

COVID-19 safety plan

Company details

Business name: Toronto Birth Centre

Others consulted: Quality Advisor, Sara Booth, RM

Date completed: December 11, 2020

Tamara Sanchez,
Occupational Health
and Safety

Date distributed: **January 15, 2021**

Representative

Revision date: January 14, 2021

Developed by: Roberta Pike

1. How will you ensure all workers know how and are able to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19?

TBC management will review the following web-sites on a weekly basis to keep up with public health and workplace safety guidance for COVID-19.

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/ihf/>

<https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/>

<https://www.ontariomidwives.ca/covid-19>

www.covid-19.ontario.ca

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents.html>

TBC management will continue to share new/updated information as soon as possible. We will ensure that we use a variety of internal and external communications systems to educate the Board, staff, midwives and visitors and provide frequent reminders and updates.

Actions:

- Posting notices, signage, and floor stickers in common areas, including the elevator.
- Email updates to staff and midwives.
- Sharing information at virtual team meetings, board meetings, business meetings and during programming.
- Post information for employees and other people entering the workplace.
- Post resources on-line on our website and social media accounts to support general knowledge about COVID-19 guidelines and precautions.
- Provide information in ways that are easy to understand, like graphics, and use resources from the Ontario government, City of Toronto.
- Provision of regular reminders to employees about available social and mental health supports and encourage them to use these resources.
- Share information/PPE to help employees stay healthy while commuting and travelling as part of their work.
- Train and re-train on procedures regularly.

2. How will you screen for COVID-19?

By keeping symptomatic workers and other people from entering, we are reducing possible transmission in the workplace.

There are two different types of screening that will be done at TBC:

- Passive screening: by posting signage for visitors at the facility and on-line related to the current symptoms for people to look for/questions to ask to assess their own risk factors and make the decision themselves (<Z:\Covid Related Forms and Instructions\Passive screening signage June 16 2020.pdf>¹).
- Active Screening: the employer screens everyone before they enter the facility and keeps a record of answers to the screening questions and retains contact information for tracing purposes.

Midwifery Staff:

As Health Care Providers (HCPs), midwives are responsible for screening themselves and monitoring for symptoms, obtaining medical care and undertaking appropriate follow up if there are any questions or concerns. TBC midwifery staff are obligated to abide by the policies and procedures of the Toronto Birth Centre as a regulated Independent Healthcare Facility. The Clinical Director/Director on Call is available to midwifery staff if a consult is needed concerning access to TBC.

Clients of Midwives using the TBC:

Midwives will screen clients prior to arranging clinic visits conducted at the TBC. TBC staff will screen clients before they enter the facility. The current approved form is documented in: <Z:\Covid Related Forms and Instructions\FORM 105 - TBC General Sign-In Rev 2.pdf> The record retention period for these documents is 2 months.

TBC Birthing Clients, Partners and Guests:

Midwives are required to screen clients prior to admission to TBC. TBC staff will conduct a second screen of clients, as well as of partners and support people before they enter the facility using the screening form above.

¹ All links to TBC forms are available on the internal server and are noted here so that staff can produce for provincial or city inspectors on demand.

- The screener will advise anyone who does not pass the screening:
 - o that they may not enter the Birth Centre
 - o to go home immediately to self-isolate
 - o to contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) to find out if they need a COVID-19 test and for further instructions.

TBC will ensure that screeners have adequate physical barriers and/or PPE while screening and that they receive information and instruction on how to perform this work safely, including donning and doffing of PPE, and what to do if a person must be excluded from the facility.

Employees:

Active screening: the employer ensures that before staff enter the workplace at the start of their shift, each employee undertake a screening process and that this is documented to determine whether the person may enter the workplace.

- TBC requires all employees to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms and other risk factors (for example, close contact to known cases, recent international travel) and temperature using the following tool: <Z:\Covid Related Forms and Instructions\COVID-19 TBC staff self-screening documentation Fillable Form.pdf> .
- Screening involves collecting information about symptoms and interactions that may result in higher risks of transmitting COVID-19.
- Based on this information, a decision is made about whether a person should be excluded from the workplace until they are further assessed and/or symptoms resolve.
- Active screening may be done in person at the workplace or remotely using telephone, internet (online), email submission prior to entry.
- Active screening applies to all workers, volunteers, suppliers, and contractors.
- On-site, TBC uses the COVID-19 screening tools for Independent Health Care Facilities/the healthcare sector to ensure that our screening process includes all the questions relevant to our working environment.
- Workers are encouraged to self-monitor symptoms at all times.
- All workers know to stay home if they have symptoms that are new, getting worse or unexplained (for example, by an existing condition) and are aware of who to contact for health care follow up.
- TBC has ensured that workers know where to find the online COVID-19 self-assessment tool in addition to the one utilized by TBC.

- TBC asks workers to use the on-line tool at home if they have any symptoms and to follow the instructions.
- TBC ensures that workers know who their workplace supervisor is and how to get in touch with them in case the self-assessment, public health or their health care provider suggests they self-isolate, or if they start to experience symptoms at work or think they may have been in contact with someone with COVID-19.

