



COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN

(April 2021 UPDATE)



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COVID-19 Safety Plan

St. Giles Language Centers (Canada) Ltd. understands the importance of having a solid COVID-19 Safety Plan and is committed to protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors at our centre. By closely following the guidelines of [WorkSafeBC](#), the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#), the [Federal](#) and [Provincial](#) government, the [Office of the Provincial Health Officer](#) and [Languages Canada](#), we have the framework to prevent and control potential transmission of COVID-19.

Our staff understand the importance of these measures and have been trained to recognize any potential symptoms or areas of concern. We understand that the need to remain flexible and adaptable to any changes to the current situation.

Understanding the Risk (from COVID-19 Go-Forward Guidelines for BC’s Post Secondary Sector)

COVID-19 is a respiratory infection that is transmitted through person-to-person contact. Illness due to COVID-19 infection is generally mild. As with many other respiratory infections, the likelihood of severe illness is much higher in the elderly and among those with chronic medical conditions. COVID-19 has become an established human pathogen, and a certain level of transmission is now expected. The goal of COVID-19 prevention measures in Canada is to minimize societal disruption, protect the most vulnerable, and maintain adequate health services. The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, and from touching a contaminated surface and then touching the face. Higher risk situations require adequate protocols to address the risk. The risk of COVID-19 depends on the amount of virus circulating in the community, which changes from place to place and over time. Community transmission is monitored by public health authorities in British Columbia.

Important considerations:



1. Institutions should remain aware of the level of community transmission in order to implement interventions that are proportionate to current local risk. They should also follow advice from local public health authorities, which can change based on the level of transmission.
2. COVID-19 is spread by people who are infected with COVID-19. Isolating away from others when infected is very effective at mitigating risk.
3. The risk of transmission is increased when many people contact the same surface, and when those contacts happen in short intervals of time. Frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces and following consistent hygiene practices help mitigate this risk.
4. The risk of person-to-person transmission is increased the closer people come to other people infected with COVID-19, and the amount of time spent in close proximity. Reducing the number and duration of close contacts helps reduce the risk during times of high community transmission of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Prevention Measures

First level protection (elimination): Promoting safe physical distancing between people as recommended by the Provincial Health Officer. Use policies and procedures to reduce the number of prolonged close contacts among faculty, staff and students.

Risk assessment – Areas of proximity:

Gathering areas: Front desk, photocopy rooms, teachers' room, student lounge, washrooms, elevators, elevator lobby, and classrooms.

Risk reduction protocols:

1. We have established and posted occupancy limits for common areas:
 - General English Classrooms 1-11: 4 students and 1 teacher
 - General English Classroom 12: 5 students and 1 teacher
 - Platinum Classrooms: 2 students and 1 teacher
 - Student lounge: 6 students maximum at any one time
 - Teachers' room: 5 teachers maximum at any one time
 - Bathrooms: 2 person maximum at any one time – face coverings required
 - Elevators: 3 person maximum per lift – face coverings required
 - Hallways: Unidirectional movement, face coverings required
2. Desks in classrooms are 2m apart from each other and are forward facing.
3. There are 5 m² of unencumbered work space per person in office areas.
4. Photocopy rooms: 1 Person maximum at any one time. Disinfecting materials provided to be used before and after each use.
5. Teachers' room: Signage with maximum capacity posted. Shared computer usage prohibited without proper hygiene protocols (disinfecting spray) before and after use.



6. Student lounge: A portion of chairs and tables removed to meet physical distancing mandates. Signage with maximum capacity posted as well as physical distancing indicators.
7. Washrooms: Occupancy indicators and maximum capacity signage installed. Middle stall in Women's washroom closed for use.
8. Front desk: Plexiglas barrier installed at the front desk with physical distancing signage indicating where people can stand.
9. Elevator lobby: Seating removed, physical distancing signage posted.
10. Work from home arrangements have been organized with administrative staff being able to work from home when possible.
11. Work and student study schedules have been staggered with later start times to avoid traveling during rush hours and reducing contact at break times.
12. Office work stations are a minimum of 2m apart and social gatherings are discouraged.

