CANTA
Caribbean Association
of National Training
Authorities

CARICOM

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

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Transforming Lives

Regional Guidelines

for

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Institutions

and

Implementation of

Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ)

in the Caribbean during COVID-19

(August 2020)

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List of Acronyms

CANTA	Caribbean Association of National Training Authorities
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CQAF	CANTA Quality Assurance Framework
CVQ	Caribbean Vocational Qualification
CBET	Competency Based Education and Training
CBT	Community-based Training
EBT	Enterprise-based Training
EDMU	Education Management Development Unit
HEART/NSTA Trust	Human Employment and Resource Training / National Service Training Agency
IBT	Institution-based Training
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
NTA	National Training Agency/Authority
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
PLAR	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SEN	Special Education Needs
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Preamble

Since March 2020, the delivery of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and the teaching, learning and assessment of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) have been impacted in various forms across CARICOM Member States; in schools, TVET institutions, enterprises and other training modalities, with some skill areas more affected than others. Whereas guidelines have been developed for general education, few countries have specifically targeted the TVET sector. Indeed, a UNESCO-UNEVOC Survey conducted in May 2020 reported that none of the over 60 countries that participated in that survey had developed special guidelines for the health and safety of trainees (learners, students) and teachers/instructors in TVET, although most of the countries reported following local Governmental and WHO guidelines on protective measures.

A void, therefore, exists for guidelines for the TVET sub-sector. The Caribbean Association of National Training Authorities (CANTA), as the CARICOM organisation responsible for the coordination of TVET in CARICOM states, highlighted the need for the development of such guidelines as being critical for the reopening of TVET institutions, especially for learners pursuing the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) programmes. Guidelines were required for:

(a) The safe operation of classrooms, labs and workshops *(labs, workshops and other similar facilities would be particularly challenging because of the many tools, equipment, machinery and material surfaces that are touched by multiple persons during training delivery)*

(b) Valid CVQ Assessment and Verification Guidelines within a safe environment

The **Regional Guidelines for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions and Implementation of Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ) in the Caribbean during COVID-19** has been informed by the 'Framework for the Reopening of Schools in the Caribbean, including Schools for Learners with Special Education Needs' (CDB/CARICOM/UNESCO IIEP 2020) and the CANTA Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines (2015). The guidelines have been developed out of a collaboration between CANTA, the CARICOM Secretariat and Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The final version was revised through an engagement with TVET institutions and stakeholders in CARICOM States, representatives of the Education Management Development Unit (EDMU) of the OECS Commission and development partners including UNESCO/UNEVOC and the International Labour Organization.

Introduction

Strategic responses in the TVET sub-sector in the CARICOM Region are required in order to reduce the risks of the pandemic in the training, assessment and certification process. Any change, however, should not compromise on the quality of teaching, learning, delivery and the conduct of assessments leading to the award of the CVQ. All processes, regardless of changes, should still be a valid and reliable indication of the knowledge, understanding and skills, and the practical competence of the trainee (student, learner) and that as far as possible, quality standards are maintained throughout the process. The guidelines provided are in alignment with the 'Framework for Reopening Schools in the Caribbean' (CDB/CARICOM/UNESCO/IIEP 2020) and are aimed at ensuring the health and well-being of trainees and the safe operation of classrooms, labs and workshops, and in enterprises where trainees are placed on work experience and apprenticeships as part of the training assessment and certification process.

The Approach

The CANTA Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines (2015) provide the framework on which these TVET/CVQ guidelines have been developed, and are used as the over-arching umbrella to help ensure the safety, health, and wellbeing of key stakeholders in the delivery system. Guidelines are provided in four (4) sections:

1) **Part A: Preparation and Planning** – describes the preparation and planning required by management prior to reopening. As in TVET delivery, a systematic step-by-step approach is used.
2) **Part B: Resumption of On-Site Training Delivery** – details the process that is required on resumption of on-site delivery (IBT, CBT, EBT) for the safety and well-being of trainees and staff.
3) **Part C: Best Practice** – gives examples of best practices used as a quality assurance strategy. These may be in the form of detailed guidelines, lists, or posters.
4) **Part D: Checklists** – contains a number of checklists, another strategy of CBET in the CARICOM/CANTA training delivery system in which guidelines provided are typically supported by a series of checklists that provide evidence and degree of compliance with the standards to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of staff and students in the training facility.

Throughout these guidelines, a description of the requirements is given (the standard) and reference is made to the relevant checklist in Part D.

A separate document – **"*Guidelines for the cleaning of tools and equipment in TVET Laboratories and Workshops – Prior to start-up and following suspected or confirmed Covid-19 case*"** – is also provided, with details on the safe cleaning of surfaces, tools, equipment and machines.

