

COVID-19 Return to Work Safety Policy

Prepared by Vantage Point

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Overview

The purpose of this policy is to communicate the steps and establish guidelines that must be adhered to for gradual and safe return to work as well as resuming of normal operations at Vantage Point office.

- a. This policy applies to all employees, clients, sub tenants, and volunteers of Vantage Point who choose to work in the office, whether regularly or occasionally.
- b. This policy also applies to the janitors and delivery people who frequent the premises of Vantage Point.
- c. This policy describes the objectives and policies regarding office work operations during the COVID-19 including working from home policy and working offsite and ensures the health, safety, and wellbeing of all.
- d. This policy was developed based on the WorkSafe BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulations and Guidelines and advice of HR experts under the VP Safety Planning Taskforce.

This safety plan will be continually assessed and updated to reflect any changes in policy or practice as we gradually return to work.

Responsibilities

Employers, employees, clients, volunteers, sub tenants, janitors and delivery people all have a responsibility to prevent exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Employers are responsible for:

- Health and safety of workers
- Completing and posting the COVID-19 Safety Plan
- Training and educating everyone in the workplace of the contents of the Plan
- Having a system in place to identify the hazards of COVID-19, control the risk and monitor the effectiveness of the controls
- Familiarising themselves and being conversant with the safety plan and all its clauses
- Taking care of themselves and observing all safety measures outside of workplace

Employees, Clients, Volunteers, and Visitors including janitors and delivery people are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care to protect their own health and safety and the health and safety of other people in the workplace
- Their own personal self-care, including frequent hand washing and staying home when sick
- Reporting unsafe conditions to their employer
- Following the procedures put in place by the employer to control the risks associated with COVID-19
- Familiarising themselves and being conversant with the safety plan and all its clauses
- Taking care of themselves and observing all safety measures outside of workplace

Sub tenants are responsible for:

- Coordinating health and safety at their own workplace
- Establish and maintain a system to ensure compliance with WorkSafe BC COVID regulations as well as VP safety plan
- Training and educating everyone in their workplace of the contents of VP Safety Plan
- Share their own safety plan with VP Operations Manager
- Familiarising themselves and being conversant with the safety plan and all its clauses
- Taking care of themselves and observing all safety measures outside of workplace

Risk Assessment

Physical Space - VP Office

VP office consists of one welcome foyer, 1 individual office, 1 training room, 1 library, 1 small meeting room, 1 kitchen, 3 washrooms, small fax area, printer/stationery room, a reception and 11 workstations. Our office space is also a shared space with two (2) other organizations.

In terms of collective space, our office shares three washrooms, printer/stationery room, fax area, kitchen, meeting/training room and library. The washrooms and kitchen are also frequented by visitors and clients of all the three organizations.

The **risk assessment** is **high** in terms of shared spaces. Measures will need to be taken to minimize the risk of contamination through the use of these shared spaces. The HVAC system would have to be assessed considering the current best practices around ventilation in closed spaces during this pandemic.

The **risk assessment** is **moderate** for reception, workstations, and individual offices. All employees have access to their own individual workstations/space. Measures will need to be taken to minimize the number of people coming to office at the same time by staggering the shifts and creating sufficient physical distancing along with plexiglass installation in between workstations and at the reception.

Job Tasks and Processes

VP job tasks and processes, especially in-person workshops and training sessions, require workers to be in close proximity with one another. These in-person sessions along with in-person staff meetings and meetings with outside clients need to be considered to minimize risk of contagion, both for staff and volunteers.

Most of the work tasks can be completed online and the workshops, training sessions, meetings can continue virtually.

The **risk assessment** for job tasks and processes is **low**. Measures will need to be in place to minimize risk of contagion through remote work, socially distanced and virtual meetings.

Tools, Machinery and Equipment

At Vantage Point, each employee has access to their own laptop and telephone. Shared equipment is confined to the printers, microwave, water cooler, dishwasher, and fridge.

The risk assessment for tools, machinery, and equipment is low. Measures will need to be in place to minimize risk of contagion related to the printer, microwave, water cooler, dishwasher, and fridge.

Physical Surfaces

The surfaces that are frequently touched by multiple people are the doorknobs of the office, bathrooms, the light switches, printers, dishwasher, microwave, and fridge apart from desks and common drawers. These are touched by multiple people including sub tenants, clients, and visitors.

The **risk assessment** for the physical surfaces is assessed as **high**. Measures will need to be put in place to ensure regular cleaning and increased safety protocols and selective access.

Safety Measures

The following is a description of the safety measures Vantage Point will be implementing to reduce the risk of contagion.

