

# FAQ for Site C workers: COVID-19



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## **General questions about COVID-19**

### **What is COVID-19?**

- COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus. Human coronaviruses are common and typically associated with illnesses similar to the common cold.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 may be very mild or more serious. Symptoms include fever, cough, and most importantly, difficulty breathing.
- Gastrointestinal distress is not typically a COVID-19 symptom.

### **How do I prevent myself from getting COVID-19?**

- In addition to social distancing, the most important thing you can do to prevent infection is to wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face. To help reduce your risk of infection:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Using soap and water is the single most effective way of reducing the spread of infection.
  - If a sink is not available, alcohol-based hand rubs (ABHR) can be used to clean your hands as long as they are not visibly soiled. If they are visibly soiled, use a wipe and then ABHR to effectively clean them.
  - Do not touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough.
  - Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
  - Do not share food, drinks, utensils, etc.

**How do I protect my family from COVID-19?**

- Ensure your family follows the same steps described above for yourself.

**Where can I access the most up to date information on the COVID-19 virus?**

- The COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly.
- We recommend keeping updated on the latest information issued by your regional health and national health authorities:
  - **Northern Health:** <https://www.northernhealth.ca/>
  - **BC Centre for Disease Control:** <http://www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/information-on-novel-coronavirus>
  - **HealthLink BC:** <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
  - **The Public Health Agency of Canada:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

**Is there a COVID-19 self-assessment tool online?**

- The BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool can be accessed at:  
<https://covid19.thrive.health/>

**What are the COVID-19 public health phone numbers in BC?**

- For general health information or symptom advice, please call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 any time of the day or night.
- The province has created a phone service to provide non-medical information about COVID-19, including the latest information on travel recommendations and social distancing. Information is available in more than 110 languages, 7:30 am - 8 pm at 1-888-COVID19 (1.888.268.4319) or via text message at 604.630.0300

**I'm at camp and not feeling well. What do I do?**

- If you feel sick, especially with flu-like symptoms, please do not leave your room.
- Contact the Health Clinic located in camp at 778.844.0281 for a pre-screening.
- A trained professional from the clinic will come to you if further assessment is necessary.
- This is important to prevent any possible virus infections from spreading, including the influenza A, influenza B, and gastrointestinal infections we have seen before at camp.
- Contact your employer.

**I'm at home and not feeling well. What do I do?**

- If you feel sick at home, contact your employer and stay home to prevent spreading any illness to others. If you live with others, stay in a separate room or keep a 2-meter distance.
- Call your local public health authority or a health care professional. Tell them your symptoms and follow their instructions. If you need immediate medical attention, especially if you are experiencing difficulty breathing, call 911 and tell them your symptoms.

## **BC Hydro health and safety measures**

### **Are there any people in the camp with COVID-19?**

- As of March 23, there have been no cases of COVID-19 reported at Site C.
- Testing procedures are being completed in accordance with current public health guidelines established by the Ministry of Health, which state that not everyone requires testing.
- As per provincial guidelines, anyone showing any sort of respiratory or cold-like symptoms (including a fever, cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing) is required to self-isolate. Given the unique nature of a worker camp, we're strictly following these protocols.
- We have the ability to safely isolate and protect workers in camp, and are working on other options that would be more comfortable for longer periods of isolation.
- The Site C Health Clinic at site is managed by International SOS; it is well equipped with experienced health practitioners, COVID-19 swab kits and medical supplies.

### **What has BC Hydro done to protect all the Site C workers?**

- ATCO and the Health Clinic are providing COVID-19 information throughout camp.
- BC Hydro has restricted non-essential visitors to site by postponing or cancelling all site tours and guest employee meetings.
- BC Hydro has limited our Site C employees to only intra-provincial travel.
- BC Hydro has implemented deep cleaning of our construction offices, where meetings with contractors are often held.
- We are also asking BC Hydro employees to wipe down their work areas and stations regularly, and to work from home where operational feasible. Although BC Hydro employees are still coming into offices, the number is greatly reduced and allows for better social distancing.
- Security has implemented cross-contamination controls at all Site C access points, including sneeze guards, workers scanning their own site-access passes, and video verification of ID.
- ATCO has implemented additional measures in the camp; please see question in the "Camp" section later in this document.

### **In the event of a confirmed positive case in camp, does BC Hydro have the authority to decide how to respond, or is that up to Northern Health Authority?**

- ATCO and the Health Clinic are governed by the Northern Health Authority, and expected to follow provincial guidelines for the quarantine, treatment, and transportation of a COVID-19 case.
- ATCO and the Health Clinic have implemented an isolation and quarantine plan to manage any contagious illness, including seasonal influenza, gastrointestinal infections, and possibly COVID-19.
- BC Hydro has the responsibility to make operational decisions about Site C.

