

# PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

## COVID-19

Apex Aluminum Extrusions

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*Apex's Commitment to its Employees and the Public*

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Apex recognizes the seriousness of COVID-19 and how it is affecting our communities. The health and safety of our staff and community is our top priority. This Pandemic Response Plan has been developed to help keep our employees and the public safe.

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## *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*

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Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease, its international impacts have affected all aspects of daily life, including travel, trade, tourism, food supplies, and financial markets.

Reducing the impact of COVID-19 outbreak conditions on businesses, employees, customers, and the public, is everyone's responsibility. Guidelines set out within this plan are to be followed in conjunction with guidelines provided by the Canadian government, World Health Organization, Center for Disease Control and BC Ministry of Health.

COVID-19 can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some people infected with the virus have reported experiencing other non-respiratory symptoms. According to the CDC, symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to-person, including:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

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## *Risk Factors*

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### **Who is at Risk?**

- The general public, customers, and employees.
- Sick individuals or those at particularly high risk of infection (e.g., international travelers who have visited locations with widespread sustained (ongoing) COVID-19 transmission, healthcare employees who have had unprotected exposures to people known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19).
- The risk will vary between and within communities. Some Canadians are more at risk of developing severe complications from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions and age.

### **Employees individual risk factors**

- age; presence of chronic medical conditions, including immunocompromising conditions

### **Effects on the workplace**

- Increased rates of worker absenteeism
- The need for spatial distancing, staggered work shifts, downsizing operations, delivering services remotely, and other exposure-reducing measures
- Options for conducting essential operations with a reduced workforce, including cross-training employees across different jobs in order to continue operations or deliver surge services
- Interrupted supply chains or delayed deliveries

As information regarding the Coronavirus, also known as CoVid-19 emerges, Apex will post this information throughout its establishments to assist employees to stay informed and will update it as necessary. Employees can also reach out to the Safety Department or HR Division with any concerns or questions.

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### Prevention

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The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the best way to protect yourself as follows:

- avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- washing your hands often with warm or cold running water and soap for a minimum of 20 seconds
- cover your mouth and nose with either a tissue or your arm when coughing and sneezing
- avoid others who are unwell
- **employees must stay home when sick**
- respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes



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### Policy & Procedures

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Apex is mandating the following:

1. Employees who experience any of the following symptoms are asked to refrain from coming to work and contact the HR division to report their illness and to complete the COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool. These symptoms include coughing, sneezing, fever, sore throat, difficulty breathing, nausea and vomiting. All reports of illness will be kept confidential. **IF YOU ARE SICK STAY HOME**

2. Employees who are calling in sick or being sent home due to illness, will be directed to the BC COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool at <https://covid19.thrive.health/> . This link will put them through a questionnaire, and they will get a response as to whether testing, self-monitoring, self-isolation, and/or recommended time off is required. The Human Resources Manager will phone every employee to check on their status.
3. Employees may only return once they are free of all symptoms or as directed by the local Health Authority. If your symptoms are indicative of COVID-19, you must follow the protocols of items 2 and 3 above
4. In order to help prevent the possible spread of the virus, Apex reserves the right to implement a flexible work site and work hour schedule
5. Employees are asked to not share food or drinks with others
6. Spitting on sites or on the facility grounds is totally forbidden. This includes in any sinks. Employees are advised not to use sinks in washrooms or lunchroom to brush their teeth
7. Group orientations, meetings and training will be suspended or modified to ensure social distancing is adhered to. Orientations are to be completed no more than 48 hours after reporting for the first day of work at any of Apex's facilities or sites. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Supervisors of the departments or new hires can contact the Human Resources manger
8. Apex will provide, unless no longer available, hand sanitizer and disinfectant for all tools/ work surfaces. Tools and work areas must be cleaned daily
9. Employees must wear a mask if working within 6' of another person
10. Apex Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee will review all policy changes and amendments
11. Employees must complete and comply with daily COVID-19 assessment questionnaires as requested. All confirmations must be truthful. There will be temperature screening prior to entering the building
12. All employees will remain diligent throughout their day and report any changes to their overall health. Employees are obligated to disclose a positive confirmation of COVID-19
13. All site personnel must comply with company policies. Should personnel determine work conditions to be unsafe they must stop work immediately and notify their supervisors. All staff maintain the right to exercise their Right to Refuse
14. Employees in the manufacturing plant are required to avoid socializing as much as possible outside of their designated areas
15. Additional cleaning staff will be utilized to focus on continuously clean and sanitize surfaces that are commonly and frequently touched such as door handles, railings, tabletops, work surfaces, etc.
16. All meetings that cannot be held via video conferencing or in a small group that can allow for proper social distancing will be postponed
17. Apex will not be posting names or providing information on any worker who has called in sick. This is a violation of the Personal Information Privacy Act. Please be assured that Apex is following every protocol to ensure any worker who has reported sick or who is returning from work after being absent is safe to be in our environment