Risk assessment - Commonly touched surfaces

Door handles, light switches, elevator buttons, photocopier, vending machines, microwaves, water coolers, coffee machine

Risk reduction protocols:

- a) Door handles: Classroom doors to remain open at during regular business hours. Areas with locked/shut doors to be routinely sanitized by both building cleaning staff and school employees. Schedule to be posted to note when surfaces have been cleaned.
- b) Light switches: not as commonly touched but to be sanitized regularly
- c) Elevator buttons: regular sanitation provided by building cleaners
- d) Photocopier: Disinfecting materials provided to be used before and after each use
- e) Vending machines: Emptied / off limits
- f) Microwaves: Off limits to students. Handles must be disinfected before and after use
- g) Water coolers: Off limits until a touchless system can be introduced
- h) Coffee machines: Removed from use

Second level protection (engineering controls): In situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained and a large number of contacts are expected (e.g. at the front desk or reception) install physical barriers.

1. A full length, Plexiglas barrier has been installed at our front desk reception counter in order to prevent droplets from being transmitted during conversations.
2. This barrier and the surfaces around the reception area are routinely cleaned.

Third level protection (administrative controls): Establish rules and guidelines, such as cleaning protocols, advising staff and students not to share tools or implementing one-way doors or walkways. Maintain hand hygiene stations and clean high touch surfaces.

We have identified rules and guidelines for how workers should conduct themselves:



1. Employees and students are to follow a one-way walkway in the halls and make note of the posted safety signage.
2. Use of face coverings in communal areas is mandated for students, staff and visitors. Face coverings are mandatory in areas where 2m distancing cannot be observed.
3. All communal equipment must be wiped down before and after use.

Fourth level protection – *Using masks/face coverings*

1. Employees are required to wear face coverings while teaching and must wear masks when interacting closely (less than 2m distance) with students or each other.
2. All staff have reviewed the information on selecting and using masks and instructions on how to use a mask.
3. We understand the limitations of masks to protect the wearer from respiratory droplets. We understand that masks should only be considered when other control measures cannot be implemented.
4. We have trained employees on the proper use of masks.

Accessing the Campus, Self-Assessment of Health and Contact Tracing

1. A COVID-19 symptom poster has been placed at the entrance to the school. People exhibiting symptoms are directed not to enter and information is given on what steps to take.
2. All staff, students and faculty are required to do a daily self-assessment using the BC COVID-19 self-assessment tool. They must report they have done so to reception and follow the directions of the self-assessment tool, with respect to getting tested or self-isolating.
3. If the self-assessment tool recommends that a person get tested for COVID-19 or self-isolate they must do so, and they may not return to the school until they have completed any requirements outlined by the self-assessment tool or medical practitioners.
4. All staff, students, faculty and visitors are instructed to go to one of the handwashing stations to wash and sanitize their hands. Posters on correct handwashing techniques are posted at all handwashing stations.
5. All staff, students, faculty and visitors are required to report to the front desk upon arrival with their contact information being recorded daily by the Student Services Coordinator.
6. No-touch, temperature checks are available upon request.

Cleaning and Hygiene Practices

Our building maintenance has increased and intensified cleaning throughout the building, in addition to putting into place enhanced health and safety protocols. Cleaning schedules of commonly touched surfaces can be accessed through QR codes placed at these locations. Building management has installed new, medical grade air filters and have increased air circulation throughout the building.



- In addition to the male/female washrooms, 3 additional handwashing stations are available: One for staff in the small staff break room and 2 for staff/students in the student lounge.
- Soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer are provided at all handwashing stations.
- Extra lidded, no touch garbage cans have been provided.
- Staff are to wash their hands upon arriving at the school, after lunch and before each class.
- In addition, extra sanitization of commonly touched areas is being performed in accordance with [BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) twice daily by school staff trained in WHIMIS.
- Shared utensils, plates and cups have been removed.
- Shared items such as toaster, toaster oven and coffee machines and access to vending machines have been removed.
- Signage on physical distancing, cough/sneeze etiquette, proper hand washing technique, and proper mask usage is posted throughout the school.
- All employees, students and visitors are asked to wash their hands upon arrival, before and after eating and after using the washroom.
- Student/staff orientation shall include training on required hand washing, cough/sneeze technique. Staff and students will be advised to wash hands or use hand sanitizer: upon arrival; before eating or drinking; before preparing food; after touching shared items; after using the washroom; after handling garbage; and before leaving the school.

