

## Hull, Kyle MAH:EX

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**From:** Bains, Harry LBR:EX  
**Sent:** December 14, 2020 2:10 PM  
**To:** Duncan, Kate LBR:EX  
**Subject:** 3067 FW: WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx  
**Attachments:** WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx; ATT00001.htm

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**From:** MacDonald, Alex LBR:EX  
**Sent:** April 22, 2020 7:52 AM  
**To:** Bains, Harry LBR:EX  
**Cc:** Scott, Samantha LBR:EX  
**Subject:** Fwd: WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx

For the WorkSafe call today. A summary of actions taken to date.  
-Alex

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Naser, Anne" <[Anne.Naser@worksafebc.com](mailto:Anne.Naser@worksafebc.com)>  
**Date:** April 22, 2020 at 7:37:47 AM PDT  
**To:** "McGinn, Ralph WCB:EX" <[Ralph.McGinn@worksafebc.com](mailto:Ralph.McGinn@worksafebc.com)>, "Hughes, Trevor LBR:EX" <[Trevor.Hughes@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Trevor.Hughes@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** "Johnson, Allan WCB:EX" <[Al.Johnson@worksafebc.com](mailto:Al.Johnson@worksafebc.com)>, "La Freniere, Kevin WCB:EX" <[Kevin.LaFreniere@worksafebc.com](mailto:Kevin.LaFreniere@worksafebc.com)>, "MacDonald, Alex LBR:EX" <[Alex.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Alex.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx

Hi Ralph and Trevor. Please the attached document prepared by Al's team in preparation for our call with the Premier's office. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks.

As more information and resources about COVID-19 become available, we will continue to update the COVID-19 section of our website at [worksafebc.com](http://worksafebc.com). Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube for the latest announcements, jobs, workplace health and safety resources, and news from WorkSafeBC.

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**From:** [Naser, Anne WCB:EX](#)  
**To:** [McGinn, Ralph WCB:EX](#); [Hughes, Trevor LBR:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Johnson, Allan WCB:EX](#); [La Freniere, Kevin WCB:EX](#); [MacDonald, Alex LBR:EX](#)  
**Subject:** WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx  
**Date:** April 22, 2020 7:37:46 AM  
**Attachments:** [WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx](#)

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## Ministry of Labour

Date: April 21, 2020

### Prevention Services COVID-19 Response and Support for Workplaces Resuming Operation

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The following provides an overview of WorkSafeBC's work to-date to ensure that employers have the required tools, resources, and oversight to ensure that workers are protected from the risk of COVID-19 transmission at BC workplaces, as well as an overview of the role WorkSafeBC can play as workers and employers transition back to work following COVID-19 work stoppages and interruptions.

#### COVID-19 Response To-date

##### Information for Workers and Employers

WorkSafeBC has established regular calls with the Medical Health Officers, the PHO and the BCCDC to ensure we have the most up-to-date information on risks to workers and to get feedback on inspectional approaches and guidance for employers. WorkSafeBC is providing up-to-date guidance and resources for workers and employers, including:

- A [COVID-19 landing page](#) on WorkSafeBC.com provides general information, and sector-specific guidance for [agriculture](#), [forestry](#), [hospitality](#), [small business](#), [construction](#), [health care](#), [manufacturing](#), [retail](#), and [transportation](#). An [Employer Guide to Preventing COVID-19 in the workplace](#) provides additional guidance and resources for employers.
- These resources have received approximately 370,000 page views with total reach of approximately 300,000 unique visitors.
- WorkSafeBC is engaging with industry associations, Health and Safety Association (HSAs), and labour organizations to provide information and respond to questions and concerns. WorkSafeBC has also held "town hall sessions" with industry groups to allow a free exchange of ideas and concerns.

##### Health and Safety Information Centre (HSIC)

The HSIC is available for workers and employers to contact WorkSafeBC and speak directly to a prevention officer. If needed, an officer will attend onsite to assess health and safety risks at the workplace.

- From February 24 to March 30, the HSIC received over 2,300 calls related to COVID-19 with a week-over-week increase averaging 200%.
- March 2020 call volume was double that of January and February 2020. Volume in April is returning to lower levels, but is on track to remain significantly higher than historical call volumes.
- The main topics of COVID-19 calls relate to personal protective equipment (including face masks), advice around how to increase distance between staff and customers, employer responsibilities, a worker's right to refuse unsafe work, and general questions about preventing exposure.