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### *Worker's Rights*

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You have the right to a safe work environment.

Apex and the Joint Health and Safety Committee are doing everything possible to ensure you have a safe work environment.

All employees have the right to refuse unsafe work as per Section 3.12 of WorkSafeBC regulations. This is a four-step process:

Step 1 – Immediately report the unsafe condition

Step 2 – Investigation by the employer must be completed and the matter fixed if possible if the concern is valid

Step 3 – If the worker still views the work as unsafe, the employer must re-investigate in the presence of the worker, a Joint Health and Safety committee member and a union representative

Step 4 – If the worker still views the work as unsafe, both the worker and the employer must contact WorkSafeBC

If you have any concerns regarding your safety at work during this pandemic, please contact the Human Resources manager, or any member of your Joint Health and Safety Committee.

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### *Personal Protective Equipment*

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**Reminder:** While correctly using PPE can help prevent some exposures, it should not take the place of other prevention strategies.

18. The use of gloves made of latex, vinyl, nitrile, or other synthetic materials is encouraged while on site. There is no need to double-glove. Hand hygiene should remain as foremost priority. WASH frequently and often for at least 20 seconds
19. Due to the shortage of PPE available, Apex will only be providing particulate masks and respirators to employees whose positions require them. Employees whose jobs do not require this type of PPE can wear their own masks during this pandemic if they so choose. Avoid adjusting and touching your mask as much as possible
20. Apex reserves the right to change the PPE requirements based on current government requirements

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### *Entry Screening*

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21. Apex has taken the precaution of restricting visitors to the facility. If we do grant access, they must go through the same health questionnaire and temperature checks as our employees

22. All employees entering our office and plant will be required to have their temperature taken at the respective entrances and answer a questionnaire. Face masks must be in place prior to entering the screening location and hand sanitizer must be used before leaving the screening location

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### *Exposure Control Plan*

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Any confirmed positive test for COVID-19 requires full disclosure by the employee to the employer.

The following indicates the Exposure Control Plan that has been put in place by Apex in the event of a confirmed positive.

#### **SITE**

In the case of a confirmed positive, the following steps are to be taken:

1. Ensure mask is being worn
2. Leave the building
3. Call Human Resources
4. Hazard assessment to be completed to determine the following:
  - a. Possible length of exposure to others
  - b. Possible number of people exposed
  - c. Proper safety protocols were being followed i.e. Spatial distancing, proper PPE
5. Cleaning of all tools that the infected worker did or may have had access to
6. Any worker who is identified during trace contact investigation who may have been exposed to the infected MUST be contacted and advised to follow all directions of Health Canada via the local Health Authority

#### **MANUFACTURING WAREHOUSE / OFFICE LOCATIONS**

In the case of a confirmed positive, the following steps are to be taken:

1. An emergency meeting of the Pandemic Planning Group is to be held
2. Hazard assessment to be completed to determine the following:
  - a. Possible length of exposure to others
  - b. Possible number of people exposed
  - c. Proper safety protocols were being followed i.e. Spatial distancing, proper PPE
3. Cleaning of all tools that the infected worker did or may have had access to
4. Any worker who is identified during trace contact investigation who may have been exposed to the infected MUST be contacted and advised to follow all directions of Health Canada and the local Health Authority

5. Apex will adhere to all requirements of Health Canada and the local Health regarding closing of facilities, disinfection of facilities and/or requirements of trace contacted employees