Monitoring of Students, Staff and Visitors

- All employees of St. Giles International Language Centers (Canada) Ltd. have been trained in the observable symptoms of COVID-19. Students are trained on COVID-19 safety information both prior to and after arriving at the school on their first day.
- Schools' staff conduct daily monitoring of students for visible cold, flu, fever or COVID-19 related symptoms. A non-contact thermometer is available for temperature checks at the point of entry. Students have been informed of expectations for daily-self monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.
- If any symptoms are present, the student, faculty or staff member will be asked to return home immediately. See "Case Management and Outbreak Response" section below.
- A daily attendance is taken of staff, students and visitors which can be provided, if necessary, to clinical authorities for the purpose of contact tracing. See "Case Management and Outbreak Response" section below.



Communication and Education for the Campus Community

COVID-19 updates

Updated information is made available on the [St Giles International website](#), under [COVID-19 update](#) on the front page of the website. The St Giles Vancouver COVID-19 Safety Plan is also posted there, as well as on the noticeboards in the school. Videos on the measures we are taking to welcome back staff and students into a safe environment are also posted there.

Multiple communication channels are used to communicate essential health, safety and wellness (including mental health) information to students and staff, including but not limited to posters, social media, television monitors and emails.

Return to work

Essential health, safety and wellness (including mental health) information is communicated to faculty and staff in writing and in advance of returning to the workplace. They are given an appropriate amount of time to review the material and to respond with questions.

Returning staff are required to complete a COVID-19 declaration on returning to work.

New Students

New students undergo an orientation on Zoom the week prior to their classes starting, in order to go over not just an orientation to their studies, but also an orientation to the preventative measures that have been put in place around the school. On arrival at the school on their first day students are given a short tour of the school so that they can see how the preventative measures work and what is required of them.

Regular Reminders

Health and Safety is a regular agenda item on the weekly teacher meetings and so staff are reminded at the meeting of the importance of the preventative measures, and are encouraged to let management know of any health and safety concerns.

Teachers are encouraged to check in with students regularly on both their physical and mental health.

In the event that new measures are put in place or a change in circumstances, management will communicate this information to each class.

Documentation

Records are kept of COVID-19 instruction and training provided to staff.



Guidelines for communication and education

- Ensure content is consistent with provincial and local public health advice.
- Ensure key messages are repeated frequently. Do not assume the message has already been understood. Communicate the *why* as well as the *what*.
- Be intentional about messaging. Consider the audience, equity and diversity, language, and tone.
- Ensure that communication is accessible to the whole campus community including low level learners.
- Communicate that acts of discrimination against people will not be tolerated.
- Reference relevant public health information in communications and training materials.

Education delivery

- When possible, students will take their classes on the physical campus. Classrooms have been set up with a maximum of 5 persons. Desks have been arranged a 2m distance and are forward facing.
- Classes are now taught by the same teacher to avoid mixing cohorts.
- Speaking practice without masks is not conducted face to face.
- If a student is unable to attend class for any reason, they can be 'zoomed' into their physical class.

Communicating with Students and Agents Pre-arrival

- Students and agents are able to communicate directly with school representatives regarding any aspect of their enrolment or arrival protocols.
- Transparent and accurate information regarding the border closures is posted on our main website.
- All students and agents are advised of and given detailed information on pre-arrival requirements and documents needed prior to arriving in Canada including, but not limited to:
 1. Ensuring they are aware of their requirement to comply with the Government of Canada's Quarantine Act, including the penalties of violation of the Quarantine Act, which include up to 6 months in prison and/or \$750,000 in fines.
 2. Agreeing to and signing a copy of the Languages Canada COVID-19 International Student Safe Travel, Arrival and Quarantine Checklist.
 3. Completing and printing the Languages Canada Quarantine Plan for presentation at their port of entry, and have registered via the [ArriveCAN](#) app and the [BC Covid-19 app](#) (free download) as well as any self isolation forms required by provincial authorities (e.g. the following is required in British Columbia: <https://travelscreening.gov.bc.ca/>.)
 4. Having appropriate medical insurance, effective as of the date of the students' arrival, which includes coverage for COVID-19 during the quarantine period. Guard.me International



Insurance confirms that their student insurance policy provides full medical coverage against COVID-19, including during the period of quarantine. Additionally, [Keep.meSAFE](#) by Guard.me offers 24/7 access to mental health support. Students are given a detailed pre-arrival orientation which includes COVID-19 safety information and information on how the school will support them in their studies, life in Canada and with their mental health.