Maintaining Physical Distance

- The 2-meter (6 foot) distance rule is to be adhered to at all times
- Staggered start and end times. This will reduce risk of exposure and maintain the physical distancing requirement
- Employees will be required to stick to their work schedules as arranged mutually with the employer to limit the presence of staff (If an employee requires a change to their schedule, one-week advance notice must be provided to the operations manager so that adjustments to other staff schedules can be made)
- Always avoid crowding at common areas, entry and exit locations, and maintain 2 metres of physical distancing
- Kitchen area and washrooms to have not more than **2 persons** at a time and exercise caution when entering and exiting, allowing only one person to step forward to enter or exit (Closing middle stall and limiting users to 2 at a time in women's washroom, with some way of advising washroom is in use e.g. red/green signs on doors. Confine men's washroom to one user at a time, with again a sign at the door advising washroom is in use e.g. red/green sign)
- The Bike storage area at the fire exit is not to have more than 1 person at a time. There will be signs advising bike storage is in use e.g. red/green signs on door.
- Employee must avoid external face-to-face meetings by scheduling conference calls and video meetings
- All staff meetings and staff development sessions will be on-line
- No shared occupancy of workstations/desks
- Small meeting room is limited to an occupancy of maximum two people at a time and library, if needed, is limited to a maximum of four-person occupancy while practicing physical distancing. The training room, if needed, is limited to an occupancy of 8 people only. Employees using meeting rooms will be required to sanitize high touch points before and after use of the meeting room
- At any given day the maximum number of employees to be in attendance in the office cannot exceed 10 people under the current guidelines from [BC Ministry of Health](#) and that is including the staff of the sub tenants. (5 maximum for Community Action Initiative Team and 5 maximum for Vantage Point including one staff of TRAS). This number will be reviewed from time to time following the updates from [WorkSafeBC BC](#), [BCCDC](#), [BC Ministry of Health](#).
- HVAC assessment and maintenance will be done to ensure good ventilation and safe sharing of closed space with recommended physical distance
- Staff, volunteers, visitors, and clients will not shake hands, hug, or touch

Access and Reception

- Signage will be posted all over the workplace including occupancy limits, effective hygiene practices, and other safety guidelines

- Hand sanitizers and/or tools will be provided at the entrance to the VP office. Upon entry, please sanitize your hands
- If required, visits to the workplace should be prearranged, staggered, and safety protocols should be communicated prior to the visit. Staff coming in must ensure that they perform the daily health check before entering the workplace. The self assessment tool can be accessed at <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>. Please email to confirm that you have passed the health check assessment and the date that you took it to info@thevantagepoint.ca each time you are coming into the office.
- All staff, sub tenants, volunteers and visitors are required to sign the logbook at the reception, and the Operations Manager would be monitoring the logbook on a monthly basis.
- All visitors must be pre-approved and must sign in and out, see Visitors Policy below
- All visitors to wait at the marking on the floor when approaching front desk
- Visitors should attend appointments alone and minimize time spent in waiting area before their appointments (e.g., request visitors to wait in vehicles and text message or call when ready)

Cleaning and Hygiene

- To minimize the potential for COVID-19 transmission, hand sanitizing stations and/or tools will be provided in each individual office, workstation, meeting room and shared spaces including kitchen and washrooms
- Anti-bacterial wipes will be available to clean all shared surfaces such as the printer, fridge, water cooler and microwave
- Wearing of masks is strongly advised when moving around the office; when in close proximity to others in closed spaces and when entering or exiting common areas like main entrance, kitchen or training rooms
- Staff will not have access to shared utensils or dishwasher
- Staff is responsible to wash their hands after using bike storage and other shared surfaces to avoid any spread of infection
- Professional cleaners will be brought into the building once a week to deep clean
- Daily and weekly cleaning protocols will be developed for all common areas and surfaces
- Use your own equipment, such as pens, staplers, headsets, and other stationery items. Do not share your supplies
- All staff and sub tenants will be jointly responsible for maintaining the highest-level of personal hygiene and practicing proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Staff will be encouraged to eat their lunch outside, if weathers permits (or otherwise at their workstations)

***Hand Washing Educational Video:**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-hand-washing.html>

***How to wear a mask**

[CDC video on how to wear a mask](#)

***When to wear gloves**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/gloves.html>

***Respiratory Etiquette**

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm>

***Physical Distancing Educational Video:**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-physical-distancing.html>

