Preventing Spread of COVID-19	17 June 2020
Name of Policy	Implementation Date
All Staff, Instructors, Students and Contractors	**29 September 2021**
Position(s) Responsible	Date of Last Revision

Preventing Spread of COVID-19 Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide training to staff, instructors students and contractors at Western Maritime Institute (WMI), on the protocol to be followed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 on campus and at off-site classrooms being used by WMI.

Background

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is working with Provincial Health Officers (PHOs) and with international partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO), to actively monitor the outbreak of a respiratory illness linked to a novel coronavirus. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a serious health threat and outlined a series of precautions and preventative measures. Additionally, the BC PHO has made orders and suggestions with regards to people gathering in groups such as a classroom that need to be followed to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission. It must also be remembered that asymptomatic individuals may constitute as much as 50% of positive tests.

On May 7th, 2020, the BC government announced a phased approach for reopening B.C business including schools. Western Maritime Institute has implemented a Policy for Preventing Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace. This policy is based on recommendations from the Government of Canada and WorkSafeBC, for returning to safe operations following COVID-19 related work stoppages.

For any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the WMI COVID-19 Project Leader Lana Forgie: lana.forgie@maritimeed.com

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Understanding the risk of COVID-19

WMI management is monitoring the ever-evolving COVID-19 situation via multiple channels, including the news, official government email alerts, and information disseminated by our various education partners: TC, PTIB, EQA, etc.

Pertinent information from the provincial government and local health authorities is communicated to staff and students via email or in-person.

COVID-19 prevention policies are reviewed on an ongoing basis and changes are implemented in this policy as necessary and required by local and/or provincial health authorities.

Reducing risk by staying home when sick

When sick, staff members are encouraged to stay home, work remotely, and only return to school when they are feeling well again. Meetings can be held virtually, and many projects can be completed from home. If necessary, a VPN can be set up to allow the staff member secure access to WMI materials.

When sick, students are to contact WMI and their instructor to inform them they will not be in class. If possible, accommodations will be made to catch the student up when they return to class, so long as their attendance record still falls within Transport Canada guidelines. If a student withdraws from a course due to sickness and the situation warrants, accommodations will be made.

Procedures before allowing student access to WMI:

Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace

All personnel are expected to arrive at WMI healthy and without reason to believe they are at increased risk of passing COVID-19 to others; and should ensure they understand and comply with the infection prevention policies and practices in place.

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Masks

Mask wear continues to be mandatory at WMI when inside any building at either campus or offsite facilities being used for instructing or other purposes on behalf of WMI. WMI recommends staff and students wash or replace their mask daily and choose a good quality double-layer cloth or medical-grade mask. Better yet take advantage of the free masks provided by WMI at all locations. Please note that bandanas, neck gaiters and masks with exhaust valves will not be accepted as a substitute for a face mask and that visors and face shields are only permitted when used in addition to a mask. Due to the severity of the current COVID outbreak there will be no accommodations made for medical reasons that prohibit a person from wearing a mask on Campus. If the issue is so severe that one cannot wear a mask then WMI will reschedule the student to a course to be held once WMI lifts the mask restrictions at a future date.

Reference: *Government of Canada Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace*

Keep your hands clean

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arms.
- Avoid touching surfaces people touch often.
- Instead of handshake, fist bump etc., give a friendly wave as a greeting.
- Use of necessary personal protective equipment, as directed.

Keep your environment clean

- Use appropriate products to clean and disinfect items like your desk, work surface, phones, keyboards and electronics.
- If they can withstand the use of liquids for disinfection, frequently touched electronics such as phones, computers, simulator equipment, laptops and other devices may be disinfected with 70% alcohol (e.g. alcohol prep wipes).
- Doors, when possible, are propped open so no touching of the handle is required.
- Building ventilation/HVAC systems have been updated at both campuses.

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Keep your distance

- Keep a distance of 2 meters between you, your coworkers, and students.
- Increase distance between desks, tables and workstations.
- Reduce activities that require close physical proximity or contact with people, such as team meetings.
- Limit any contact closer than 2 metres to the shortest time possible.
- If one absolutely must work within 2 metres of others PPE is to be worn i.e. a mask and gloves

Additional measures

- Staff and students are required to have their first COVID-19 vaccination by no later than October 12th, 2021 and their second no later than November 22nd, 2021.
- Where possible, classes have been adapted for online delivery.
- Communal spaces for students closed until further notice.

If you have a symptom of COVID-19

- If you think you might have COVID-19, use the self-assessment tool provided by the Government of Canada to find out what to do.
- If is critical that, if you have one symptom of COVID-19 (fever, cough or difficulty breathing), or even mild symptoms, you should stay home to avoid spreading illness to others.
- If you develop even mild symptoms while at your workplace, separate yourself from others and inform your instructor or the COVID-19 Project Leader and go home, avoiding use of public transit if possible.
- Contact your local Public Health Authority and follow their advice.