**Does WorkSafe have a role in preventative measures for camp/site?**

- WorkSafeBC is advising employers and workers to follow the recommended personal hygiene practices like frequent hand washing, avoiding touching your face, and avoiding direct contact with others.

**What happens if there is a case of COVID-19 in the camp?**

- ATCO and the Health Clinic have implemented an isolation and quarantine plan to manage any contagious illness, including seasonal influenza, gastrointestinal infections, and possibly COVID-19. ATCO and the Health Clinic are governed by the Northern Health Authority.
- The quarantine area is isolated from the main shared areas of camp, provides some amenities for patients, and can be scaled as necessary. ATCO has the trained staff, facilities and supplies required to manage even a sizable quarantine.
- Examples of quarantine controls include meals delivered in disposable serving dishes which are bagged and disposed of separately, linens sent to an authorized commercial facility, anyone interacting with the workers will be required to wear masks, gowns and gloves.

**What happens if I am required to go home due to scaling back of some construction activities on the Site C project? How will I get home?**

- For workers who utilize a contractor's charter flight program, every effort will be used to get you home quickly and safely.
- There may be options for driving home, including renting vehicles if the worker is not at risk of COVID-19.
- Over the coming days, BC Hydro will work with project contractors and unions to safely scale back certain construction activities at the project site.
- Please remain patient and respectful as this process will take time to organize. Your employer will work with you during this time.

**Why isn't Site C shutting down entirely?**

- On March 18, BC Hydro announced that work at Site C will be scaled back in response to the increasing escalation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Focus will be on essential work and critical milestones.
- Reducing the number of people in the camp and travelling to and from Fort St. John aligns with public health guidelines for maintaining social distance.
- With the ATCO camp and Health Clinic, Site C is well equipped to manage a contagious illness. We also have the benefit of a hospital nearby to support seriously ill people.
- Many other industrial camps do not have the same level of services and/or are located in non-accessible areas.

**Is the site scaling down because of a positive test at camp?**

- On March 18, BC Hydro announced that work at Site C will be scaled back in response to the increasing escalation of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Reducing the number of people in the camp and travelling to and from Fort St. John aligns with public health guidelines for maintaining social distance.
- Essential work on critical milestones continues.

- As of March 23, there have been no positive tests or confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported at Site C.

## **Employers**

### **What is my employer doing to protect workers?**

- BC Hydro is supporting contractors/employers with regular updates, and coordination meetings will continue as information is updated.
- Contractors and employers on site are required to hold information sessions with their workforce, relaying COVID-19 information as appropriate.
- Contractors have already been actively participating in additional cleaning measures.
- Please contact your employer for additional information.

### **What travel policies are being implemented for Site C workers?**

- Currently, health authorities are advising strongly against non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the U.S.
- Their direction includes the requirement to self-isolate for 14 days if a person has been out of the country.
- BC Hydro is committed to following guidance of the health authority for its work force.
- Please contact your employer regarding charter and commercial flights organized through your company.

### **Will there be pre-screening for people coming into camp?**

- BC Hydro introduced another layer of protection by commencing a pre-access screening consisting of the same BC Ministry of Health COVID-19 self-assessment, along with a non-invasive temperature scan, starting with an initial launch at Gate A. Full implementation of this pre-access screening will be in place at both Gate A and B very shortly.

### **Are people being asked if they have travelled during turnaround?**

- Contractors and BC Hydro are asking workers before they return to site if they have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.
- If so, under direction of provincial and federal health authorities, they will be required to self-isolate for 14 days.

### **What government benefits am I covered for in the event I am exposed to COVID-19?**

- For Canadians without paid sick leave (or similar workplace accommodation) who are sick, quarantined or forced to stay home to care for children, the federal government is:
  - Waiving the one-week waiting period for those individuals in imposed quarantine that claim Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits. This temporary measure is in effect as of March 15, 2020.
  - Waiving the requirement to provide a medical certificate to access EI sickness benefits.
  - Introducing the Emergency Care Benefit providing up to \$900 bi-weekly, for up to 15 weeks. This flat-payment benefit would be administered through the Canada

Revenue Agency (CRA) and provide income support to workers, including the self-employed, who are quarantined or sick with COVID-19 but do not qualify for EI sickness benefits.

- Employment Insurance (EI) information:
  - EI sickness benefits provide up to 15 weeks of income replacement and are available for those unable to work due to illness, injury, or quarantine.
  - This can be applied through Service Canada. The mandatory one-week wait time has been waived.

