

What is an exposure control plan?

An exposure control plan is a document that describes how workers will be protected from occupational exposures such as infectious diseases or [a hazardous substance](#) in the workplace. An exposure control plan includes information on the nature of the hazards and the risks associated with exposure, as well as controls such as safe work procedures that the employer will use to protect workers.

The requirements for exposure control plans are described in [sections 5.54](#) and [6.34](#) of WorkSafeBC's *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*.

What should my plan include?

Your exposure control plan is specific to your workplace and must include the following information:

- Statement of purpose
- Responsibilities of the employer, supervisors and workers
- Risk identification and assessment
- Risk controls
- Written safe work procedures
- Worker education and training
- Hygiene facilities, decontamination procedures and health monitoring
- Written records.

Where do I start?

The first thing is to identify potential occupational exposures in your workplace, and then conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the risk. In long term care and community support you will want to consider the following:

Infectious Disease Type	Transmission	Examples
Bloodborne diseases	Contact with infected blood or certain body fluids.	Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, AIDS
Contact diseases	Direct or indirect contact with bacteria or viruses.	Norovirus, MRSA, VRE, C. difficile)
Airborne diseases	Large respiratory droplets or aerosolized airborne droplet nuclei.	COVID-19, Tuberculosis, Influenza.

Note: Depending on your workplace, there may be other considerations. This is not an exhaustive list.

A risk assessment must be carried out by a qualified person. WorksafeBC defines a qualified person as someone who is *"knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience of a combination thereof"*.

The objective of the risk assessment is to determine the job types, tasks and procedures for which occupational exposure is anticipated and to evaluate the likelihood that such exposure would occur. Some factors that the employer should consider when performing a risk assessment include determining the nature of the hazard, and the nature of the exposure and the risk level.

Steps to consider when developing or reviewing your exposure control plan are outlined below.

Step 1	Identify and assess areas where there may be a potential risk of exposure to hazardous substances
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have identified categories of tasks and procedures that may put workers at risk for exposures (i.e. use of sharp devices, exposure to blood and body fluids, conducting aerosol generating medical procedures). ✓ We have identified the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ nature of the hazard. ○ routes of exposure. ○ signs and symptoms of disease. ✓ We have considered all job roles in the workplace when assessing the risk of exposure.
Step 2	Implement hazard controls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have considered the hierarchy of controls when taking measures to eliminate or reduce the risk of exposure in the workplace and implemented the highest level of protection first. <p>Elimination or Substitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have evaluated if the hazardous substance can be eliminated or substituted from the workplace. ✓ We have considered the use of different cleaning and disinfecting materials. ✓ We have recommended any available vaccines to staff. <p>Engineering Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have implemented engineering controls where appropriate (physical barriers, ventilation, sharps containers, safety engineered medical devices, dedicated rooms to use for isolation if needed). <p>Administrative Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have adopted general infection prevention and control measures in the workplace. ✓ We have policies and procedures for preventing exposure to hazardous substances (hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette, handling and disposal of sharps, cleaning of spills, handling of contaminated laundry). ✓ Staff are trained to use cleaning and disinfection materials, and chemical product labels are visible on the cleaning solutions and SDS are available. ✓ We have clearly communicated the rules and guidelines to workers through a combination of training and signage. ✓ We have policies to ensure required inspections, maintenance and cleaning of the ventilation system is completed when required by a qualified person. <p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have reviewed information on how to use and store the PPE required and provided. ✓ We understand the limitations that PPE has in providing protection and how it needs to be used in combination with other control measures. ✓ We have trained employees on how to use PPE (donning, doffing)

Step 3	Develop polices and written safe work procedures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have a workplace policy relating to infectious disease including how to address workplace illness and keep workers safe. ✓ We have procedures to be followed for those providing direct care to individuals who may be infectious. ✓ We have procedures to be followed if there is a spill of infectious material or if a worker believes they have been exposed. ✓ We have identified cleaners and disinfectants to be used in the workplace.
Step 4	Worker education and training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have ensured that workers have been informed and trained in our policies and procedures. ✓ We have trained all workers who have the potential to be exposed to infectious materials on ways to reduce their risk of exposure. ✓ The exposure control plan describes worker education and training and how it will be carried out.
Step 5	Monitor the workplace
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have a plan in place to monitor hazards. ✓ We make changes to policies and procedures as necessary. ✓ Workers know who to go to with health and safety concerns. ✓ When resolving safety issues, we involve employees and the Occupational Health and Safety Committee and/or Representative.

An exposure control plan must be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary by the employer in consultation with the joint committee or the worker health and safety representative as applicable.