to complete the task in shorter time; and/or
- Additional PPE and sanitation measures to be used while completing the task.

### **3. WORK RULE ADJUSTMENTS**

New rules about on-site behaviour will mean individual employees aren't solely responsible for making sure social distancing is practiced by all workers.

Rules must be implemented, communicated, and enforced that all workers shall remain a minimum of two (2) metres apart from each other. Unnecessary close contact shall be prohibited.

Where on-site meetings are necessary to share information, worksites must limit the number of participants meeting to no more than five (5) people at a time. This includes at breaks and lunch hours. Meetings must be held in locations capable of

allowing attendees to maintain their minimum distance from each other during meetings.

Alternative formats for the sharing and communicating of information shall be used to ensure all unnecessary contact is prevented.

## **STEP 2: PREVENTION**

Once the site is set up and good practices and rules are in place, steps must be taken to ensure that to the maximum extent possible, no contagious persons or objects make their way into the worksite.

### **1. RESTRICT SITE ACCESS**

All employees, subcontractors, union site representatives and visitors to the project must be required to complete a Coronavirus (COVID-19) Questionnaire (see **Appendix 1**) before entering the worksite.

The questionnaire should be comprised of these three main questions.

#### **1. Have you travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes - Date of Return? \_\_\_\_\_ (must be 14 days minimum to stay on site)

#### **2. Do you currently have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, including the following symptoms: fever, coughing and difficulty breathing, diarrhea, muscle aches/headaches?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

#### **3. Have you been exposed to a person who has a confirmed or suspected case of the COVID-19 infection?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Anyone who answers “yes” to any of the three questions must not be permitted access to the worksite until that person has completed a 14 day self-isolation period with no symptoms manifesting at which time they will be entitled to be recalled to their original position with no loss of seniority, if applicable. The rights of Union

Representatives to attend on site in the course of their duties will not be curtailed other than in accordance with this Protocol or the applicable collective agreement. Site management must notify the Health & Safety Advisor or the Superintendent and applicable union representative immediately.

## **2. DAILY HEALTH REVIEW**

Every person, including visitors and union representatives, who attends on a project site must be subject to temperature screening upon arrival at the jobsite.

All employees shall be provided with wearable thermometer patches daily and temperature readings will be reviewed three times daily – at the outset of the shift, at the mid-shift break, and before leaving at the end of the day.

If wearable thermometer patches are not available, temperature screening shall be conducted by a qualified medical practitioner or an individual properly trained to administer tests and shall include an initial forehead thermometer temperature check and a follow up confirmatory check five minutes later. Any employee with signs of heightened temperature once the confirmatory check has been performed will be sent home that day.

Best practices for hygiene shall be followed with respect to this screening process. Illness reporting shall be required as described above.

The health of each worker under each foreperson's supervision will be reviewed at least three times daily for all employees and subcontractors: prior to entry, at lunch and before leaving work. A foreperson shall also be responsible for reviewing the health of all workers under his or her care during pre-shift meetings and will require forepersons to assess the health of each worker.

## **3 ENCOURAGE SELF-REPORTING**

Employees must self-monitor and must voluntarily leave the job site if they experience any signs of illness. The symptoms of COVID-19 are shared with many other illnesses including the cold and the flu. Any worker or visitor who begins experiencing symptoms of cold or flu while on site will be sent home.

No reprisals will be taken against any employee for doing so and doctor's notes will not be required from an employee who is sent home or experiences symptoms.

Employees with heightened risk of a life threatening response to infection (such as asthma, diabetes, heart condition) will be offered a job-protected layoff for reasons of sickness and an ROE will be issued to enable that employee to access income replacement during the layoff. These individuals will be encouraged to identify themselves and not be on site for their safety.

In addition, all workers experiencing symptoms will be advised to complete the self-assessment on the Ontario COVID website and follow instruction there, or call telehealth (1-866-797-0000), their local public health unit or their family physician.

#### **4. Mandatory Public Health Reporting**

Public Health is the leading authority for all issues related to COVID-19 and only they can provide detailed instructions to employees and employers.