VP COVID 19 Protocols and Policies

Sick Time – Possible COVID 19

- Symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - Fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
- Do not attend work if you have any of the symptoms described
- Anyone exhibiting possible symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home and required to follow self-isolation practices. The BC Centre for Disease Control provides the following guidelines for self-isolation <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>
- Anyone under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate must follow those instructions
- Employees are required to report if they are feeling unwell to their Manager/Supervisor as soon as possible
- Employees can take up to 10 paid days off in one calendar year as listed under Benefits in VP People Policies to cover illness if
 - they are tested positive for COVID:
 - or have symptoms that are disabling and constrain virtual work from home
- Vantage Point retains the right to request a doctor’s certificate or a copy of test results following any absence due to COVID and the confidentiality of such documentation would be maintained under all circumstances
- If an employee has few or no personal days left in reference to the 10 personal days off clause under VP People Policies, and still exhibits disabling symptoms or is still recovering from COVID, they can apply for Short Term Disability, however, the approval of the disability is not assured and may vary case to case. Several variables will be taken into consideration by the claims team while reviewing a claim and approving it.
- If an employee is self isolating or has a family member who has tested positive or is in quarantine, the employee is required to continue working virtually/remotely. Please refer to the Work from home policy below.
- Please refer to this [section](#) under Employment Standards Act to know more about the circumstances under which an employee qualifies for unpaid leave related to COVID 19

Visitors Policy

- Visitors to the workplace must be pre-approved by Vantage Point or the relevant sub tenants
- When booking appointments, visitors should be reminded to reschedule if they experience symptoms typical of COVID-19 or are placed on self-isolation. The self assessment tool can be accessed at <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- Visitors will be approved if safety protocols can be enforced and if the visit meets an important business objective that could not be met through other means.
- Any visitor to the office will be expected to follow all Vantage Point hygiene protocols and will be required to sign in at the logbook at the reception.

- During COVID, to ensure the safety and security of the limited staff members coming to the office, the front door would be locked at all times. Signage would be displayed at the front door with contact information for any drop in visitors to schedule an appointment for a virtual or in person meeting.

Working from Home

- Employees who are well but have a sick family member at home with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should notify their supervisor immediately. The employee will be required to stay home from work to prevent the spread of disease and will be expected to work remotely from home
- Employees returning from outside of Canada must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms. They will, however, be expected to work remotely from home
- Team leads must discuss the following with their team members who are working from home (using the WorkSafe BC guidelines):
 - Following safe work practices while working from home
 - How to report any work-related incidents or injuries while working remotely
 - Preference for check in on one's health and wellbeing
- If you are working from home, follow safe and healthy practices in your workspace as recommended in WorkSafe BC [working from home guidelines](#)
- Also, all employees must know and acknowledge that COVID Work from home policy is provisional. This arrangement is temporary under these trying times to ensure the well being of all our employees and volunteers. VP Directors will review the safety to return to work on a monthly basis in consultation with the People Manager and will closely follow the updates from [WorkSafeBC BC](#), [BCCDC](#), [BC Ministry of Health](#). The People Manager will update the team and will review individual return to work plans on a monthly basis to facilitate their return to pre COVID work schedule in accordance to the 9 day fortnight and flexible work schedule clause under people policies.

Working Offsite

- Vantage Point recommends virtual sessions for all client engagements. In the case of a client request for in-person meeting or session facilitation, which will not require the facilitator to take public transit, Vantage Point will require the client organization's safety plan to share with the facilitator before committing.
- Employees and volunteers who agree to consider in person facilitation will be responsible for reviewing the safety plan of the client organization prior to committing.
- If the employee or volunteer facilitator has any safety concerns, they will alert the Vantage Point staff person as soon as possible.
- Any employee or volunteer who develops any signs of infection must not visit the client organization, and must inform the Client and Program delivery coordinator, Engagement Manager, and the client contact
- Once on site, employees and volunteers must adhere to the following:
 - Perform hand hygiene (hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer) when entering and leaving facilities
 - Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands especially your eyes, nose, or mouth

- Carry personal protective equipment to the site and use masks when/if you come in close proximity to others
- Maintain a minimum of two meter (six feet) of distance between yourself and others
- Do not shake hands with anyone on site
- Avoid sharing equipment such as pens, tools, remotes and other frequently used items. If items must be shared ensure they are clean and sanitized between use

Communication and Training Plan

- Vantage Point COVID-19 Safety Plan will be circulated to all employees, volunteers, and sub tenants.
- Sub tenants would be required to sign an agreement confirming they have communicated Vantage Point safety plan to their staff and provided necessary training
- An online meeting will be scheduled to train all employees on the COVID-19 safety measures, protocols, and policies
- On-going training will be provided should safety measures, protocols and policies change and/or evolve
- Any revisions in the policies, protocols and safety measures will be communicated to the employees, volunteers and sub tenants as soon as possible

Monitor and Review

In the recognition that the risk of COVID-19 is an ever-evolving situation, the COVID-19 Safety Plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure relevance and to incorporate the most recent best practices.