Cross-related themes of *Leadership and Management, Training Delivery, Customer Service, Communication, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement* are interwoven throughout the guidelines to ensure safe environments for effective training delivery and CVQ administration. The guidelines should be adapted to context-specific needs depending on local demographic and social conditions and the public health situation in each territory.

Part A: The Preparation Phase

Phase 1 is the preparation phase in which TVET managers, administrators, coordinators and other senior staff in the facility prepare for the reopening of the institution. During this phase, plans should be developed, which will establish the framework for the safe return of trainees and staff. A step-by-step approach is used:

Step 1. Establish a Committee

Establish a planning committee or use the existing Quality Assurance Committee to develop a plan for the reopening of the training facility and to review existing guidelines on the health, safety, and well-being of staff and learners. If not yet in place, develop a Health and Safety Policy. From the Committee membership, delegate a point person to whom trainees and staff may readily refer in the event additional information or help is needed. Communicate the name of this individual to all staff and trainees.

Step 2. Develop a plan

With the assistance of the Committee and with input from staff and key stakeholders (employers, trainees/learners, parents, etc.), develop a **Preparedness and Response Plan** or **Safety Plan** *(see Section C on Best Practices)* for the reopening of the TVET facility and for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19; consider all training sites, the tasks that trainees carry out in training, and potential sources of exposure. While these guidelines will assist in developing your plan, the plan should be customised based on your own specific needs.

Consider topics such as:

- new regulations/policies (in light of the pandemic)
- modified school-day routine
- sensitisation of staff and students to COVID-19
- specialised classroom and workshop layout
- adaptation of the environment
- formation of trainee groups
- learners with special education needs (*refer to Framework for Reopening of Schools (CDB/CARICOM/IIEP)*
- infrastructure (physical and I.T)
- enterprise-based training
- community-based training and work-experience
- communication strategies (trainees and staff)

The plan may have short-term, medium and long-term programming goals and objectives. Table 1, for example, presents three (3) main objectives that TVET programmes may work towards during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, and provides actions that may be undertaken in three potentially-overlapping phases of the crisis. Member States should assess where they are and apply the relevant policy actions.

Table 1: TVET and COVID-19 Relevant Stages

	Coping	**Managing Continuity**	**Improving and Accelerating Progress**
	TVET AND COVID-19 RELEVANT STAGES		
OBJECTIVE	**Reduce learning losses while TVET Institutions are closed and support emergency response through skills training**	**Promote learning recovery as TVET Institutions and businesses gradually reopen**	**Build on innovative policy responses and lessons learned during the first two phases and build back better programmes**
POLICY ACTIONS	• Provide remote TVET learning where possible • Continue CVQ and other work-based learning *(on site and/or online)* where possible • Engage TVET teachers, instructors and trainees in provision of skills for the emergency response *(e.g. health care workers, health/personal care services)* • Where possible, take advantage of opportunities to re-train and up-skill laid-off or unemployed workers • Train TVET instructors to develop and transition theory courses to online delivery	• Embed hygiene skills in TVET programmes • Work with employers on adapting safe work conditions for CVQ and other work-based learning • Reopen institutions and work experience and/or placements with flexibility to accommodate varying needs and contexts • Recognise prior learning obtained during closure • Provide psycho-social support to manage mental health impacts of the crisis • Provide customised support for vulnerable trainees • Prepare for rapid assessment and response to emerging skill needs *(signals from employers and labour market assessment surveys)*	• Design new, or expand current programmes in collaboration with employers, to address emerging skill needs, • Invest in providing flexible *(e.g. modular, unit, customised, part-time, evening)* learning • Facilitate modular/unit training and customised certification in TVET/CVQ and life-long learning • Work in partnership with employers to provide rapid and modular/unit skills training to unemployed or laid-off workers • Continue to build on remote/distance learning infrastructure and skills • Embed successful innovations from Stages 1 and 2 in skill development systems

(Adapted from UNESCO-UNEVOC – 2020)

Step 3. Conduct a Risk Assessment

Prior to reopening of the training facility, conduct a risk assessment and put proportionate control measures in place. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect staff, trainees and others from COVID-19 within the education and training setting.

Using the CANTA Q.A. Criteria Risk Assessment Guidelines, revisit and update risk assessments. Build on the learning to date and the practices already developed and consider any additional risks and control measures to enable the return of all learners, whether for Institutional-Based Training (IBT), Community-Based Training (CBT), or Enterprise-Based Training (EBT), *(see Risk Assessment for Employers p.31)* or Special Education Needs (SEN) students. Implement control measures that follow the health and safety hierarchy of control *(See Section C on Best Practices)* to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level, and put in place active arrangements to monitor that the controls are effective, working as planned, and updated appropriately considering the issues identified.