Occupational illnesses among employees on site including COVID-19 will be reported:

- a. to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (in writing) within four (4) days;
- b. to the joint health and safety representative;
- c. to Local 793; and
- d. to WSIB

If any employee is confirmed to have tested positive for COVID-19, the jobsite to which the employee reported will be shut down immediately until a safety and risk assessment is completed. That assessment shall be completed in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. Work crews who have been in contact with the infected employee will be required to self-isolate away from the workplace for fourteen (14) days, among other measures which at a minimum shall include thorough cleaning and disinfecting of all common surfaces. Any recommendations of Public Health Officials will be followed. Subject to any recommendations of Public Health Officials, employees who have completed a fourteen (14) day self-isolation period without experiencing any symptoms



consistent with COVID-19 shall be entitled to be recalled immediately to their original position, with no loss of seniority, if applicable.

**5. RULES REGARDING OFF SITE CONDUCT**

Certain off-duty and off-site behaviour during the pandemic has the potential to bring serious health and safety concerns onto worksites. All individuals who will be working on active job sites, employees, supervisors, contractors, visitors and union representatives are expected to respect the advisories of Public Health Officials and must respect any self-isolation and social distancing recommendations at all times, including when they are off work. Individuals will be removed from site if there is any reason to believe off-duty conduct is inconsistent with social distancing and self-isolation during off-duty hours as this has the potential to expose many other workers to risk of infection.

**STEP 3: PROTECTION**

Effective social distancing, site cleaning, PPE, and hygiene practices that ensure the virus is not transmitted through commonly touched objects are important to the protection of all workers.

The following practices must be undertaken to protect workers from cross-contamination.

**1. REGULAR CLEANING OF EQUIPMENT AND SURFACES**

All ‘high-touch’ surfaces must be cleaned using soap and water or an alcohol-based rub on EVERY shift. The Health Canada List of Approved hard surface disinfectants shall be consulted for this purpose.

This includes door-way entrances, door handles, light switches, ladders, elevator buttons, keyboards, phones and all construction equipment handles, consoles, controls and seats, subject to any risk to damage to such equipment.

Offices, trailers, containers, workshops and other facilities will be properly cleaned. The frequency of cleaning each work area and surface will depend on the number

of people who use it, the duration of use, and the presence of any objects which people might handle with their hands.

## **2. USE OF PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR, GLOVES AND MASKS**

### **Safety Eyewear**

If employees are required to wear protective glasses or face shields in the course of their work, such glasses or face shields shall be for the use of that employee only and shall be clearly identified as such.

PPE must be issued for individual use only.

Employers must give instruction on how to remove glasses and or face shields without touching a worker's face. Sterilization wipes or disinfecting liquid must be readily available at stations on site to assist workers removing or cleaning protective glasses or face shields.

### **Work Gloves**

If employees are required to wear protective work gloves in the course of their work, such gloves will be issued to that employee only. Gloves must not be shared and should be marked with the name of the individual to whom they are issued.

Infection can adhere to gloves. Because the use of gloves can discourage regular handwashing, notices must be posted in the workplace confirming that gloves are no substitute for handwashing and handwashing stations must be made available to all employees using gloves. High alcohol content cleanser must also be applied to all work gloves at regular intervals throughout the shift.

### **Masks**

All employees will be issued and required to use N95 type face masks or equivalent while on the jobsite. In the event that due to mask shortages an employer is temporarily not able to obtain N95 or equivalent masks, employees will be provided with non-medical masks for use for periods of time when and if physical

distancing is not possible. Non-medical masks must meet the recommendations for such masks published by Health Canada. Masks should fit well, should not be shared with others, and must be changed as soon as they get damp or soiled. Cloth masks can be laundered with other items using a hot cycle and then dried thoroughly.

Employees must be instructed on how to put on the mask in order to make a proper seal. Employees must be instructed on how to remove and put on masks without touching their faces.

Lined disposal bins with closing lids should be made available on site for disposable masks. Disposable masks will be disposed of and replaced immediately if they become damp and otherwise after a maximum of three (3) days of use.

Employees must be instructed that mask use is ONLY effective in combination with handwashing immediately before putting it on and immediately after taking it off. Handwashing stations and breaks to perform appropriate hand washing will be provided for all employees.