3. How will you control the risk of transmission in your workplace?

Actions:

All administrative staff not interacting with clients are to work from home until otherwise instructed. Administrative staff that need to physically go to TBC from time to time, do a self-screening prior to coming on site to lower the risk of transmission. In addition, staff are required to wear a mask and conduct hand hygiene regularly while on site.

COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms. Therefore, it is very important to have effective control measures in the workplace. Changes made to the workspace and to the ways in which work is done is as follows:

- The Family Interview Room and the Midwife Workroom have been set up as alternative spaces for staff of TBC and SGMT to unmask and eat their lunch. All staff are required to conduct high touch disinfection after eating.
- Occupancy maximums have been established for each birth room. Midwives are empowered to observe these maximums for the safety of both the client and for themselves.
- Maximize physical distancing and separation as per required distance.
- Stickers and markers to indicate where to wait and set out the required distance.
- Directional arrows to control and limit the flow of traffic within the hallways of the workplace, as able.
- Glass/plexi-glass barriers for admin staff and screeners to maintain separation as a primary means of control.

To enable workers to maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres from other people in the workplace, use a variety of engineering and administrative controls such as:

- scheduling and other administrative changes to reduce the number of people who must share the same space including during shifts, lunch and other breaks.
- providing adequate space by using and repurposing available areas inside the facility.
- Using masks as source control involves having workers, visitors and clients in the workplace wear a mask to protect those around them in addition to regular hand hygiene and provision of hand sanitizers and tissues throughout the facility.
- Midwives engaging in birthing care are provided with the highest-level masks, gowns, caps and goggles/face guards appropriate to their task while working with clients.
- Mandating that clients and visitors wear face coverings (non-medical mask, cloth mask) to comply with legislation and regulations (the requirements of the local public health unit, Toronto City bylaws, regulations under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act that are applicable to IHFs, and directives issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health) to help protect workers and to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
- TBC will provide masks to those who present and who do not have one.
- TBC will provide masks to employees to ensure that they have a fresh supply throughout the day, including for when they go home and come into work for their next scheduled shift.

Optimize ventilation and air flow

- The risk of COVID-19 transmission is higher in more enclosed and crowded spaces. TBC will ensure that air-handling (HVAC) systems are maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions and meet minimum American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) standards.
- Additional precautions include:
 - keeping windows and doors open as much as possible, pending weather and HVAC operations.
 - Continue ventilation and air exchange after regular business hours
 - Use of fans for temperature control limited and to be used as safely as possible.
 - Use of existing higher-flow air turn-over in birth rooms being used for clinical care

To reduce transmission

- TBC has identified commonly touched surfaces (<Z:\Covid Related Forms and Instructions\Daily Common Area High Touch Disinfection.pdf>) and commonly used areas in

the workplace and we are working to reduce transmission from surfaces and objects via daily/twice daily high touch disinfection.

- A schedule has been implemented to clean and disinfect all common spaces by Birth Centre Aides, SGMAT admin staff and contracted cleaners.
- Assign tools, equipment and workstations to a single user if possible. Limit the number of users in any one room at a given time.
- Regularly clean and disinfect any shared equipment and tools, including between users.

Support good hand and respiratory hygiene

The same everyday steps recommended by public health officials to stop the spread of COVID-19 are important in the workplace too. The following steps will be taken:

- share training information to staff and the general public on proper donning and doffing of masks/PPE and on proper technique for hand washing and handrubbing with ABHR.
- post reminders to wash hands often with soap and water, use of hand sanitizer, use proper cough and sneeze etiquette and avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth
- provision of tissues and wastepaper baskets throughout the facility.
- ensure that workers can clean their hands frequently and whenever needed
- have all workers and visitors properly clean their hands before entering the workplace and after contact with objects and surfaces others may have touched.

Use of PPE

- Correct use of PPE. Workers are trained on the care, use and limitations of any PPE that they use.
- TBC provides the following PPE for use by midwives, students and staff: surgical or procedure masks, face shield, goggles, gloves, gowns and caps.
- Staff/ Midwifery staff will not likely need to use a respirator (N95s and equivalent alternatives). These are only required in specific and rare circumstances, for example where aerosol generating medical procedures are performed. TBC does stock supply of N95s in preparation for an event where they may be required and has on file all staff members' fit-tested size.
- Workers that wear PPE for protection against workplace hazards besides COVID-19 must continue to use that PPE as required.

4. What will you do if there is a potential case, or suspected exposure to, COVID-19 at your workplace?

If workers, visitors, or clients have symptoms that may be related to COVID-19 or are diagnosed with COVID-19:

Step 1: Exclude symptomatic people from the workplace

- If a worker calls in sick, informs management of symptoms or informs that they had close contact with someone with symptoms, they will be instructed to take the on-line self-assessment. The employee will be asked to follow any recommendations given by the tool, including being tested and self-isolating and to keep in touch with TBC throughout.
- If anyone shows symptoms in the workplace, they should return home and notify their supervisor, and self-isolate immediately. If they cannot leave immediately, they will be isolated until they are able to leave. TBC management will troubleshoot coverage.
- The employee will be asked to contact their doctor or Telehealth Ontario for further directions about testing and self-isolation.
- If the person is very ill, management will call 911 and let the operator know that the employee may have COVID-19.

