

Guidance on lunchroom/breakroom practices during COVID-19

Lunchrooms or breakrooms are places where there is a potential for infected carriers of COVID-19 to come into contact with others or contaminate surfaces.

Workplaces and employees should:

- **Maintain physical distancing** while in the lunch or break room. Physical distancing means maintaining a distance of at least two metres (six feet) or more between persons.
- **Restrict eating to clearly identified and dedicated eating areas.** These areas should have handwashing stations, cleaning and disinfectant materials, and adequate space to maintain minimum physical distancing.
- Post **physical distancing signage** to remind workers to keep their distance.
- Ensure enclosed lunchrooms are **well-ventilated** or only made available during inclement weather if they are not well ventilated.
- Post signage to remind workers to **wash or disinfect their hands** before and after eating.
- Ensure maximum limits are put on the **number of people allowed in eating areas.**
- **Stagger coffee/lunch breaks** to reduce the number of workers in the lunchroom at the same time.
- **Limit access and use of shared devices** like coffee machines, water fountains, microwave ovens, etc.
- **Clean and disinfect** tables, microwaves, and other commonly handled items between workers' lunch shifts. Also, ensure that the means to clean and disinfect these devices between uses is provided.
- Where there are common touch points such as door handles and water coolers, etc., **paper towels should be provided** to allow users to avoid skin contact.
- **Organize chairs and stagger seating arrangements** to maintain physical distancing, or have workers take lunch and coffee breaks outside.
- **Remove garbage** often.
- Serving food **buffet-style or potluck style is prohibited.**
- If air circulation is a concern, **install negative air units and vents** outside the lunchroom.
- **Separate PPE and clothing** that is hung up in the lunchroom to avoid potential cross-contamination.
- Workers intending to take work clothing home should **place the clothing in a plastic bag and not remove the clothing** until it goes into the laundry to be washed (ideally separately).

Simple precautions and planning can make a big difference.

Action now will help protect your employees and business continuity.

For more information, visit www.bchu.org/coronavirus