

PREMIER'S OFFICE RELEASES HEALTH CARE GUIDELINES

By Diana F. Saturno and Emily Duncan*

The Ontario Ministry of Health indicates that there is evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). On April 30th, guidelines for certain industries were released by the Premier's Office. The Ontario government works closely with four provincial health and safety associations to help set, communicate and enforce the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (the "**Act**"). In partnership with the Public Service Health and Safety Association ("**PSHSA**"), five guidelines were released as they relate to the health care sector. These guidelines address five main areas:

- [food services in health care](#);
- [long term care](#);
- [community laboratory and specimen collection centres](#);
- [physician and primary care provider employers](#); and
- [precautions when working as a personal support worker, home and care provider](#).

The guidelines apply to organizations in each of these sub-categories. The guidelines include a broad array of information such as helpful tips, obligations for each sector including references to the relevant statutory provisions which apply, and additional helpful resources to reference. More specifically, the guidelines set out tips to help prevent the spread of germs and also set out best practices to stay healthy and safe in the workplace. Best practices to control the spread of COVID-19 include:

- following their policies and procedures that deal with workplace safety;
- maintain physical distancing;
- follow specific guidance for health and safety infection prevention and control practices;
- procedures for returning to work after illness;
- precautionary measures; and
- stringent hand hygiene.



[Diana F. Saturno](#)
Associate

t: 416.864.7624
dsaturno@foglers.com

[Emily Duncan](#)
Student-at-Law

t: 416.864.7621
eduncan@foglers.com

The guidelines set out ways workers can protect themselves and report illness, along with information regarding when to notify the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development about when an employee tests positive for COVID-19 due to exposure at the workplace. The guidelines also set out how to establish an effective occupational health and safety and infection prevention and control plan and information about environmental cleaning and disinfection.

As an organization in the health care sector, the PSHSA website should also be referenced to confirm whether any directives from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health apply. PSHSA resources can be found here: <https://www.pshsa.ca/covid-19>.

If you have any questions about your obligations as a worker or employer in the health care sector, reach out to a member of the Fogler, Rubinoff LLP Health Law Group.

Diana F. Saturno is a member of the Health Law Group and can be reached at dsaturno@foglers.com

**Emily Duncan is a Student-At-Law with Fogler, Rubinoff LLP.*