



YMCA OF HAMILTON | BURLINGTON | BRANTFORD

Return to the Workplace Action Plan

August 2021

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Introduction

At the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford, it is our priority to keep our employees and their families safe, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, we will abide by provincial government and Public Health guidelines as we strive to balance public health concerns with operational needs. This action plan details our plan for reopening, while continuing to keep all our employees safe to every extent possible. This plan, which pulls from Public Health Ontario and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, highlights the responsibilities of People Leaders (supervisor/manager) and employees, and outlines the steps YMCA HBB is taking to address COVID-19.

While we will implement various protocols to ensure safety, it is reliant upon all stakeholders to execute on these protocols daily. By releasing this return-to-work action plan, YMCA HBB hopes to clearly communicate our plans, moving forward, highlight workplace protocols in place to protect your safety and establish a level of comfort for all employees as we prepare to return to the workplace.

We understand that every employee's situation is different and encourage those with specific risks or concerns to reach out to their People Leader (supervisor/manager) or HR department at HBBHR@ymcahbb.ca to discuss alternate arrangements, should they be necessary.

Return to the Workplace Considerations

Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating an exact timeline for resuming “normal” or “regular” operation is not feasible. YMCA HBB will continue to monitor applicable provincial and local guidance and determine next steps for reopening the office.

At this time, we have created a tentative phased approach for inviting our employees to return to their workplace.

The following summary outlines the various phases of operation:

Phase One

Under Phase One, operations were closed with limited essential employees on site to ensure continuity of service, where applicable. Due to closures, substantial portions of the workforce were placed on temporary layoff and others reverted to remote work arrangements.

Phase Two

Under Phase Two, the workplace will enter a transition period commencing September 13, 2021 through to December 31, 2021. During this transition period, employees will begin a gradual return to the workplace as defined by the position function and by authorization of the Vice President responsible. Like Phase One, employees who can work from home may, in some instances, continue to do so. Access to the workplace will be granted for job roles that are critical to operations or for employees who are not able to work remotely.

The workplace in this limited capacity will continue to practice social distancing protocols and employee health screening will continue to be in place; workplace modifications may be made to ensure social distancing can be maintained throughout the workday. The following protocols will be put in place to ensure our headcount does not exceed limitations and adheres to social distancing efforts:

Staggered and monitored schedules:

YMCA HBB will maintain a tracking system for employees to request and record their attendance through the employee health screening, via the daily screening QR code, in addition to established work schedules. Additionally, rotating schedules will be used until all restrictions are lifted to minimize employee contact.

Workstation modifications

YMCA HBB will modify the office layout to ensure at least a 2 metre (6 feet) distance between employee workstations, and face to face layouts will be changed.

In-person meetings

Until all social distancing requirements are lifted, YMCA HBB will limit in-person meetings. Where possible, employees will continue to conduct virtual meetings. Employees who are in the workplace will avoid gathering in groups. i.e., hallways, lunchrooms, other common spaces.

In addition to the protocols mentioned above, YMCA HBB may implement additional guidance during this Phase that is designed to promote workplace safety.

Finally, although governmental guidance dictates that non-essential travel may resume, business related travel (other than between branches) will remain suspended. A travel approval workflow will be implemented.

Phase Three

Under Phase Three, the workplace may reopen to all employees based on authorization and guidance from the government.

Considerations

It is important to note that these phases are tentative and are subject to change based on government and local Public Health guidance. Should an employee test positive for COVID-19 after the re-opening of the workplace, our plan may change to protect employees. In addition, if cases of COVID-19 spike in our local area, we will reconsider the feasibility of remaining open.

We recognize that everyone will need to make personal decisions as to when he or she is comfortable returning to the workplace based on individual circumstances. Questions and decisions in this regard will involve the immediate People Leader (supervisor/manager) or HR department at HBBHR@ymcahbb.ca to discuss personal situations and the related expectations, options and/or accommodations.

Workplace Protocols to Follow When Returning to the Workplace

YMCA HBB has implemented various workplace protocols designed to safeguard the health and safety of our employees as they return to the workplace. This section further explains these protocols. For additional information, please reach out to your People Leader (supervisor/manager) or the HR department at HBBHR@ymcahbb.ca.

Employee Screening, Exposure and Confirmed Illness Protocols

Keeping employees safe is our priority. YMCA HBB has created various procedures for screening employees who return to the workplace, dealing with exposure to COVID-19, responding to a confirmed case of COVID-19 and reporting transparency.

Employee Screening Protocols

Employee health screening questionnaires will be completed upon daily entry to the workplace and at the end of the work shift. The YMCA HBB reserves the right to implement screening protocols for symptoms, such as temperature checks and the requirement to complete employee health questionnaires. Results will be tracked separately from any personnel record and will be kept confidential. This protocol will commonly be implemented as a response to a confirmed case.

STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



COVID-19 Exposure and Confirmed Illness Protocol

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 or experience symptoms will be directed to an isolation area within the workplace until arrangements can be made to exit the workplace. The employee will be instructed to follow the advice of a qualified medical professional and self-quarantine. When self-quarantining, employees should:

- Stay away from other people in their home as much as possible, staying in separate rooms and using separate bathrooms, if available

- Not allow visitors
- Wear a face mask if they must be around people
- Avoid sharing household items
- Clean high touch surfaces daily
- Continue to monitor their symptoms, calling their health care provider if their condition worsens

Employees who are symptomatic or who have tested positive will not return to work until the conditions outlined in the table are met. **Any absences related to COVID-19 should be entered into the [Reporting Employee Absences form](#)**

Return to Work Considerations

Employee was symptomatic but was not tested for COVID-19	Employee was tested for COVID-19
<p>The employee may return to work if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have not had a fever for at least 24 hours and have not used fever-reducing medication during that time • Coughs and other symptoms have improved • Seven days have passed since they first experienced symptoms 	<p>The employee may return to work if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They no longer have a fever • Coughs and other symptoms have improved • They have received two consecutive negative COVID-19 test results

When an employee tests positive for COVID-19, deep-cleaning procedures will be initiated. Furthermore, employees who have been in close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be instructed to self-quarantine and follow the direction of their local public health unit.