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*Spatial Distancing*

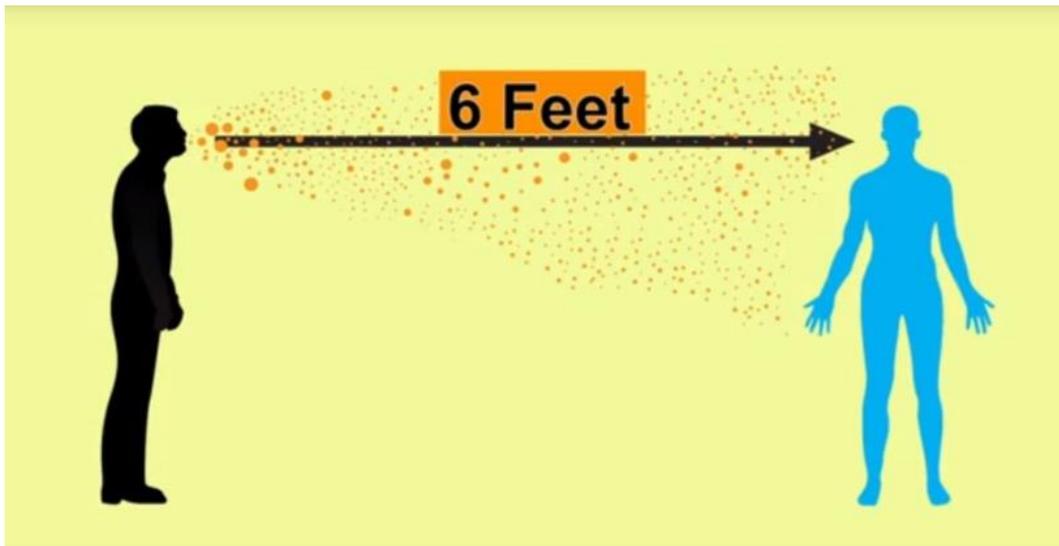
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**Spatial distancing is everyone's responsibility.** Spatial Distancing includes ways to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. It means less contact between you and other people. Worker must always keep 6ft between one another where possible.

Spatial distancing is important because COVID-19 is most likely to spread from person-to-person through:

- direct close contact with a person while they are infectious or in the 24 - 36 hours before their symptoms appeared
- close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes, or
- touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

The more space between you and others, the harder it is for the virus to spread.



**“We don’t need social distancing. We need physical distancing with an abundance of social support and connection”**

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## Travel

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The Canadian government is now enforcing mandatory 14 quarantine for all travelers returning from overseas into Canada, even if they do not show symptoms. These efforts will help contain the outbreak and limit the spread of COVID-19 in Canada.

**As per the Canadian government:**

*Upon return to Canada, you will be asked if you have a cough, fever or difficulty breathing. If you have any of these symptoms, you must:*

- *go immediately to your place of isolation using private transportation only, such as your personal vehicle*
- *isolate in a place where you will not be in contact with vulnerable people, such as older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions*

*If you have symptoms but do not have a place to isolate, you will be required to isolate for 14 days in a facility designated by the Chief Public Health Officer.*

*If you **do not** have symptoms, you must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor your health for cough, fever or difficulty breathing. If you develop these symptoms within 14 days:*

- *continue to isolate yourself from others*
- *immediately call a health care professional or public health authority and:*
  - *describe your symptoms and travel history*
  - *follow their instructions carefully*
- *do not have visitors, especially older adults, or those with medical conditions who are at a higher risk of developing serious illness*

23. In the case of a confirmed case of COVID-19, Apex reserves the right to require a doctor's note clearing the worker of contagion prior returning to work.

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## Site Offices

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24. Do not touch items that you do not need to touch. Limit what you are doing in the office spaces.
25. Where possible, do not share keyboard or mouse, pens, clipboards. **IF** you need to share, make sure you are wiping down surfaces before another person uses the same item.