5. Taking a [molecular COVID-19 test](#) with negative results 72 hours prior to departure.
6. Booking a mandatory 3 day stay at a [government-approved quarantine hotel](#) and taking an additional test at the end of the 14 day quarantine.

Students will be required to sign off on information packages received.

In transit

While in transit to the port of departure in their home country, in airports and during flights, students will be expected to follow all recommended personal hygiene and physical distancing guideline as per their Checklist, including:

- Wearing a mask and gloves.
- Washing/sanitizing hands frequently.
- Observing appropriate physical distancing.

Upon arrival

The school will ensure that students understand the expectations around their arrival in Canada, including:

Students must wash/sanitize their hands, wear a fresh mask and gloves and respect physical distancing requirements while in their arrival airport.

When passing through Canadian customs, students will be required to acknowledge that they must quarantine (self-isolate) for 14 days and will be required to present their printed Quarantine Plan to the CBSA agent.

- Students will meet their pre-arranged safe transportation in a pre-arranged pick-up area. The safe transportation will respect necessary quarantine requirements (i.e. reduced seating capacity, driver and passenger wearing masks and gloves; vehicle is sanitized between users, windows open when possible).
- Students must contact the student services officer at their host school to confirm their arrival and pick-up by their designated transport.
- Students will be transported immediately to their designated quarantine location.
- During check-in at the quarantine site, students will wear a mask and gloves and respect all necessary personal hygiene and physical distancing guidelines.
- Immediately following check-in, students will be escorted to their room.
- The quarantine provider will contact the school to confirm that the student(s) have arrived .



Quarantine Accommodation

Through the [Study Safe Corridor](#), Languages Canada has provided an extensive list of designated quarantine hotels ready to provide assistance with all necessary elements of a student's mandatory quarantine. Including:

1. Adequate food for 3 meals a day
2. Adequate linens, cleaning supplies and toiletries
3. Strict hygiene and physical distancing protocols

All quarantine hotel sites have implemented rigorous COVID-19 operating procedures as per the Hotel Association of Canada's [Best Practices, Operating Procedures and Considerations for Hotel Guests in Self-Isolation](#). Students may also, where possible, [quarantine at one of the GEC Residences](#) (Viva or Pearson) or with one of St. Giles' pre-vetted Canadian homestay families. Students will be in direct communication with their Host Family regarding Covid-19 procedures. Both the GEC Residences and our Homestay families follow the same strict quarantine protocols.

Staff from St. Giles International will provide regular mental health check-ins to support students while quarantining. Two staff have completed Mental Health First Aid training for this purpose and resources such as [Here2Talk](#) or the [COVID-19 Mental Health Check-in](#) (Canadian Mental Health Association B.C.Division) will be provided for mental health counseling.

Schools will include information about COVID-19 related stigma and provide anti-racism support to all students, both as part of orientation for students and on an ongoing as-needed basis.

During their quarantine, students will be offered free online lessons, with the school "zooming" them into the physical classroom, so that they can meet and interact with their teacher and fellow classmates.

Online activities, such as quiz nights, fitness classes and conversation groups will be provided to the students to help integrate with the general population.

If a student presents COVID-19 symptoms, they must call 8-1-1 and follow the guidance and direction outlined to them. They are also required to notify the school. Students will be required to remain at their quarantine site until a medical professional has cleared them to end their quarantine.

Students who intend to arrange their own quarantine accommodation must still provide the quarantine plan and checklist to St. Giles prior to departure, including contact information for their quarantine provider.

Once quarantine has been completed, staff will continue to monitor students and provide mental health check-ins, ensuring that stigma barriers are removed.



Case Management and Outbreak Response

Our priority is the health and safety of both students and employees. The following protocol is designed as a general best practice that can be used as a student or staff COVID-19 illness process in conjunction with the institution's response to COVID-19 and in accordance with local and provincial public health guidelines.