Record details of:
- risk assessments
- the measures taken to reduce these risks
- expected outcomes

Review your assessment if:
- it is no longer valid
- there has been a significant change in related matters

Review and refresh the health and safety risk assessment as part of the planning for the reopening of the training facility. Identify and mitigate all risks of exposure to trainees and staff at the facility arising from COVID-19 in terms of person-to-person infection or contact with contaminated surfaces, tools, equipment or machinery. Having assessed the risks, adopt specific measures that address them, and that will allow for the safe delivery of education and training for all learners. A sample of a Risk Register is provided in Table 2 as an example of risks associated with Human Resources as a result of COVID-19 and Table 3, Risk Assessment to mitigate against drop-outs in the TVET System.

Risks associated with Human Resources as a result of COVID-19

Table 2: Risk Register

	Risk Description	Cause	Impact	Inherent Risk Level			Risk Response	Mitigating Strategy	Implemented (Y/N/P)	Residual Risk Level		
				Likelihood	Impact	Score						
HR	High Workforce Absenteeism	High rate of Employee Illness Restricted travel Fear of Contagion	Low/lost Productivity Failed achievement of objectives	5	4	20	Treat	Work from Home or remote location Staggering work hours to reduce number of employees in work-space	Y Y	4	3	12

Risk assessment to mitigate against drop-outs in the TVET System

Table 3: Risk Assessment of drop-outs in the TVET System

Issue	Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Background **Risk of dropouts from the TVET system** is a critical issue that negatively impacts the performance of the system. Students experience several challenges during this time of the pandemic, resulting in drop-outs.		
Socioeconomic situation Increased unemployment: Parents are losing their jobs (trainees are affected) and many trainees/students need to help out by providing some income for themselves and their families	Some trainees are dropping out of programmes to help augment household income	Further research needs to be conducted e.g. conduct an audit of the specific issues that affect trainees The level of Career Development Services should be expanded in

Issue	Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Decreased economic environment leads to reduced funds	Student/trainee access to infrastructure causes learning to be hampered as limited or no access to learning devices (e.g. tablets, computers) and internet services is a major issue Some institutions may not be able to obtain and implement online platforms and other resources for implementation of technology enabled learning	order to be able to track trainees' attendance and reasons for not attending training on a continuous basis Funding should be sourced to assist training providers to access/purchase the infrastructure and to provide resources to the students for practice and assessment Implement strategies where the trainees can do productive work (monetary incentive) so while they are learning, they are also earning Training providers should work with NGOs, social welfare organisations and government institutions to put support structures in place to help disadvantaged trainees (e.g. assist with transportation and other learner needs) Implement Learner contracts Identify international learning resources (free software learning programmes) Develop creative innovative teaching/learning resources and identify funding sources for other urgent resources
Infrastructure Availability of ICT infrastructure for students and institutions	Learning is hampered Access to devices and internet services is a major issue. Some institutions may not be	As a mitigation strategy, introduce the use of a smart board embedded with practical simulations in various technical areas. This can compensate for face-to-face delivery, observing all

Issue	Risk	Mitigation Strategy
	able to use online platforms and many students will be left out of teaching learning activities	protocols (e.g. video recording to be accessed at home) Use of simulation software platforms can help in terms of keeping students active in the various skill forms
Competencies Student's and instructor's competency in using the online modality system	Delivery of teaching is hampered as teaching/ learning strategies do not match objectives	Technology instructors to train other instructors and trainees on navigating the online environment Students encouraged to practice at home (maybe pairing with other trainees residing in close proximity – a buddy system). If possible, use and upgrade a mobile lab and any other available resources as outreach to trainees in remote areas.

Step 4. Develop and Communicate the Message

The main message that needs to be developed and communicated is the promotion of hygiene and the safety and well-being of staff and students in the TVET classroom, laboratory, workshop and workplace, in light of the pandemic. Messaging should include the following:

- **Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend classes for training**

  If students are unwell, or suspect that they have the virus, they should not report to the facility. If they fall ill at the facility, follow the local health authority guidelines. The temperature should be taken of each individual arriving at the facility. Everyone must wash his/her hands thoroughly for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitiser, after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant after he/she has left, to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to students and staff.

- **Clean hands thoroughly, more often than usual**

  Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an easy virus to kill when it is on the skin. This may be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser. Ensure that learners clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at the training facility, when they return from breaks, when they change classrooms or workshops, and before and after eating. Regular and thorough hand cleaning (See Section C on Best Practices) is going to be needed for the foreseeable future.