## **Pay and compensation**

### **If I get sick and stay home, or even get COVID-19, will I get paid?**

- The Canadian federal government has announced some assistance programs for people impacted by COVID-19; for example, waiving the one-week waiting period for employment insurance and other income supports for those not eligible for EI sickness benefits.
- Please contact your employer to understand their health and wellness benefit programs, as well as how to access government assistance programs.

### **If, due to COVID-19, the project is paused for a prolonged period of time, am I able to collect Employment Insurance?**

- If work on the project is put on hold, you will receive a temporary layoff, and will be entitled to Employment Insurance through Service Canada.

### **Do I get paid if I have to be isolated based on the new testing guidelines?**

- Please contact your employer.

## **Health screening at site access points**

### **What pre-screening measures has BC Hydro implemented at Site C?**

- BC Hydro introduced another layer of protection by commencing a pre-access screening consisting of the [BC Ministry of Health COVID-19 self-assessment](#), along with a non-invasive temperature scan, at both Gates A and B. Gate C is closed.
- Contractors working on Site C use the same BC Ministry of Health COVID-19 self-assessment questionnaire for employees returning on charter flights to Fort St. John.

### **What is the process if I am denied entry? Should I go home?**

- You should return home. If you cannot return home, you should check with your employer.
- If you are recommended for self-isolation, your site card will be temporarily deactivated during your isolation period. A BC Hydro representative will notify your employer if you are required to self-isolate. No other details of your assessment will be provided to BC Hydro or your employer.



**If I am denied entry will I still be paid?**

- You should contact your employer to understand their health and wellness benefit programs, as well as how to access government assistance programs.

**Is there an appeal process if I do not agree with the temp scan or the questionnaire?**

- You must be screened before going onsite. There is no appeal process. Work with your employer to address your concerns with submitting to the screening.

**How accurate are the scans?**

- The scan is accurate, and it is similar to those used at airports.

**Do people that go in and out of site multiple times per day still have to scan each time or is it only once per day per person??**

- Anyone going in and out of the site multiple times in a single day will be screened at first entry only.
- You will be asked during the initial screening if you will be leaving site and returning that same day. If you answer "YES", you will receive a wristband to indicate you do not have to be screened again when you return to site later that day.

## **Camp**

**Should I use face masks when staying in camp?**

- Health professionals warn that face masks are not very effective in preventing infection for the general population. People often touch their face masks frequently – to have a drink, smoke, or because it needs adjusting. Any germs on their hands may transfer to the mask which is then placed directly over their nose and mouth.
- Masks should be worn by people who are symptomatic, to prevent transmission to other people.
- If you feel strongly you'd like to wear a mask, please consider using your N95 mask.

**What has ATCO done in the camp to protect guests?**

- ATCO has implemented the highest level of enhanced cleaning procedures and containment in shared areas of the Lodge.
- This includes bi-hourly disinfection of all shared touch points in the facility using an antiviral product.
  - Touch points include doors, handles, tables, counters, desks, buttons in elevators or door bells, benches and chairs and other items as situationally defined.
- The following common areas around the Lodge are closed to maintain social distancing guidelines:
  - Spiritual room
  - TV room
  - Movie theatre
  - Recreational rooms and gym
  - Games room

- The Bean Café
- Two Rives Lounge
- Hair salon
- Guests are required to wash their hands prior to entering the dining and mug-up rooms.
- ATCO has implemented increased measures in the dining room:
  - 50 people gatherings: we have segregated the dining room into 5 section of 50 sitting areas.
  - Social distancing of two metres: tables in the dining room have been setup to help guests adhere to the social distancing guideline.
  - Required handwashing/sanitizing for guests before entry to the dining room.
  - The facility dining area has removed virtually all self serve options – fresh fruit is either portioned and packaged or handed out piece by piece as guests request it.
  - Salad bars have been replaced by packaged selections.
  - All water fountains and refilling stations have been closed with bottled water provided in their place.
- ATCO has additional staff on site to manage the changes in the dining room.

**How are guests maintaining distancing standards in the bathroom at the dining room?**

**How is ATCO ensuring that congestion is managed?**

- On average at peak times it takes approximately three minutes to get in and out of the washroom when washing your hands. The washrooms are being monitored and cleaned frequently using proper sanitization methods.
- ATCO is working hard to manage the congestion in the entrance to the dining room.

