

STAFF SAFETY

Catholic Social Services takes employee safety very seriously. As we begin to adjust to our “new normal” during the COVID-19 pandemic, services will begin shifting towards meeting with children, youth, adults and families in a physical distancing world.

There are many steps and precautions staff must take to help prevent the spread while continuing to provide services to children, youth, adults and families. To help keep yourself and persons served safe, review the following information and resources before making in-person visits.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions related to staff safety, please talk to your supervisor or manager.

Workplace – Offices and Work Sites

As you know, CSS offices remain closed to the general public. **DO NOT** go to work when you have symptoms, and self-isolate for the timeframe set out by Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services (AHS).

- Promote and practice good personal hygiene (wash hands often, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes, and have hand sanitizer available).
- Use enhanced workplace cleaning practices.
- Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean (telephones, computer equipment, etc.).
- Enforce physical distancing.
 - Keep a minimum of 2 meters (6 feet) from others
 - Ensure work spaces are separated
 - No shaking hands
 - Limit the number of people meeting/gathering in one space/room
- Work from homes strategies continue to be in place. Work with your supervisor /manager to discuss the unique needs of your worksite and community.
- Although employees enjoy sharing food and treats, please refrain from bringing in food to share with others and remove treat or candy dishes. If you bring items to the workplace in containers that are recyclable, take them home with you rather than disposing of them in the office recycling bins.
- Although the public is not permitted in our worksites at this time, under special circumstances, children, youth, adults and families may be welcomed into designated areas of our worksites. When doing so, they should remain in one room large enough to ensure a two meter (6 foot) distance between participants. If you are unsure, speak with your supervisor/manager about which space is designated for this purpose.
 - Before having a meeting, complete AHS screening questions.

Conducting In-Person Visits

Consult and follow the direction of your supervisor/manager for information on when it is appropriate to conduct community, office, or in-person visits with persons served.

Please consider:

- Under no circumstances should you go on visits or be at work when you are feeling sick, have symptoms or have been advised by AHS to [self-isolate](#).
- Prior to a visit or in-person meeting, conduct a screening (phone, email or in person) using the CSS Health Screening form. You may also be asked similar screening questions by the individual you are meeting with.
- **DO NOT** enter a home or have an in-person interaction where someone has symptoms of COVID-19. If there is imminent harm or danger to a child/youth/adult or an apprehension is required, consult your supervisor on appropriate next steps.
- Physical distancing must be followed during interactions.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer, after any meeting or in-person interaction.
- Please see CSS “Do I Need PPE” poster regarding what personal protective equipment should be worn and in which situations when conducting an in-person visit.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

There have been many question regarding the use of PPE in our daily work with children, youth, adults and families. Alberta Health and AHS have clear guidelines on using PPE, as outlined below.

CSS staff working in Community Based and Outreach settings have been identified as medium-low risk professionals as defined below:

- These are individuals who have multiple interactions with persons served in vulnerable population environments and cannot maintain/sustain a two meter physical distance (including shelter workers and childcare providers).
- The PPE guidelines for this medium-low risk group are:
 - Basic PPE (hand-washing, using hand sanitizer and wipes), plus the use of procedure/surgical masks and gloves when required (see chart next page- *what type of PPE is appropriate*).
 - Eye protection (goggles) have been provided to staff.

Staff who are required to interact with children, youth, adults and families should have a PPE kit containing the following items when they are out of the office:

- Surgical/procedural mask
- Disposable gloves
- Eye protection
- Hand sanitizer
- Garbage bag for disposal of items




PPE should be donned (put on) in the following order:

1. Mask
2. Eye protection (goggles), if necessary
3. Gloves

PPE should be doffed (removed) in the following order:

1. Gloves – followed by hand-washing or hand sanitizer
2. Eye protection (goggles)
3. Mask

What type of PPE is appropriate?

You are unable to maintain a physical distance of 2 meters but no contact with a child/adult is required.	Surgical mask only. 
You are required to physically support a child/adult.	Surgical mask and gloves. 
You are required to hold a child, manage high risk youth/adult behavior, and/or are concerned about droplets.	Surgical mask, gloves, and goggles. 

Wearing Masks

Wearing a mask can be very important in certain situations. Alberta Health and AHS advise if you are sick, wearing a mask helps prevent passing the illness on to other people.

It is important that when putting on and taking off a mask, you are following proper precautions. According to the [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int), the following outlines how to properly wear and dispose of a mask:

- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds).
- Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds).
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin or garbage bag; and clean hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds).

For more information on the do's and don'ts of wearing a mask – please reference the CSS COVID-19 Staff Resource webpage.

Wearing Gloves

Disposable gloves are an important piece of PPE and when donned (put on) properly, they help protect workers from exposure. When doffed (taken off) correctly, workers help prevent contamination to themselves and their environments. Below are tips on how to don and doff gloves in ways that help ensure worker safety:

- The outside of gloves are contaminated! Do not touch your face while wearing gloves. Limit other surfaces that you touch, including your cell phone.
- If your hands get contaminated during glove removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

HOW TO DON GLOVES



1 Remove one glove from the package and inspect it to be sure no pinholes or tears are present.



2 If gloves are ambidextrous, they can be worn on either hand. If not, align the glove's fingers and thumb with the proper hand before donning.



3 Insert five fingers into the cuff and pull the cuff over the wrist.



4 Check for a secure fit around the fingers and palm. The cuff should fit snugly around the wrist.

HOW TO DOFF GLOVES



1 Grasp the outside edge of the glove near the wrist.



2 Peel the glove away from the hand, turning it inside out. Hold it in the opposite gloved hand.



3 Slide an ungloved finger under the wrist of the remaining glove, being careful not to touch the outside of the glove.



4 Peel the remaining glove off from the inside, creating a "bag" containing both gloves. Discard.

Wearing Eye Protection

Wearing eye protection (goggles) are an important aspect of PPE when you are unable to maintain physical distancing (2 meters or 6 feet), are required to carry a child, or are working with individuals who have tested positive or are symptomatic for COVID-19.

To properly don (put on) eye protection (goggles):

- Using the arm bands place over face and eyes and adjust to fit.

To properly doff (remove) eye protection (goggles):

- Arms of goggles and headband of face shields are considered to be 'clean' and maybe touched with the hands.
- The front of goggles are considered to be contaminated.
- Remove eye protection by handling ear loops, sides or back only.
- Reusable goggles should be cleaned by the individual after each use using soap and water or wipes.

Considerations when Transporting Children, Youth or Adults

When a child, youth or adult needs to be transported, consider the following:

- Consult the [CSS Do I Need PPE](#) poster on what PPE is recommended for transporting a child/youth/adult.
- If the child/youth/adult is symptomatic or has tested positive for COVID-19, if age and development allow, have the child/youth/adult wear a mask.
- Whenever possible, have the child/youth/adult sit as far from you as the vehicle allows (i.e. rather than having an individual sit in the passenger seat beside you, have them sit in the rear passenger seat).
- Follow the CSS Vehicle Disinfecting & Cleaning Tips for cleaning personal vehicles after use.
- Ensure any car seats and high-touch areas have been cleaned using soap and water or an alcohol based disinfectant after use.

Resources: [CSS Portal](#) - [COVID-19 Staff Resources](#)