Guidance for Self-Isolation
Reference: *The BC Centre for Disease Control (BC CDC)*

The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BC CDC) have issued the following guidance around self-isolation:

- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and painful swallowing, must self-isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days.
- Anyone under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate must follow those instructions.
- Anyone who is a contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- Unless exempted, visitors from outside of Canada must complete a mandatory 14-day quarantine.
- Prohibit or limit visitors.

WMI Infection Prevention Practices

- The front and back door should be left open for at least 20-30 minutes twice a day to allow fresh air turnover in the campus buildings.
- Lunch hour and break times should be staggered between classes to allow 2 metres distance between individuals in all break rooms. Social distance should be maintained between all chairs.
- Food or drinks are not to be shared.
- Handwashing should be conducted frequently, including upon arriving at WMI, before and after breaks, after handling cash or other materials and before and after handling common tools and equipment.
- All garbage bins should be disinfected every evening before the school re-opens in the morning.
- Paperless media should be encouraged to avoid direct contact between individuals. Homework and assignments can be put on tablets.
- All persons shall wear face masks when inside any building on campus or any areas where social distance is difficult to maintain.
- Where other measures are not sufficient, the use of gloves should be considered, understanding that these have limitations and are a last resort after all other methods of hazard mitigation have been tried.
- The maximum number of persons allowed in a classroom or any communal gathering area is based on the occupancy load marked on the signage by the door or entrance.
- The maximum number of students allowed in a simulator bridge is two plus an instructor and a TC Invigilator as required.

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- Chartwork tools should not be shared and can be purchased through the WMI Office Manager. Students should maintain social distancing with each student using their own charts.
- Information regarding use of personnel protective and other equipment will be included in a separate detailed policy. We are working with industry professionals to ensure that we have the highest level of safety practices in place for our personnel protective equipment.
- The COVID-19 Project Leader must be notified if any individual shows symptoms of COVID-19. It should be reported as soon as possible to local area medical professionals and the individual should be isolated. Contact tracing should immediately be implemented, and the surrounding areas and ventilation system should be disinfected immediately.
- The COVID-19 Project Leader and/or her authorized person is responsible to follow up with the individual and to provide support as required.

Communicating policy changes to staff and students

- Admin updated at weekly staff meetings on any relevant policy changes. Instructors are informed via email from the campus director or in-person from WMI admin. Students are updated via instructors or email from WMI admin.
- Supervisors hold a weekly meeting with management where they are updated on any policy changes.
- Signage is posted all over campus reminding staff and students that masks are mandatory and encouraging good hand hygiene.

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Monitoring COVID-19 policies and preventative measures

- Any updates to COVID policy are reviewed by the VP, campus director, head instructor, and office manager before being approved. Anyone on staff can suggest changes to be discussed/implemented in WMI's COVID-19 response plan.
- Health and safety concerns in the workplace can be communicated during weekly staff meetings or discussed with a supervisor in private.
- All staff, including instructors, are reminded to be vigilant about enforcing COVID prevention policy, both for students and each other. Repeated breaches of COVID policy (mask wearing, etc) are to be addressed by the campus director/head instructor.
- This policy is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

Resolving concerns about unsafe work

Reference: *WorkSafeBC*

WorksafeBC's OHS Regulations 3.12 states that workers have the right to refuse work if they have reasonable cause to believe it presents an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person.

An undue hazard is an "unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate" risk, above and beyond the potential exposure a general member of the public would face through regular, day-to-day activity.

Please contact the WMI COVID-19 Project Leader immediately if there are concerns regarding unsafe work due to COVID-19. If the matter is not resolved, the worker and the supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC.

Case/Outbreak Management

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 amongst staff, students, or any visitors to campus within the last 14-days, WMI is prepared to follow the guidance of the local health authority.

- If a student begins experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, they will be sent to receive a COVID-19 test and told to begin self-isolating.

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- If the test comes back positive, the WMI COVID-19 Project Lead will immediately contact the local health authority to report the case.
- The COVID-19 Project Lead will speak to the affected persons/class(es) to inform them of the situation and encourage self-monitoring for symptoms.
- WMI will assist with contract tracing as well as follow any directives laid out by the local health authority.
- Those determined as close contacts via contact tracing will be given instructions to self-isolate for 14 days.
- To prevent further spread of COVID-19, additional signage will be posted, hygiene measures will be reinforced, and the need for class/campus closures will be considered as necessary.
- WMI will stay in contact with any students or staff potentially exposed, providing updates while still maintaining confidentiality as it relates to the case(s).
- WMI will conduct regular check-ins with anyone in the community self-isolating to ensure their continued wellbeing.
- When the case/outbreak is resolved officially by the local health authority, WMI COVID-19 policy will revert to pre-outbreak measures.

Parts of this COVID-19 prevention policy adapted from WorkSafeBC's <u>Communicable disease prevention: A guide for employers</u>

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