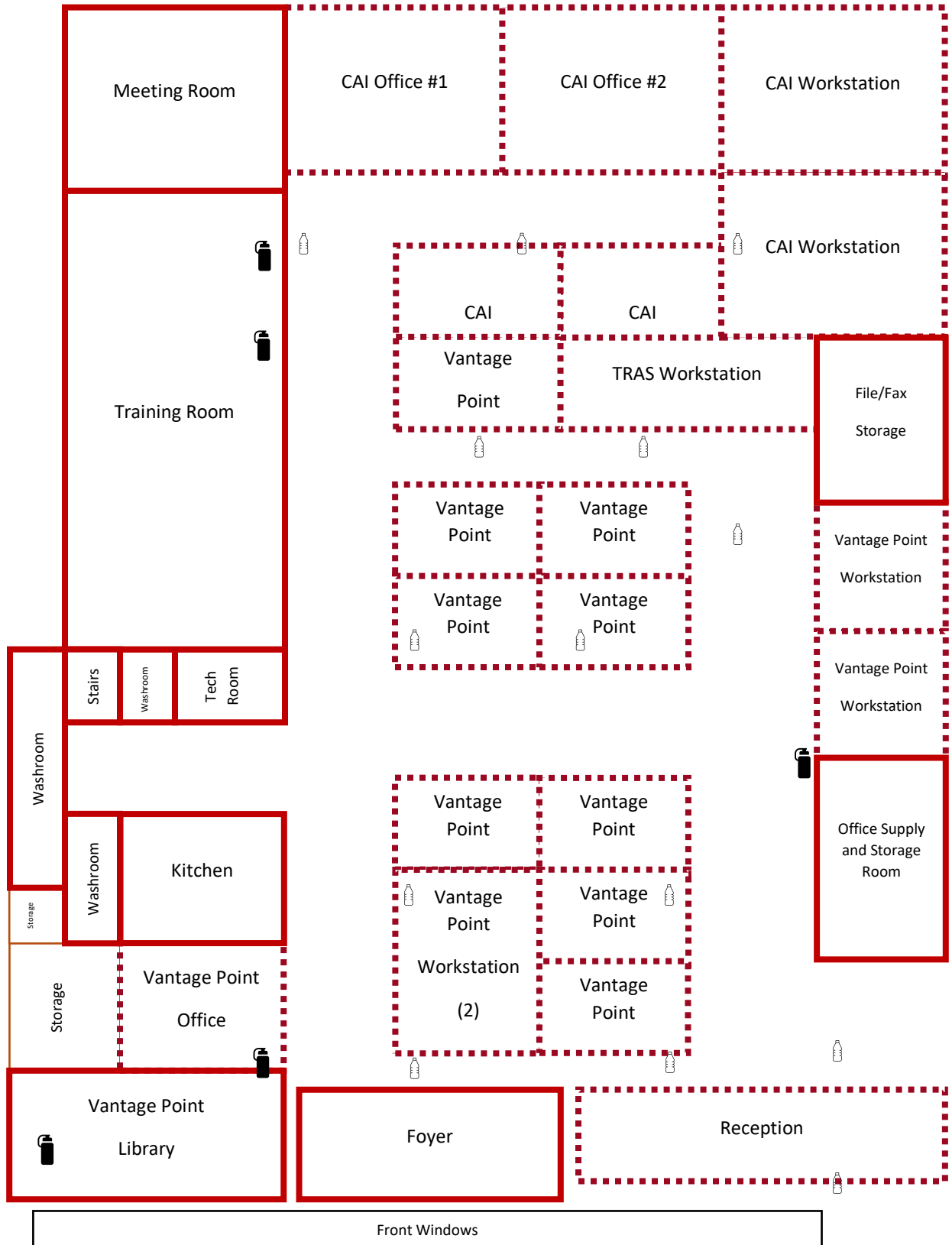
Further, should a new area of concern be identified, Vantage Point commits to updating our policies and procedures accordingly. We encourage all workers to raise safety concerns and to collectively work together to ensure that Vantage Point workplace is following all recommended safety standards. Vantage Point is committed to providing a working environment that is free of any prejudice or discrimination based on the fear of this pandemic.





In the absence of a health and safety representative, all health and safety concerns can be brought to the VP People Manager. For any concerns around facilities or office space please contact VP Operations Manager. Vantage Point commits to addressing all concerns brought forward in a thoughtful and efficient manner.

Other Relevant Resources

- [British Columbia Centre for Disease Control – COVID-19](#)
- [Centre for Disease Control – COVID-19](#)
- [Government of Canada – Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Outbreak Update](#)
- [World Health Organization – Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) Outbreak](#)
- [COVID 19 and your mental health](#)

2020 VP Floor Plan - Safety Plan Map



	High Risk Area		Sanitizer Station
	Moderate Risk Area		Personal Sanitizer