**Does ATCO have enough cleaning and housekeeping supplies?**

- It has been well publicized that supplies of basic hygiene products (such as surgical masks, sanitizers, and even toilet paper) are increasingly limited, especially for retail sale.
- ATCO has several wholesale suppliers and to date has been able to source sufficient supplies for Site C needs, including for our contingency plans.

**Will ATCO run out of supplies such as food and toilet paper, due to transportation and shipping issues with closed borders?**

- Supplies that are required for camp such as food and toilet paper are delivered by commercial suppliers that have Canadian distributors and are scaled to serve a facility like the ATCO Two Rivers Lodge.
- ATCO has been working closely with all its key suppliers to ensure there is no disruption to the supply chain.

**How does ATCO ensure their staff are trained to perform enhanced cleaning measures?**

- Enhanced cleaning measures are being completed by a dedicated team of janitorial professionals along with high level oversight of the detailed logs and records ensuring end-to-end coverage in the Lodge.

**What kind of cleaning products does ATCO use to clean the Lodge?**

- The chemical used in the Lodge is Oxivir 5 concentrate. This is a hospital-grade disinfectant cleaner effective against a wide variety of micro-organisms including viruses, bacteria, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, fungi, mould and mildew.
- Oxivir TB Wipes are used in the medical clinic. Oxivir TB Wipes are intended for the cleaning and disinfecting of healthcare environmental surfaces.
- Both products of these products provide effective cleaning and disinfection.

**How often are hoteling showers cleaned?**

- On Mondays and Wednesdays, ATCO cleans the hoteling showers every two hours as part of the enhanced cleaning procedures. On all other days, ATCO will clean the showers as they are used.

**Do I have to have my room cleaned if I don't want it cleaned?**

- All guest rooms must be cleaned by an ATCO staff member to ensure appropriate health and safety practices are applied.

**Can measures be put in place at the commissary that can prevent the workers from touching everyone's items to scan them, then touching the next persons items, to prevent cross contamination?**

- ATCO has already implemented a higher level of enhanced cleaning procedures in shared areas, including the Commissary.
- Commissary staff wear gloves when handling items and taking payment. Two payment stations have been set up to shorten service times. Guests should also make use of the hand sanitizing stations at both entrances of the Commissary.
- ATCO monitors the number of guests accessing the Commissary and has found the number of guests is within recommended guidelines.
- We ask that guests remember to maintain social distancing within the Commissary.

**Why are you closing the gym and not the lounge? Why are you now closing the lounge and the coffee shop?**

- Initially, the gym was closed because it has a different level of risk than the lounge. The lounge is effectively an extension of the dining room and does not require users to clean the equipment/facility (which they may or may not do).
- With B.C. declaring a provincial state of emergency, ATCO has now closed all areas where people gather, including the lounge and coffee shop.

**Governments are recommending no more than 50 people in a gathering; won't the camp dining area be in violation of this?**

- The B.C. provincial government has recently amended its directive regarding events of no more than 50 people (from 250). This directive is more focused on public gatherings which typically do not have effective control measures in place, such as ATCO's enhanced cleaning measures.
- Given the public emergency status, ATCO has deployed more controls for hand washing and sanitization, eliminated self-service stations in the camp dining room, and now closed all locations where people can congregate in larger numbers.

- The following common areas around the lodge are closed to maintain social distancing guidelines:
  - Spiritual room
  - TV room
  - Movie theatre
  - Recreational rooms and gym
  - Games Room
  - The Bean Café
  - Two Rives Lounge
  - Hair salon
- To promote social distancing, the dining room has been rearranged to limit seating areas to 50 people maximum in five areas, all booths are restricted to two seats, round tables are limited to three seats, and tables have been moved further apart.
- Additionally, we have implemented the recommendation of the Chief Mines Inspector released this week that:
  - Reduce the number of on-site personnel by encouraging work from home where feasible;
  - Eliminating town hall meetings for groups of more than 50 people, instead communicating on site in smaller groups;
  - Holding daily pre-shift safety meetings (toolbox meetings) in smaller numbers; and
  - Reducing in person meetings and other gatherings where ever possible.

#### **What entertainment options are available to me in camp?**

ATCO is launching some recreation options for everyone staying in the Lodge. These include:

- Login instructions for in room fitness classes
- Printed copies of in room workout (also available on channel 57.1)
- Games and puzzles for guests to photograph and take back to their rooms – they'll be asked to solve the puzzle and email their solutions to a new, dedicated Gmail address.