## Workplace Inspections

- A **COVID-19 Inspectional Approach** has been developed that assists prevention officers in planning and conducting COVID-19 workplace inspections that focus on key risk controls while ensuring safety of both the prevention officer and workplace parties. Inspections are conducted remotely whenever feasible. At this time, officer efforts are focused on those businesses that have been deemed essential by the province. Specific protocols have been developed for industries where COVID-19 risks are higher including construction, health care, forestry, manufacturing, and retail.
- HSIC officers, Prevention Officers, and members of Consultation and Education Services have access to an **Internal COVID-19 Information Hub**, which ensures consistency of advice and interpretation being delivered to workers and employers.
- Following every COVID-19 inspection, officers complete a survey that measures the current status of workplace safety, next steps to improve workplace controls, and effectiveness of WorkSafeBC inspections.
- 13,773 total inspections have been completed YTD 2020, an increase of 11% in the same period 2019. As of April 15, 2020, prevention officers have conducted over 1,700 inspections focused on reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission at workplaces, resulting in 143 orders at 75 workplaces.
- In alignment with the inspection initiative, Prevention OHS Consultation and Education Services is engaging in employer-level consultations to support employers and workers with questions and challenges regarding the health and safety of their workforce related to COVID-19.

## Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs)

- A [COVID-19 FAQ](#) on worksafebc.com outlines the role of JHSCs and worker representatives in workplace safety, and provides guidance about how they can be meaningfully engaged in protecting the workplace against COVID-19.
- JHSC and worker representatives are one of three key focus areas for COVID-19 inspections, along with ensuring physical distancing is being practiced, and confirming that employers have instituted policies restricting workers from the workplace who have symptoms of COVID-19 or under advisement by the Provincial Health Officer to self-isolate.
- Prevention officers are asking employers to confirm that they have a JHSC or worker representative in place and they are continuing to meet either in person or remotely, that the JHSC or worker representative is an effective conduit for safety concerns between workers and the employer, and that control measures are developed in consultation with the JHSC or worker representative.
- As of April 15, 2020, seven orders were written requiring employers to implement or improve JHSC or worker representative effectiveness following COVID-19 related inspections.

## Support for Workers and Employers as Workplaces Resume Operation

- WorkSafeBC will follow the guidance issued by Public Health with respect to employers and industries returning to work following COVID-19-related stoppages or interruptions and promote the Provincial Health Officer's direction in the maintenance of healthy and safe workplaces.
- WorkSafeBC will continue to liaise with and support public health and municipal by-law officers in the enforcement of public health orders and guidance at worksites. We have instituted referral processes between these agencies that will ensure appropriate agencies and oversight are applied where needed.

- While employers are legally responsible for ensuring workplaces and workers are healthy and safe, WorkSafeBC will support employers and workers through the development of industry-specific resources (templates, checklists, training and educational materials, signage, etc...) that will help them follow the guidance and orders issued by Public Health at their workplaces as they resume operations. These materials, including current information, best practices, and reference materials, will be posted to [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com), communicated through workplace consultations and inspections, and promoted through industry Health and Safety Associations.
- Prevention officers will engage directly with employers in returning industries through consultations and inspections to support them as they return to partial or full operation. These engagements will follow the customized inspectional approach developed for all COVID-19 inspections, and will focus on the key elements of hygiene, physical distancing, and effective JHSCs.
- Employers requiring additional assistance in reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission at their workplace as they resume operations may call the HSIC to speak directly with a prevention officer to receive advice and direction.
- Workers with concerns or questions about the risk of COVID-19 transmission at their workplace can call the HSIC to speak directly with a prevention officer, who may conduct a workplace inspection to determine the nature of the risk and the effectiveness of the employer's control measures.
- Workers have the right under the *Workers Compensation Act* to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. Any worker who raises concerns about COVID-19 transmission to their employer that is not resolved can contact WorkSafeBC so that a prevention officer can determine whether there is an undue hazard and issue orders if necessary.

**From:** [Hughes, Trevor LBR:EX](#)  
**To:** [Naser, Anne WCB:EX](#); [McGinn, Ralph WCB:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Johnson, Allan WCB:EX](#); [La Freniere, Kevin WCB:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WorkSafeBC Prevention COVID-19 final.docx  
**Date:** April 22, 2020 8:06:01 AM

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Well done, my friends. Thank you.

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Trevor Hughes  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Labour (BC)

Office: (778) 974-2189

-----Original Message-----

From: Naser, Anne <Anne.Naser@worksafebc.com>  
Sent: April 22, 2020 7:38 AM  
To: McGinn, Ralph WCB:EX <Ralph.McGinn@worksafebc.com>; Hughes, Trevor LBR:EX <Trevor.Hughes@gov.bc.ca>  
Cc: Johnson, Allan WCB:EX <Al.Johnson@worksafebc.com>; La Freniere, Kevin WCB:EX <Kevin.LaFreniere@worksafebc.com>; MacDonald, Alex LBR:EX <Alex.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>  
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