



COVID-19 & The Workplace


June 2, 2020

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ABOUT SALOPEK & ASSOCIATES ...

- A team of 20 consultants who work across Canada and support organizations with HR, Board Governance & Strategy
- Outsourced HR Department for many organizations
- In business since 2006 and have supported over 200 organizations in both the profit and non-profit sector
- Consultants have designations within the Human Resources profession
- Senior Consultants have over 15 years experience and Specialists have received their Masters, PhDs or other advanced designations



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- **Navigating HR**
 - Layoffs, recalls, government programs
 - **OHS Requirements (Re-opening)**
 - Risk mitigation
 - **Staff sickness/Refusal to return**
 - **Looking ahead**
 - Policy changes & best practices



Presentation Overview

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Aware of employment rules and regulations
- Not in violation of any employment/OHS standards
- To mitigate your risk & liability related to COVID-19
- Ensure a safe work environment for employees
- How to answer employee questions and concerns in relation to their return to work



LAYOFF/RECALL/GOV'T PROGRAMS

LAYOFF

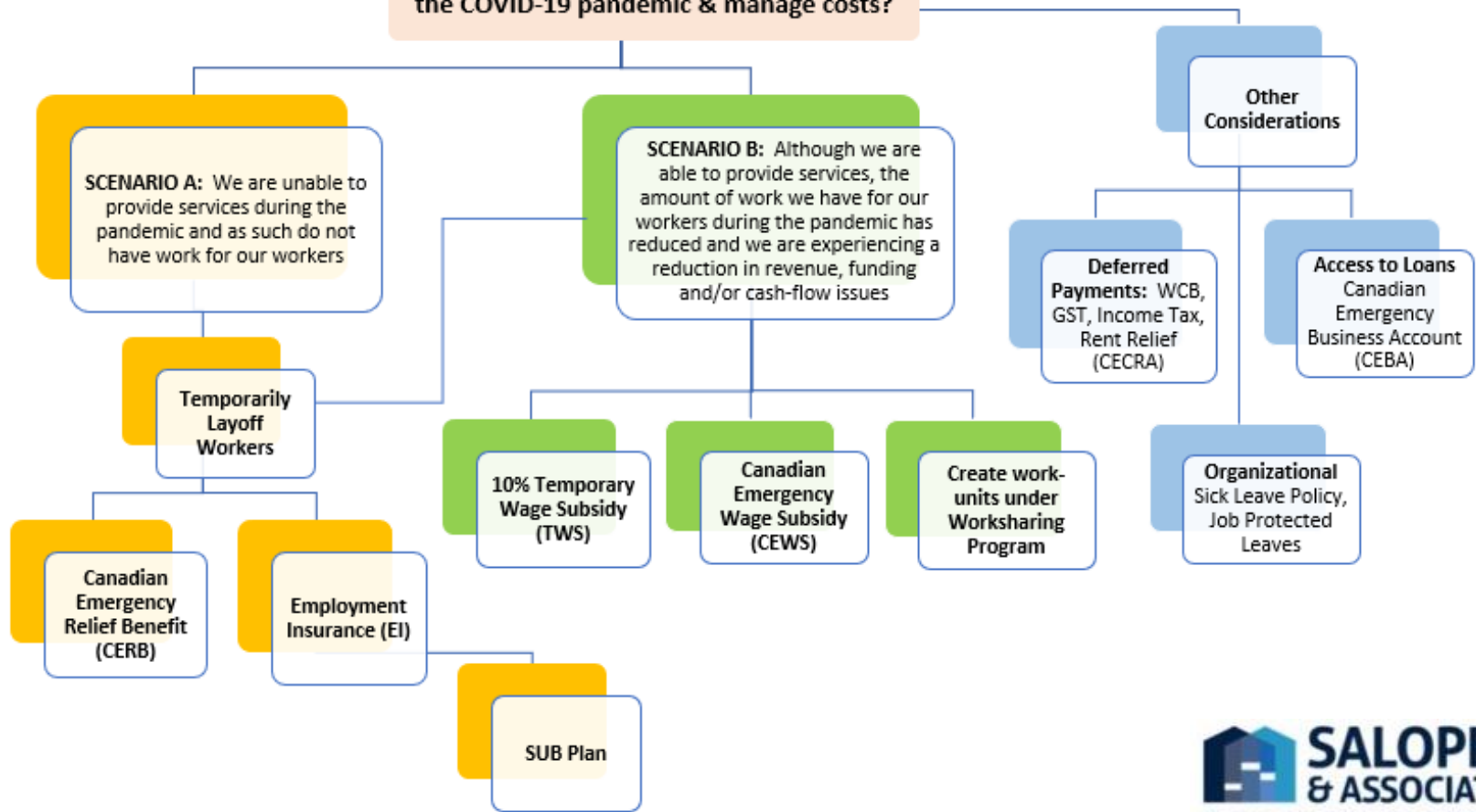
- Automatic Extension of layoffs for up to 120 days
- Extended if employee agrees to receive wages, pension or benefit payments in lieu of a firm limit of the length of layoff
- Written Notice of Recall
 - Prior to the expiry of the 120 days

RECALL

- Employee must return to work within 7 days if not...
 - Termination
- CAN'T RECALL – Terminate employment/pay out Termination Pay



How do we protect our workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic & manage costs?



QUESTIONS?



DUTY TO PROVIDE SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Duty under OH&S legislation
- Required to implement preventative measures
- New Health & Safety Policies & Practices
- Liability including fines, penalties and in serious cases criminal prosecutions



TO OPEN OR NOT...

Open Safely?

