



## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION PLAN** **(PREVIOUSLY - COVID-19 SAFETY POLICY)**

*Version #3 - revised March 1, 2024*

The **Sheet Metal Industry Training Board (SMITB)** on behalf of the **Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre Society (SMWTCS)** puts the health and safety of all our students, staff and visitors as our top priority in our response to communicable disease prevention. These entities will be referred to as the Training Centres throughout this document and are located at:

- MAIN: 19077 95A Ave. Surrey, BC
- VALLEY: 5514 275 Street. Langley, BC

This communicable disease (CD) prevention plan has been developed in alignment with the [BC Restart plan](#) and the Post-Secondary [Return-to-Campus Guidelines](#), and following [WorkSafeBC](#) requirements, and outlines the ongoing prevention measures that everyone needs to follow as we transition from prescriptive COVID-19 safety measures to general communicable disease prevention measures that are guided by public health. We continue to monitor ongoing industry updates working closely with the SkilledTradesBC, International Training Institute, public health authority, WorkSafeBC and other stakeholders, so we can be responsive with additional measures for when there is an elevated risk of communicable disease.

### **SCOPE**

This CD plan applies to all staff, students and visitors engaged in any Training Centres' activity including in-person training and related activities, administrative, operational and other services.

This CD plan is effective as of March 1, 2024 and replaces existing COVID-19 Safety Plan.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION**

Communicable disease prevention focuses on basic risk reduction principles to reduce the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. The fundamental components of communicable disease prevention include both ongoing measures to maintain at all times and additional measures to be implemented as advised by public health during periods of elevated risk. SMITB/SMWTCS' Health and Safety Committee (H&S) will regularly monitor and review communicable disease information from public health authorities, and update the stakeholders of any changes affecting the Training Centres activities, including updating the CD plan as required.

### **ONGOING PREVENTION MEASURES**

#### **Blended Learning Model**

SMITB offers technical training to students using a blended learning model including online theoretical training and



onsite technical training. Students are issued IT equipment for use while in technical training including the instruction of online video platforms Zoom and TEAMS, AutoCAD, as well as Total Track our learning management system.

While attending the Training Centres for technical training, whether it be apprenticeship or specialty training, all students must adhere to the following communicable disease prevention protocols:

### **Supporting staff and students to stay at home when sick**

- Tool Talks will be hosted as part of routine daily health screening protocol for all students
- If students, staff or visitors are ill or have symptoms of a communicable disease (e.g. fever and/or chills, recent onset of coughing, diarrhea):
  - please stay home
  - notify a supervisor or instructor of your absence
  - consult 811 if you require medical advice
  - Students who are sick will be advised what the next steps are specific to their technical training
- If there is a confirmed communicable disease case that negatively impacts other staff or students being onsite, SMITB will communicate to all students, staff and other stakeholders immediately. Students will be required to follow instructions re: next steps as directed by SMITB.
- Supervisors should follow the sick leave provisions in the appropriate collective agreement to support staff, and contact their Union representative if advice is required.
- Instructors should follow established protocols to support student absence due to illness (e.g. theoretical learning at home) and contact the Training Coordinator if advice is required.
- Staff should follow established protocols to work at home while they are recovering from their illness/symptoms. Please contact the Training Coordinator for guidance on setting up your home workstation, ergonomic tips, FAQs and other resources.

### **Promoting mask wearing, hand-washing and hygiene practices**

- Students, staff and visitors are not required to wear non-surgical masks in both facilities but are encouraged to do so based on their personal preference.
- Effort should be made to avoid close contact with people but not required.
- Signage is posted to remind individuals to practice good hygiene (handwashing for 20 seconds; avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth; sneeze or cough into elbow or tissue; report flu-like symptoms to staff).
- Washing your hands regularly, or using hand sanitizers if a washroom or sink is not readily available, is one of the most simple and effective ways to minimize the spread of communicable diseases.
- Washroom facilities are accessible for staff, students and visitors to facilitate regular handwashing. The Training Centres will continue to supply hand sanitizer stations at all main entrances to building, and additional locations in buildings with higher occupancy levels, to promote hand hygiene.
- Reception area and other similar areas will keep a supply of disposable masks and hand sanitizer available for use.
- For outdoor or off-site activities, individuals should ensure that hand sanitizer is supplied if washing facilities are not available (e.g. outdoor events, field locations, etc.).
- The Training Centres have posted signage throughout both facilities to remind everyone of safety protocols.



### **Routine cleaning**

- SMITB is committed to maintaining a clean environment through routine cleaning practices, and has a contracted company onsite at both facilities for scheduled cleaning sessions at least twice per week.
- SMITB will implement enhanced cleaning practices if directed by public health during periods of elevated risk. Cleaning will be scheduled as recommended by the PHO and Post-Secondary Guidelines.
- Students will follow cleaning protocols for all equipment used in both facilities, including high touch shared equipment.
- Frequent handwashing will be encouraged and handwashing sinks identified with signage
- Equipment that may have specialized cleaning practices due to their activities (e.g. VR equipment) should continue to follow those practices, in addition to any other requirements that may still be in place.
- Students will not share any Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) with another person, unless it is properly sanitized and disinfected.
- Staff will be encouraged to disinfect surfaces or shared equipment (e.g. office equipment including photocopiers, keyboards, desks, appliances, etc.) as part of their usual cleaning protocols.

### **Building Ventilation (HVAC Systems)**

- Following the direction of WorkSafeBC and the PHO, institutions must ensure that building heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are operating and maintained in accordance with WorkSafeBC requirements and relevant ASHRAE Standards.
- SMITB has assessed building HVAC systems to ensure systems continue to meet WorkSafeBC requirements.
- SMITB has taken extra steps to further improve indoor air quality including upgrading filters and increasing air flow wherever possible to ensure HVAC systems meet or exceed WSBC requirements.
- As the weather permits, windows may be opened to also improve air circulation and where it does not interfere with the proper functioning of an HVAC system.

### **Supporting Vaccination**

- Getting vaccinated is the most important tool supporting the BC Restart Plan.
- SMITB encourages everyone who is eligible and able, to consider vaccination to protect yourself and others.
- SMITB and SMWTCS staff are [entitled to up to three hours of paid leave](#) to be vaccinated against COVID-19, if required.
- A COVID-19 vaccine is not mandatory in order to work, access training or visit the Training Centres.



### **RESPONDING TO ELEVATED RISK**

- The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may elevate from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level or within a workplace.
- In addition to maintaining the ongoing prevention measures, SMITB/SMWTCS' H&S Committee will monitor public health information and be responsive to any further directives from the local medical health officer or provincial health officer which could include, for example, implementing enhanced cleaning measures, distancing requirements or masking guidance.
- Any changes to prevention measures during periods of elevated risk will be communicated to those affected in both our Training Centres.

### **COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING**

- This CD plan will be available on the [smwtcs.ca](http://smwtcs.ca) website.
- SMITB staff have reviewed the CD Plan and understand and follow the measures in place.
- The prevention measures will be reinforced through signage, social media and other communication tools on a regular basis.
- The ongoing review and evaluation of the CD plan will involve SMITB/SMWTCS' H&S Committee, as part of its ongoing process on health and safety for all stakeholders.
- Monitoring of the ongoing prevention measures is shared responsibility for staff and students, as part of regular Training Centres' safety inspections, and SMITB/SMWTCS' H&S committee.
- Individuals should report any health and safety concerns to their supervisor, who is responsible to follow-up and address any concerns.
- Individuals may also contact their union representative or H&S committee for assistance with a safety concern or question.