

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PANDEMIC PLANNING

This resource supports the planning process needed to manage changing requirements, following the most current pandemic guidelines and restrictions, including the potential for a second wave of COVID-19 and business implications. The intent of the resource is to provide a framework for developing a pandemic plan with consideration of operational needs and managing change. The pandemic plan is most effective when continually assessed for improvement. The framework highlights various considerations, as well as an introduction to self-assessment for the purpose of identifying gaps in need of address as a result of changes to the environment, or to the current situation, and updated restrictions and guidelines.

Operational Considerations for Pandemic Planning Did you...	Was this item initiated or considered	Was there something missing? A gap which was not addressed?	Evaluate – how and where can it be improved Your plan should...
Planning and Preparation			
Establish a Team	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Represent all departments and/or succession planning for absent members
Establish and maintain an emergency response system	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include Testing ▪ Highlight performance criteria
Collect and maintain alternate contact information for all workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Represent all workers and their most current contact information ▪ Support all workers receiving the communication
Assess the business operation to reflect current pandemic directives	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support adapting operations to meet guidelines, are there improvements that can be made to the process
Designate a team member to monitor and keep up to date with directives from government or local public health authorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assign the responsibility ▪ Have a process to support timely updates and responses ▪ Has a criteria been established to determine what updates are to be included in your plan

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Planning and Preparation			
Establish a process for continual improvement to your pandemic planning, to continue to monitor the business operations ability to adapt to adjusted operations	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully support integration of new processes and operations Address additional adaptations needed or added supports provided to manage change in a better way
Establish a framework for consultation on planning and improvements	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the JHSC, union leaders, HR and HS departments Are all areas and functions of the business reflected
Establish a pandemic communication platform, format and schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively support sharing timely and accurate information Did the information reach throughout the organization in an impactful way Capture or define success
Administration of Plan			
Complete a current state assessment, prioritize functions for business continuity to define critical operations and processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Account for all key departments and functions Is there any need to adapt or flex the range
Complete a current state assessment, define critical staffing levels needed to maintain operations	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurately represent minimum/optimum staffing levels needed in order to adequately maintain a variable range in operations
Outline workplace parameters/criteria for consideration of temporary shutdown or closure	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address protocol for temporary suspension of operations or closure What/how does this impact planning and protocol

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Administration of Plan			
Develop contingency plans for staff shortage by department and/or function	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage contingency plans adequately Were all areas adequately represented
Ensure key positions and workers have what they need to maintain quality of and ability to work	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include adequate supports for workers to perform their work remotely or differently (tools/equipment)
Identify and establish a secondary source for key procurement partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and represent secondary sources which were sufficient and reliable Are additional partnerships required
Establish an effective change management process	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support adapting to changing directives and business needs How efficient and timely was the change Is there a need for additional resources, supports, autonomy, or governance
Identify Risks and Develop Polices and Procedures			
Complete a risk assessment to determine potential transmission risks in the workplace under new operating conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve multiple perspectives and scenarios Were there new risks that were not addressed or could have been addressed differently
Use the hierarchy of controls and government guidelines to manage associated risk	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include provisions for sufficiently re-assessing or improving controls Is there new information or best practices to be considered and applied Support successful adoption of control measures

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Identify Risks and Develop Polices and Procedures			
Identify how changes made as a result of new controls may contribute to new risks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address how to manage new risks How are they identified Are the new risks being appropriately addressed and represented in operational processes, policies and training
Communicate new policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how to define success (timing and effectiveness) Ensure training was provided for all new processes, equipment, and chemicals
Equip managers and supervisors with supports needed to manage change	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how to define success (conclusive) Has change been received and applied Was feedback collected or work observed
Equip workers with supports needed to manage change	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Include provisions for recommending where additional supports are needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there additional change management support needed Where is there potential for additional support or improvement
Health, Safety, and Wellness			
Complete screening of any workers returning to work after illness or time off, prior to their return to work	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a successful screening process Is there an assigned screening coordinator Where and how long are records kept
Create an isolation protocol and appoint an isolation coordinator for suspected cases identified during work	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate to all workers Is there a room assigned Is the coordinator aware of the expectations of their role

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Health, Safety, and Wellness			
Create infection reduction/control procedures (hand washing, cough/sneeze/cold etiquette, physical distancing)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Account for reinforcing messaging with workers ▪ Are ample hand washing/sanitizer stations available ▪ Does the operations schedule (time) support the directive
Identify need and distribution of PPE, Face Coverings, Cleaning and Sanitization products	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify why and where it may be required ▪ Are all workers made aware of who and why they were identified as needing PPE, Face Coverings or use of specific cleaning and sanitization products
Manage stock and availability of PPE, Face Coverings, Cleaning and Sanitization products	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inventory compliment need ▪ Were all needs addressed ▪ How well did the distribution process work
Provide mental health resources and information	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Address current need with available resources ▪ Are all the available supports communicated ▪ Was input collected
Encourage workers who are feeling sick to stay home or take time off work? Prepare for staff shortages due to increased sick days?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enable workers to make appropriate decisions through policy and provisions ▪ Do sick/leave policies need to be updated to be more nimble or accommodating ▪ Prepare for production changes due to staff disruptions

