



# Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



## Indoor Exercise, Fitness, & Dance Class Facility COVID-19 Guidance

January 19, 2022

### Scope of Guidance

**Martial Arts, Cheerleading, & Gymnastics** studios are not covered in this guidance document as these activities are governed under provincial and local sport organizations.

“**group exercise**” is defined as exercise or dance class in a communal setting where a group of patrons follow a set exercise routine simultaneously led by an instructor and refers to all types of indoor group exercise (i.e. high intensity and low intensity group exercise).

### Proof of Vaccination

- As per the [PHO Order on Gathering and Events](#), proof of vaccination is required for all participants aged 12 years or older in indoor exercise, fitness, and dance class facilities. More information on Proof of Vaccination requirements for businesses can be found [here](#).

### Staffing

- Facilities should have staff on site (or electronic measures) to ensure occupancy requirements and other public health measures are adhered to.
  - For example, occupancy requirements can be maintained through staffed or electronic entry/exit gatekeeping systems or through pre-booking; communication and enforcement of masking requirements as well as cleaning and disinfecting should still occur.

### Environmental Measures

Environmental measures are changes to the physical environment that reduce the risk of exposure, such as increasing ventilation, and frequent cleaning and disinfection.

### Ventilation

- Creation of intentionally overheated exercise environments creates increased risk of spread and should not occur
- Outer doors and windows should be left open or partially open at all times (if possible)
- All mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems should be working properly
- Fresh air intake on ventilation systems should be increased as much as possible



- Floor and wall fans increase risk of virus transmission and should not be used

### Reducing Group Congregating

- Any group classes or bookings where a cohort of patrons are arriving at the same time should include at least 5 minutes before and 5 minutes after the class/booking time to reduce bottleneaking
  - For example, a 45-minute group class would be 35 minutes of exercise, with 5 minutes for staggered arrival and 5 minutes for staggered exit (additional time between classes should also be incorporated, see Booking and Registration section, below)
  - Additional time may be required for larger classes or to reduce the potential of gathering in common spaces
- Designate different doorways for entrance and exit if possible, or create a different process so patrons are not entering and exiting simultaneously at the same time

### Cleaning and Disinfection

- All shared equipment (e.g. exercise machines, floor mats, weights, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected between each use either by staff or patrons; supplies and signage should be provided throughout facility.
- Other high touch surfaces (e.g. door handles, sink faucets, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected at least once per day

### Physical Barriers

- Physical barriers between exercise equipment or stations can be used as an additional safety measure

## Administrative Measures

Administrative measures include the implementation of policies, procedures, training and education that reduce the risk of exposure.

### Occupancy

- As per the PHO Order on *Gatherings and Events*, to determine overall occupancy for individual and group exercise: each workout or dance room/space must have at least **7 square metres** of unencumbered useable floor space per patron/staff who will be in the space exercising
  - **Group exercise** has a maximum occupancy of **25 people per workout room/space**
- Post signage with occupancy limits for each room so staff and patrons are aware and ensure that capacity is not exceeded

### Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

- Physical distance of **2 metres** between each patron is recommended **while exercising**:
  - If possible, exercise machines/equipment should be spaced or blocked off to accommodate
  - Floor markings/signage should be used to identify exercise space



- If there is movement occurring, each patron should have enough space to ensure they are not coming in close proximity with other patrons
- Personal trainers should try and maintain physical distance from client (and other patrons)
- Instructors should remain in a designated “instructor area” throughout the class and give verbal rather than hands-on corrections for yoga/barre/Pilates, etc.

### Booking and Registration

- All workouts should be pre-registered where operationally feasible
  - Inform clients when they book that they must not come if they are feeling sick, and must cancel if they are feeling unwell
- For group exercise classes, there should be at least 5 minutes between classes where no patrons are in the space:
  - *Example Schedule:* 9:00-9:05– staggered entrance for Class 1; 9:05-9:50 – group exercise Class 1; 9:50-9:55 – staggered exit for Class 1; 9:55-10:00 – cleaning and no patrons in space; 10:00-10:05– staggered entrance for Class 2.
  - Smaller studio spaces or those with lower ceilings or fewer windows/natural air intake are encouraged to allow even greater time between classes
- Ask that patrons do not arrive earlier than their scheduled arrival time
- All patrons must have read and agree to follow safety protocols
- If possible, stagger bookings to ensure not all patrons are not arriving or departing at same time

### Audio

- Music in all exercise and dance class spaces should be kept below speaking volume in order to reduce singing or shouting

### Food and Beverages

- Patrons should bring or use a personal water bottle and not drink directly from shared water fountains

### Staying Home When Sick and When New Symptoms Develop

- Policies should be established to
  - ensure employees can and must stay home when they have symptoms of COVID-19
  - ensure patrons are incentivized and supported to stay home and cancel bookings when they have symptoms of COVID-19

## Personal Measures

Personal measures are actions individuals can take to protect themselves and others. Examples include vaccination, physical distancing, minimizing physical contact, frequent hand washing, practicing respiratory etiquette and staying home if sick.



## Exercise Attire / Personal Equipment

- Patrons should arrive in exercise attire to minimize use of change rooms

## Hand Hygiene

- Direction should be given to patrons to practice hand hygiene before and after a workout; supplies should be provided throughout the facility

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

### Masks

- As per [PHO Order on Face Coverings](#), masks must be worn at all times in exercise facilities except when exercising.
  - All instructors/personal trainers must wear a mask at all times except when exercising
  - Masks are recommended while exercising for all patrons and instructors
- People who are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition or a physical, cognitive or mental impairment, and people who are unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person are exempt from mask requirements.
  - People who are unable to wear a mask must maintain at least 2m distance at all times when in the facility