Primary guidelines for students or staff when they become sick should include but are not limited to:

1. Do not attend activities if you are experiencing symptoms.
2. All students and staff should self monitor each day before coming to campus and not come to school if they are sick or symptomatic.
3. If a student or staff member has symptoms they should complete the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) [Covid-19 self-assessment](#) and follow guidance from BCCDC, which may include booking a COVID-19 test.
4. Should a student or staff member require a Covid-19 test, St. Giles staff will assist with transportation as needed.
5. All students, staff and visitors sign in to the school each day, in the event of contact tracing. Contact tracing would be the responsibility of BCCDC, if the student tests positive for COVID-19.

Procedure if a student or staff member becomes sick while at school

1. If a student or staff member becomes sick, they should leave the classroom immediately, if they are well enough.
 - a) The student or staff member should wear a mask while leaving the premises and/or while waiting for transportation.
 - b) If the individual needs to wait for transportation, they may stay indoors while maintaining a two-metre physical distance from others; if the weather is clement, they can stay outside.
2. Instruct the individual to perform hand hygiene and avoid contact with others or the environment.
3. Identify the areas and surfaces that the individual was in contact with or close to (within two metres) for cleaning.
4. Notify other members who are living in the same household.
5. Once at home, the individual should complete the [COVID-19 Self assessment tool](#) on the BC Centre for Disease Control website and follow the instructions.
6. Students will be encouraged to call 8-1-1 to receive guidance in the language of their choice.
7. Students and staff members should inform their supervisor of the situation.
8. Students and staff members should attempt to identify a list of people with whom they were in close contact (within two metres without a physical barrier or without PPE) should a positive COVID-19 test indicate a need for contact tracing.
9. The individual will remain off campus until cleared to return in accordance with self-assessment or testing results (based on BC Centre for Disease Control isolation criteria).



10. Accommodation staff will check in twice daily, recording the student's temperature and symptoms and will escalate if the student's symptoms increase.

Recommended transportation options in order:

1. Individual drives themselves home.
2. Pick up by family or friend.
3. Pick up by taxi:
 - a) Provide the individual with a mask and instructions to perform hand hygiene before entering the vehicle.
 - b) Avoid touching the inside of the vehicle.
 - c) Keep mask on for the duration of the ride.
 - d) Note: you will need to check with the taxi company if they will be able to transport and take precautions.
4. Public transit is asking people not to ride the bus, SeaBus or SkyTrain if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Reporting procedure in case of presumptive or confirmed COVID-19 case

1. Based on recommendations from the Public Health Agency of Canada, management will notify the appropriate health authorities.
2. The student or staff member will be reminded that they must quarantine for a minimum of 14 days.
3. Work or study from home arrangements will be made where possible.
4. St. Giles will provide collected student and staff attendance information to the BCCDC for the purposes of contact tracing if requested.
5. The student or staff member will be reminded that they will not be discriminated against because of the diagnosis and that their name will be kept confidential from the public.
6. Through the guidance of the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Public Health Agency of Canada, employees, students, residence management and Homestay families will be notified and will be advised to follow appropriate safety protocols.
7. A deep cleaning of the school may be initiated.
8. Symptomatic individuals will be allowed to return to school upon receiving clearance from a medical professional that it is safe to do so.
9. St. Giles will follow the guidance of provincial health authorities with respect to communication with the wider community.



Safety Committee

Primary contact for Covid-19 Compliance Reporting / Basic Mental Health Counselling / Fire Warden

Michelle Ronback
Centre Director
m.ronback@stgiles-canada.com
604-685-0291

School Compliance Officer

Simon Best
Platinum Coordinator
platinum@stgiles-canada.com
604-685-0291

Quarantine Check In Monitor

Miho Kojima
Accommodation Officer
homestay@stgiles-canada.com
Emergency phone: 604-831-4006

Basic Mental Health Counselling / Pre and Post Communication / Anti-Stigma Training / Fire Warden

Laura Haseley
Director of Studies
lhaseley@stgiles-canada.com
604-685-0291

Records of Attendance / Sanitization Control / Pre and Post Communication

Andrea Changoluisa
Student Services Coordinator
Studentservices.vancouver@stgiles-canada.com
604-685-0291