### **3. DISINFECTANTS AND SANITIZERS**

Alcohol wipes or liquid to be used in wiping down thoroughly all gloves at end of workday will be provided. Alcohol content must be minimum 70% for cleaning. The Health Canada List of Approved Hand-Sanitizers shall be consulted and followed.

Wash stations provided on site shall be in easily accessible locations. There shall be wash stations on every floor of a building. All workers will be required to wash their hands before entering an elevator or stairwell. Before exiting the jobsite, all workers will likewise wash their hands. All workers will be advised that their clothes must be washed upon returning home and their steering wheels and handles in the car must be disinfected to prevent any potential community transmission.

A supply of disinfectants and hand sanitizers will be provided throughout the site for general use and will be replenished as needed.

#### 4. ADDITIONAL MEASURES FOR TOILET FACILITIES

Soap / paper towel dispensers, hand dryers and hand sanitizing stations on site will be checked frequently and replenished as needed.

Garbage bins will be placed near toilet's exit doors to encourage people to use a paper towel to open/close the door.

Paper towel dispensers will be placed near high-touch surfaces such as water coolers, kitchen/break room counters, conference rooms, and other locations with shared high-touch surfaces.

#### 5. REINFORCEMENT OF BASIC HYGIENE RULES FOR ALL WORKERS

All persons on a jobsite will be directed and reminded to take the following individual hygiene measures. Notices and recommendations will include:

- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds**, especially after using the washroom - **use alcohol-based hand sanitizer** if soap and water are not available;
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth** with unwashed hands;
- **When coughing or sneezing: cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm**, not your hand, and dispose of any tissues used as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash hands afterwards;
- **Avoid hugs and handshakes;**
- **Avoid commonly touched areas** including handrails and public transit poles;
- **Wash your clothes** as soon as you get home and shower;
- **Take outside shoes off before entering your home and do not allow them in your house;** and

- **Notify your supervisor** immediately if you feel sick

## **STEP 4 - POLICING**

### **1. ENFORCEMENT**

The final step is Policing. Without adequate enforcement the best planned safety measures are ineffective. All employees must be engaged in the process of identifying and correcting unsafe workplace practices.

The Government of Ontario, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Employers and IUOE Local 793 all agree that these stringent standards must be adhered to in order to protect employee and community safety.

All employers shall make clear to employees the process for reporting concerns or violations in regard to this policy or COVID-19 risks at their workplace. No reprisal shall be taken against any individual for reporting concerns with respect to this policy or COVID-19 protections.

This policy is appended to and shall be deemed a part of the Collective Agreement. It is enforceable under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the Labour Relations Act, and in the same manner as a violation of the Collective Agreement.

**Appendix 1 - Coronavirus (COVID-19 ) Preventative Measures**

**Questionnaire to be completed by all personnel entering the site**

All employees assigned to this site must complete this form and submit to \_\_\_\_\_ prior to entering the site.

**Personal information -**

First and last name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Have you travelled outside Canada since March 12th?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes - Date of Return? \_\_\_\_\_ (must be 14 days minimum to stay on site)

**2. Do you currently have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, including the following symptoms: fever, coughing and difficulty breathing, diarrhea, muscle aches/headaches?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Have you been exposed to a person who has a confirmed or suspected case of the COVID-19 infection?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration:**

I hereby confirm that the information provided herein is accurate, correct and complete and that the responses submitted within this form are genuine.

I undertake to inform \_\_\_\_\_ in writing of any changes to the information already provided and to update the information on this form whenever requested to do so.

Signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## EMPLOYER ENDORSEMENT

### **IUOE Local 793 Endorsed Safety Protocols for JOBSITE MEASURES to Protect Against COVID-19**

I, the undersigned employer, agree to abide by the minimum protocols outlined in the **IUOE Local 793 Endorsed Safety Protocols for JOBSITE MEASURES to Protect Against COVID-19**.

I recognize that members of Local 793 have the right to refuse unsafe work and in accordance with that right, any failure to abide by any of the policies above may lead to members of Local 793 refusing to perform unsafe work. I agree that no member of Local 793 shall suffer any loss as a result of any member of Local 793 refusing unsafe work as a result of the employer's failure to abide by the above policy.

I further recognize that the failure to abide by any of the policies above may be considered a violation of the collective agreement between Local 793 and the employer and may be enforceable as such.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

Employer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_