Reporting Transparency Protocols

Any YMCA HBB employee who experiences COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19 must notify HR department at HBBHR@ymcahbb.ca as soon as practicable. The employee will be asked to assist with contact tracing. This information will be tracked separately from personnel records, and names will not be released. Depending on the circumstances and Public Health directives, YMCA HBB will notify impacted employees if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace. YMCA HBB may select to close the workplace for a period following a confirmed case to allow for natural deactivation of the virus.

Social Distancing Protocol

Employees should follow social distancing best practices in the workplace, including but not limited to workstations, lunchroom, shared areas, and other spaces. Specifically, employees are asked to:

- Stay a minimum of 2 metres (6 feet) away from others when working or on breaks. Where a minimum distance cannot be maintained, engineering or administrative controls will be in place.
- Avoid job tasks that require face-to-face work with others when possible
- Avoid contact with others whenever possible (e.g., handshakes)
- Avoid touching surfaces that may have been touched by others when possible
- Distance themselves from anyone who appears to be sick
- Avoid gathering when entering and exiting the facility. Employees should also only enter and exit designated areas.
- Follow any posted signage regarding COVID-19 social distancing practices
- Disinfect their workspace often
- Avoid touching their face
- Practice frequent hand washing
- Avoid non-essential gatherings
- Stagger lunches to limit the number of individuals in the lunchroom (where possible, employees are encouraged to take meal breaks outside or remain at their workstation)
- Avoid using communal areas

YMCA HBB may extend its social distancing guidelines after re-opening. Information and instructions will be communicated via email and Workplace.

Employee Health and Safety Protocols

The success of our return-to-work action plan relies on how well our employees follow social distancing and health and safety protocols. As such, the following protocols have been implemented to ensure your health and safety. Please bring any concerns regarding the following protocols to a People Leader (supervisor/manager) or supervisor immediately.

General Employee Health and Hygiene

Practicing good hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Do your part by practicing good hygiene at work and at home:

- Regularly wash your hands for at least 20 seconds throughout the day with warm water and soap, specifically before eating.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

Employee Mental Health Considerations

Even in the most uncertain of times, the role of a manager remains the same: to support your team members. That includes supporting their mental health.

Some strategies to support your team include:

Modelling Health Behaviours – share with your team that you are taking a walk and encourage others to take breaks away from their computer

Build a Culture of Connection through Check-ins – intentionally check in with each of your direct reports on a regular basis; go beyond a simple, “how are you?” and ask specific questions about what supports would be helpful.

Offer flexibility and be inclusive - Expect that the situation, your team’s needs, and your own needs will continue to change. Check in regularly — particularly at transition points. You can help problem-solve any issues that come up only if you know what is happening.

Communicate – Never make assumptions and ensure that information is shared and shared often. Always provide the opportunity for dialogue and ensure that your team members have an opportunity to share and be heard.

Employee Assistance Program – remember to offer available resources through the Employee Assistance Program if you become aware that a member of your team is struggling or shares their struggles with you

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocol

To help employees remain healthy, YMCA HBB has hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes available throughout its facilities. We will continue to restock supplies as needed and as available. It is suggested that employees wash their hands more frequently than normal.

In addition, employees are required to wear face coverings when in public facing situations, throughout their movements in YMCA facilities such as in shared areas such as bathrooms, kitchens, and the lobby and when physical distancing of 6 feet or more cannot be guaranteed. Employees may use their own face coverings, unless otherwise prescribed by regulation if they choose to, as well, the YMCA will make available face coverings throughout its facilities.

Office Procedures

Employees who become unwell while at work or are feeling sick are asked to stay home from work and are required to report their absence to their supervisor. Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, should immediately seek medical attention, and follow the guidance of a health care provider. Employees who have been diagnosed with or are aware they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 should notify Public Health as well as the HR department at HBBHR@ymcahbb.ca.

Conclusion

YMCA HBB looks forward to the future of our employees returning to work. The COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertain times and unprecedented workplace changes. As communicated throughout this Return to the Workplace plan, we are prioritizing the health of our employees, members, participants and volunteers every step of the way.

We will execute on our plan cautiously, following applicable Public Health guidance. We also understand that each employee's needs and situations will be different. Employees should discuss any concerns they have about returning to work as it relates to their personal health or situation with their People Leader (supervisor/manager).

Finally, we ask that employees are patient and understanding of the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic may require our Return to the Workplace plan to change. Employees will be given as much notice as possible in the event of an unforeseen setback or closure.

Employees may direct questions regarding the content of this action plan to their People Leader (supervisor/manager). While the strategies highlighted in this document may assist to protect employees from COVID-19, it is important to follow Public Health guidance at all times.

For more information, pertaining to our policies and procedures, please visit our [Workplace Knowledge Library Staff Resource Page](#), or reach out to the HR department at HBBHR@ymcahbb.ca.

References

Government of Canada

[Ontario Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#)

Public Health Agency of Canada

[Measures to Reduce COVID-19 In Your Community](#)