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Health, Safety, and Wellness			
Provide supervisors strategies and supports they can relay to their workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outline available options and supports ▪ Has training in identification and management of psychological harm prevention been provided
Communication and Implementation			
Communicate the most current response plan to workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capture all workers in the communication ▪ Include provisions for communicating changes or updates in a timely and effective manner ▪ Address how to identify new updates for communication ▪ Address the change and reason for the change ▪ Identify how the change applies and what it means in the role of worker and the business operation
Communicate new policies and procedures to workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Provide training and instruction on new equipment or processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Communicate the process for providing feedback and input	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Communicate the ongoing consultation process	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

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A **Pandemic Response Plan** is the business plan that supports the successful navigation of challenges posed by the Pandemic. It is important to recognize the pandemic's effect on the workplace, inclusive of the physical space, operations and workers. The plan should be adaptable and consider scenarios based on current guidelines and/or restrictions. The plan needs to consider partial or complete closure.

A **Pandemic Team** is established by the organization to provide support and guidance through creation and implementation of the business' pandemic plan. When creating the Pandemic Team ensure you define the roles and responsibilities and level of authority for all team members.

A Pandemic **Emergency Response System** is a communication and planning mechanism, unique from other systems in their messaging and intent. The Emergency Response System should operate independently from other systems in that it can be initiated remotely should other systems not be available or otherwise immobilized or impacted. The employer should gather alternate (personal or private) contact information for all workers and is responsible for ensuring that the information is current in the system.

It is important to maintain regular updates to ensure accuracy of data and contacts. It is recommended that the maintenance of contact information, system functionality, and receipt of information be tested regularly and adapted as part of a continual improvement process.

Employers are encouraged to complete **an assessment of business operations to support planning**.

A systematic approach to planning ensures an efficient application of change intelligence. Businesses are encouraged to maintain a current understanding of critical operations, functions, processes, key positions, roles, partnerships and procurement relationships to allow for nimble movement. Have core requirements fundamental to the success of the business been identified? The operational considerations of the plan should include a graded approach to planning, inclusive of changes to reduced operations, or a complete shutdown.

The foundation of all Health & Safety Program is a **Risk Assessment**. It is recommended that businesses complete a pandemic focused risk assessment taking into account known and probable sources of transmission or potential exposure. The findings of the risk assessment supports the **development or update of policies and/or processes**. All identified risks, inclusive of changes to policies and processes should be communicated in the form of **training**.

A **Change Management Process** has many moving parts. The business operation may be impacted by new guidelines or restrictions, therefore it is important to have a process in place to identify such changes. The change management process should include supports for managing the acceptance and adoption of change involving of stakeholders in the decision making process.

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A **Monitoring Process** supports business planning and response efforts. It is a structured organizational approach to solution mapping, implementation, and improvement which supports the business intent and success of the practical application of the change. The concept of creating a formalized process for monitoring change relates to continual improvement in an established system. The process is designed to stay abreast of changes impacting the viability of operations. A process for evaluating the impact of change and its effect needs to be considered. Check for changes from government bodies or other credible organizations, what to do with the information and how and where it is applicable.

Establishing a consultation process supports decision making through direct input. The involvement of relevant stakeholders can add value to the planning, implementation and impact of change. Soliciting feedback from those involved improves the likelihood of adoption while fostering easier and earlier implementation. Change can be difficult, supporting the change through feedback and involvement can make the change feel more unified and ultimately impacting success.

A **Communication Plan and Strategy** supports implementation of business planning efforts. Timely updates focused on the person, process, business need, and reason for the communication ensures that the message is received with intent. A pandemic communication plan should mirror existing communication strategies, include information pertaining to the current and future state. It is important to emphasize the priority to real-time adherence.

For more information visit [WSPS.CA/COVID19](https://www.wsp.ca/covid19)

NOTE: This document is intended for informational purposes only to provide an overview of the potential hazards posed in the workplace due to COVID-19. It is not intended as medical advice, to provide a comprehensive risk assessment for all workplaces, or to replace any legislated workplace safety obligations. WSPS has not endorsed and does not endorse any particular product or company as a solution to the risk presented by COVID-19. Due to the ongoing evolution of the situation in Ontario and around the world, this document may be used as a guide for Employers in addition to guidance delivered by public health authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Ontario Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Any use which is made of this document by any Employer or individual, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of the Employer or individual. WSPS and its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, representatives, suppliers and service providers accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions in content or for damages of any kind or nature suffered by any Employer or any third party as a result of use of or reliance on this communication.