1. Assessing workplace
 - Conduct Hazard Assessment
 - Consult joint health & safety committees and worker reps
2. Implementation of Controls



POLLING QUESTION #1

Q: Have you completed a Hazard Assessment in your workplace related to COVID-19?

POLLING QUESTION #2

Q: If you answered yes to the previous question, have you *involved your staff* in completing the Hazard Assessment?

HAZARD ASSESSMENT – COVID-19

- Required to comply with Alberta's OH&S legislation
- May have a duty to consult joint health and safety committees (>20 workers) and/or health & safety representative (5>19 workers)
- Seek input from employees on where potential transmission may occur and how they think COVID-19 transmission can be controlled



EXAMPLE: HAZARD ASSESSMENT FORM

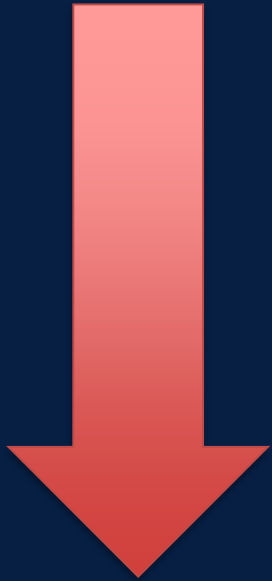
Date: _____ Hazard: Risk of COVID-19 Virus Spread

Address: _____ Completed By: _____

| Location | Risk: Y/N | Type (Low, Med, High) | Specific Risks | Control |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Entry into Building | | | | |
| Parking meter | | | | |
| Elevator | | | | |
| Front Door | | | | |
| Front Reception Desk | | | | |
| Desk area | | | | |
| Patient Rooms | | | | |
| Lunchroom | | | | |
| Storage Room | | | | |
| Ventilation | | | | |
| Confined Spaces | | | | |
| Patient waiting areas | | | | |



IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTROLS



- 1. Engineering Controls**
 - i.e. Physical Distancing/Physical Barriers
- 2. Administrative Controls**
 - i.e. Policies & Procedures
- 3. PPE – Personal Protective Equipment**
 - i.e. Gloves, masks etc.



1. PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

- ✓ Limiting entrance and exit points. Update emergency evacuation plans
- ✓ Rearranging workspaces and floor plans
- ✓ Controlling access to elevators and areas within the workplace
- ✓ Adjusting scheduling (start/end times, breaks)
- ✓ Implementing signage to ensure distance is maintained
- ✓ Discouraging or cancelling all non-essential activities
- ✓ Staggering appointments and meetings with customers or other meeting attendees



1. PHYSICAL DISTANCING CON'T

- ✓ Continue working from home (if possible)
- ✓ Minimum amount of staff to return
- ✓ Implementing staggered or rotating returns
- ✓ Controlling the number of patients
- ✓ Installing physical barriers between workers & third parties
- ✓ Removing all communal items
- ✓ Reducing or eliminating sharing of tools and equipment



2. ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

- ✓ **Promotion of Regular and Thorough Hand-washing**
 - Access to soap, water, sanitizer
 - Procedures for regularly scheduled enhanced cleaning and disinfecting
- ✓ **Implementing Appropriate Policies/Practices**
 - Limit nonessential travel to other locations/worksites
 - Review Sick Leave/COVID-19 policies (refusal to work, leave of absence, mandatory quarantine upon arrival from travel outside country, wearing PPE etc.)
 - Health Assessments/Consent
 - Train employees on all COVID-19 related policies



3. PPE CONTROLS

- ✓ **Face masks, Gloves, Face shields, Eye Protection**
 - Used as per AHS & CPSA recommendations
- ✓ **If policy states employees must wear masks to protect themselves and others, it would be difficult for employee to refuse**
- ✓ **Training on how to use PPE correctly**
 - fit, use, putting on, taking off, maintenance, cleaning, disposal, limitations)



QUESTIONS?



EMPLOYEE REFUSAL TO COME TO WORK

- **Concern about workplace safety**
 - Employer must address the hazard
- **Higher-risk employees (Underlying medical conditions)**
 - Mitigation measures (i.e. Working from home)
 - Leave of absence
- **Childcare issues or caring for a sick relative**
 - Leave without pay



JOB PROTECTED LEAVES

➤ COVID-19 Leave

- 14 days of job protected leave if they are required to self-isolate (don't need a medical note)

➤ Personal/Family Responsibility Leave

- Employees caring for a child affected by school or daycare closures or a dependent adult who is required to self-isolate

**Employees can apply for CERB to cover their time off (have to have stopped working for at least 7 days)*



POLLING QUESTION #3

Q: Do you have a Policy or Procedure in place to deal with symptomatic employees?

HOW TO HANDLE SYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEES

- **Develop an Infection Prevention & Control Plan**
 - Procedures for isolating & transporting the individual
 - Steps to take if an employee or patient tests positive
 - Obligation to report to provincial health authorities
- **Employee appears to have symptoms should be immediately separated from employees, visitors, patients and sent home**
 - Not allowed to return until he/she is symptom free and they have completed self-isolation



LOOKING AHEAD: POLICY & CONTRACT CHANGES...

1. Communication

<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

- Available social and mental health supports (EAP, CMHA)
- Notification of steps being taken to prevent the risk of transmission of infection including changes to policies



LOOKING AHEAD: POLICY & CONTRACT CHANGES...

2. Plan

- Prepare for Absenteeism - Creating or updating Sick Leave Policy/COVID-19 Policy/Infection Prevention & Control Protocol/Hand Hygiene Policy
- Health Screening Assessment & Consent Form/OHS Checklist (Returning to workplace)
- Assessment of emergency evacuation plan and muster point location based on COVID guidelines. If revision is required, ensure staff training, procedure and applicable signage alterations occur



QUESTIONS?





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LET'S CONNECT



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