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### *Absenteeism + Leave of Absence + Quarantine*

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26. Should worker(s) be symptomatic or request leave:

- Doctors notes are not required. Employees who are calling in sick or being sent home due to illness, will be directed to the CDC's COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool at <https://covid19.thrive.health/>. This link will put them through a questionnaire, and they will get a response as to whether testing, self-monitoring, self-isolation, and/or recommended time off is required
- Apex Management will be reviewing ALL requests for a Leave of Absence and approvals will be done on a case by case basis. A leave of absence can be no more than 14 days total. At the end of the 14 days, employees must contact their supervisor to reassess their return to work. This does not jeopardize a worker's position or employment.
- If a worker must self-quarantine due to their self- assessment, the quarantine period will be that of the period stated from the assessment tool. If tested positive, the worker must provide proof from a health practitioner that they are no longer contagious and are fit for work.
- Apex will issue an ROE electronically for any staff member who is symptomatic and off work or have an approved leave of absence request. Employees are encouraged to contact Services Canada regarding eligibility of payment.

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### *Stigma*

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The CDC has provided some information on how to reduce the stigma that comes from fear and anxiety surrounding a disease. Please read below for further information,

#### **Knowing and sharing Facts can help stop stigma**

- [Share facts about COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 FAQs](#)

Public health emergencies, such as the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), are stressful times for people and communities. Fear and anxiety about a disease can lead to social stigma toward people, places, or things. For example, stigma and discrimination can occur when people associate a disease, such as COVID-19, with a population or nationality, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is specifically at risk for the disease. Stigma can also occur after a person has been released from COVID-19 quarantine even though they are not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others.

It is important to remember that people – including those of Asian descent – who do not live in or have not recently been in an area of ongoing spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, or have not been in contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 are not at greater risk of spreading COVID-19 than other Americans.

Some groups of people who may be experiencing stigma because of COVID-19 include:

- Persons of Asian descent
- People who have traveled
- Emergency responders or healthcare professionals

Stigma hurts everyone by creating fear or anger towards other people.

Stigmatized groups may be subjected to:

- Social avoidance or rejection
- Denials of healthcare, education, housing or employment
- Physical violence.

Stigma affects the emotional or mental health of stigmatized groups and the communities they live in. Stopping stigma is important to making communities and community members *resilient* (3). See [resources on mental health and coping during COVID-19](#).

Everyone can help stop stigma related to COVID-19 by [knowing the facts](#) and sharing them with others in your community.

Communicators and public health officials can help counter stigma during the COVID-19 response.

- Maintain privacy and confidentiality of those seeking healthcare and those who may be part of any contact investigation.
- Quickly communicate the risk or lack of risk from associations with products, people, and places.
- Raise awareness about COVID-19 without increasing fear.
- Share accurate information about how the virus spreads.
- Speak out against negative behaviors, including negative statements on social media about groups of people, or exclusion of people who pose no risk from regular activities.
- Be cautious about the images that are shared. Make sure they do not reinforce stereotypes.
- Engage with stigmatized groups in person and through media channels including news media and social media.
- Thank healthcare employees and responders. People who have traveled to areas where the COVID-19 outbreak is happening to help have performed a valuable service to everyone by helping make sure this disease does not spread further.
- Share the need for social support for people who have returned from China or are worried about friends or relatives in the affected region.

## Key Terms

1. **Stigma** occurs when people associate a risk with a specific people, place, or thing – like a minority population group – and there is no evidence that the risk is greater in that group than in the general population. Stigmatization is especially common in disease outbreaks. ([https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/cerccorner/article\\_123016.asp](https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/cerccorner/article_123016.asp))
2. **Mental health** is defined by the World Health Organization as a state of well being in which a person realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-responseexternal icon>).
3. **Resilience** is the ability to withstand and recover from stress. (<https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2017/08/predicting-community-resilience-and-recovery-after-a-disaster/>)”

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### *Enforcement*

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Given the importance of these directives, failure to follow these protocols will result in clear disciplinary action.

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### *Additional References*

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There are new developments of this virus and unpredictable new cases being diagnosed daily in our communities, we reserved the right to implement new measures with all recommendations and guidelines of the Canadian Government.

For more information:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration website: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health website: [www.cdc.gov/niosh](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh)
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/>
- WorkSafe BC: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/news-events/announcements/2020/March/covid-19-and-the-workplace>
- Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/people-high-risk-for-severe-illness-covid-19.html>