#### **What is the leisure shuttle doing to keep workers safe?**

- Industrial Shuttle continues to operate the shuttle with measures in place that align with guidance for social distancing from the provincial health authority along with enhanced cleaning.
- Effective March 22, Industrial Shuttle eliminated the scheduled stop at the Pomeroy Hotel, as the casino and restaurant are now closed.
- Any modifications to services will be aligned with public transportation changes under BC Transit.
- Information about BC Transit's response to COVID – 19 can be found on [their website](#).
- We are continuing to monitor and evaluate the use of the shuttle

## **Medical / isolation and quarantine**

**If I have recently travelled out of the country, am I required to self-isolate for 14 days?**

**What is the process for informing my employer?**

- The Provincial Medical Health Officer has directed individuals to self-isolate for 14 days after returning from a trip outside of Canada, including from the United States.
- You will need to contact your supervisor / employer directly to make self-isolation arrangements.

**If I am concerned about returning to site, what are my options?**

- Some Site C contractors have advised BC Hydro there will be no repercussions for individuals who do not wish to return to work, out of concern for the current COVID-19 situation.
- Employees must notify their employer directly.

**If the government asks us to self-isolate am I supposed to stay here at camp? And if I choose to self-isolate at home, how do I get home?**

- ATCO has implemented new measures to proactively manage the risk associated with COVID-19.
- Effective March 16, the B.C. Ministry of Health provided new testing guidelines for COVID-19, which strongly urge anyone who has any respiratory symptoms – including a fever, cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing – to self-isolate for 14 days.
- COVID-19 testing is being prioritized for at-risk health workers, senior citizen facilities, people with serious symptoms, and people who have been in extended, close contact with someone confirmed for COVID-19. Testing is not being used for initial screening at this time.
- BC Hydro, ATCO, and the Health Clinic are following these new provincial health guidelines, while BC Hydro works with provincial authorities to clarify the operational implementation of the guidelines.
- If you choose to travel home to self-isolate there, please conduct yourself in a safe and responsible manner and follow regional public health advisories regarding travel and self-isolation.
- People resident in camp will be safely isolated in camp.
- The message from the B.C. Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) continues to be that everyone should be social distancing as much as possible, washing their hands every 20 minutes if in a public setting, and after hours limit their time in the dining room and spend most of their time in their room.
- You can use [this information sheet](#) from the BCCDC to help you self-monitor, and if you develop symptoms go to your room in camp and call Health Clinic at 778.844.0281:
- People resident in FSJ may return home to be isolated at home.

**What happens if I get sick enough to warrant a COVID-19 test?**

- Testing procedures are being completed in accordance with current public health guidelines established by the Ministry of Health, which state that not everyone requires testing.

- People waiting for a test result, or with positive test results, will be quarantined in an isolated and protected section of camp until there are two successive negative test results.
- The Health Clinic is well equipped with medical supplies to keep most people who are sick comfortable.
- If someone is really ill with the virus, they will be safely transported to the Fort St. John hospital for treatment and care.

**What happens if I am under quarantine at camp? How will healthy people in camp be protected from contact with possible or actual COVID-19 cases in camp?**

- ATCO and the Health Clinic have implemented an isolation and quarantine plan to manage any contagious illness, including seasonal influenza, gastrointestinal infections, and possibly COVID-19. ATCO and the Health Clinic are governed by the Northern Health Authority.
- The quarantine area is isolated from the main shared areas of camp, provides some amenities for patients, and can be scaled as necessary. ATCO has the trained staff, facilities and supplies required to manage even a sizable quarantine.
- Examples of quarantine controls include meals delivered in disposable serving dishes which are bagged and disposed of separately, linens sent to an authorized commercial facility, anyone interacting with the workers will be required to wear masks, gowns and gloves.

**If someone tests positive on my crew, would the whole crew be quarantined?**

- Health Authorities are notified when an individual is tested for COVID-19. If the result is positive, the Health Authority undertakes a 'contact assessment', which may include testing of others who may have been in extended, close contact.
- It is wise to practice social distancing even with crew mates, in the lunch room and at work sites.

**I'm feeling stressed and overwhelmed. Who can I reach out to?**

- All employers involved with Site C know this is a stressful time and situation for everyone, especially employees and your families.
- If you are feeling overwhelmed, please reach out to your employer and/or union Employee Family Assistance Program.

**Should I self-isolate after returning home?**

- Workers returning home from Site C are not under any special advisory to self-monitor.
- However, health authorities advise everyone to self-monitor their health, at all times, for symptoms such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing; especially if you have returned to Canada from international travel or an area with a number of COVID-19 cases.

**What happens at the end of the self-isolation period?**

- When a worker is medically cleared from isolation, they are also cleared for work if they have no other health issues.
- It is up to the employer if they want to have the individual return to work or go home.