Step 2: Contact public health

- Toronto Public Health will be contacted for guidance on what to do if someone develops symptoms at work or if we are told one of the employees has COVID-19. Public health will provide instructions and do contact tracing if needed.
- To support contact tracing, we have a system in place so that we can provide information about which people had close interactions with an affected worker.
- This could include information such as:
 - dates and times of shifts
 - which clients and visitors may have been in contact/exposed
 - approximate length and frequency of interactions
 - full names
 - contact telephone numbers

Step 3: Follow public health direction

- Toronto Public Health may require that:
 - other workers who were exposed are notified and sent home to self-isolate, self-monitor and report any possible COVID-19 symptoms
 - the workplace be shut down while the affected workplace or area and equipment are disinfected
 - other public health measures are implemented
- Disinfect surfaces that may have been touched by the ill person as soon as possible.
- Self-isolation and return-to-work procedures be followed.
- Follow specific directions for each situation as provided by Toronto Public Health based on provincial guidance on the management of cases and contacts of COVID-19.
- Workers should self-isolate if they either:
 - have symptoms
 - had close contact with an individual with symptoms or a confirmed diagnosis
 - have travelled outside of Canada
 - Close contacts may include people who have spent time less than two metres away from the infected person in the same room, workspace, or area without barriers or protective equipment and people living in the same home.
- In general:
 - A worker who had close contact with someone known to have COVID-19 should self-isolate for 14 days. If they do not develop symptoms, they may usually return to work and other activities 14 days after their last contact with the case.
 - A worker with COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptoms started.
 - If a worker who has symptoms receives a negative COVID-19 test result, they may usually return to work before 10 days if they do not have a fever and their symptoms are getting better.
 - Some symptomatic workers may need to self-isolate for longer based on the advice of public health or their health care provider.
 - These timelines for self-isolation include time spent waiting for COVID-19 test results.

Step 4: Inform any workers who may have been exposed

- TBC will let workers know if they may have been exposed in the workplace.
- All workers will be given information about the date and time of the potential exposure and where it took place. No information that might identify the infectious person will be provided.
- TBC will not undertake contact tracing activities unless asked to do so by Toronto Public Health.

Step 5: Report to Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

- If we are advised that one of our employees has tested positive for COVID-19 due to exposure at the workplace, or that a claim has been filed with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), we must give notice in writing within four days to:
 - the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development
 - the workplace's joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative
- Additionally, we must report any occupationally acquired illnesses to the WSIB within three days of receiving notification of the illness.

5. How will you manage any new risks caused by changes to the way you operate your business?

Actions:

- We will establish regular check-ins with workers about how they're coping.
- Changes to work practices such as how many people can sit together at the Reception and charting stations are in place. While we recommend that masked workers maintain the 2 metre distance, we recognize that sometimes workers will not be able to maintain physical distance but will work to reduce these interactions or add additional PPE (face guards in addition to masks) as necessary.
- If sourcing cleaners and disinfectants through the supply chain becomes challenging during the pandemic, and we must begin to use a new product, a new SDS will be added to our binders and workers will be notified of the change and provided with new training, if required.
- Due to the nature of lockdown situation in Toronto, the inside of the Painbox Bistro will no longer be an option for people during an emergency evacuation. People however can still

gather outside of the Paintbox. Maintaining physical distance during an emergency evacuation will be the same as what is required of people practicing safe social distancing in a public space.

- The health and well-being of all staff, midwives, clients and visitors is our priority. TBC employees may be given additional days at the discretion of the ED to follow up on COVID 19 testing and self-isolation. Employees with confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be encouraged to apply for COVID-19 WSIB/EI benefits while recovering or caring for a loved one with COVID-19 and until cleared to return to work.
- Management is aware that working front line during the pandemic and/or remotely can induce stress and can raise or aggravate existing mental health concerns. The employer will check in with workers on a regular basis and keep employees up to date about resources available to employees either through the Employee Assistance Program via the AOMBT benefits program or others available in the community. Management is committed to keeping employees safe.
- Remote workers may experience barriers due to lack of supplies, equipment, technological or ergonomic challenges. Management will check-in periodically with staff and loan/provide these items to ensure all remote workers have what they need to work during the pandemic.

6. How will you make sure your plan is working?

- We will set up a weekly meeting between the ED, the CD and the employee's health and safety representative.
- The weekly meeting will review any new training for supervisors and employees, make sure there is compliance with all protocols.
- Ensure that the employees are aware that the employee's health and safety representative is also there to support the flow of information about COVID concerns to the management
- Use existing incident reporting systems: Employees can file an anonymous safety report if compliance by anyone (co-workers, midwives or others) at the workplace is a concern.
- Changes to TBC policy and procedures will be communicated by email, through training at Joint Admin/BCA meetings, as required to ensure all workers know about the changes and are trained to implement them.
- The plan and related documents will be updated and shared as changes evolve.