- **Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach**

  Reduce transmission from surfaces and objects (See detailed Cleaning Guidelines in separate document). The virus that causes COVID-19 may be transferred to surfaces or objects. Trainees may be infected if they touch their faces with contaminated hands. Your Health and Safety Policy will contain procedures to make sure the facility is disinfected and kept free of the virus as much as possible. High-touch surfaces should be cleaned at least twice a day.

  To reduce transmission:

  a) consider whether you need to clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and common areas more than twice a day

  b) assign tools, equipment and workstations to a single user if possible, or limit the number of users

  c) regularly clean and disinfect any shared equipment and tools, including between users

- *Put in place a cleaning schedule that ensures cleaning is generally enhanced and includes more frequent cleaning of classrooms, laboratories, and workshops that are shared, or that are used by different skill area groups; make sure that frequently touched surfaces are being cleaned more often than normal.*

- **Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distance**

  Minimising contact and mixing between people reduces transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is important in all contexts, and Management should consider how to implement this. Everything possible should be done to minimise contact and mixing of trainees while delivering a full programme of study.

  The overarching principle to apply is reducing the number of contacts between people in the facility, including learners and staff. This may be achieved through keeping groups separate (in 'bubbles') and through maintaining social distance (See Best Practice in Part

C on social distancing) *between individuals. These are not alternative options and both measures will help, but the balance between them will change depending on the age groups of learners, the layout of the building, and the feasibility of keeping distinct groups separate while offering the CVQ Training Programme.*

- **Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)**

Personal protective gear includes items such as safety boots, safety goggles, face shields, masks, ear plugs or muffs, hard hats, gloves, aprons, coveralls, and fall arrest devices.

As is customary in TVET, protective gear is used by trainees according to the industry guidelines. Each CVQ standard addresses health and safety in the occupation. Wear additional appropriate PPE such as masks and face shields as dictated by the local health authority and/or the industry, e.g. in personal care services such as barbering, health care, cosmetology, hairdressing, massage therapy, and garment production.

It is advisable that trainees wear a mask, especially inside buildings *(See Section C Best Practices on the wearing of masks).* *Aside from face masks in some skill areas, and the use of gloves, the majority of instructors and teachers and trainees in the training facility should not require additional PPE beyond what is usually needed in the workshop or workplace for those in enterprises.*

Use of masks in Garment Production

Trainees should follow the same safety and health procedures in their occupational area according to industry specifications when doing their practical work (e.g. following health and safety in garment production or in hairdressing practicals as they would in salons).
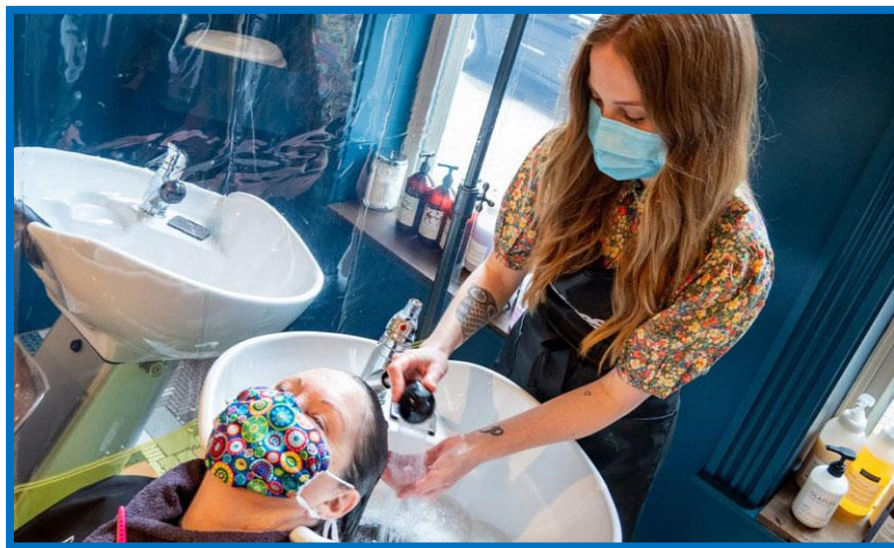
Use of masks in Hairdressing

Depending on the level of resources, the training facility should use a variety of options to relay the message, such as:

a) developing a student-friendly brochure

b) developing a series of posters

c) communicating the message via email of WhatsApp (or appropriate means)

d) conducting orientation and sensitisation sessions with staff and students

e) providing signage at hand-washing facilities that demonstrate proper hand washing

f) distributing educational leaflets

g) training, supporting occupational safety, health measures and hygiene practices

h) creating a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ)

Set up or use current internal communication systems to provide frequent reminders and updates. Use a variety of ways to reach trainees, such as:

a) posting notices in common areas

b) emails

c) virtual team meetings

d) intercom announcements

A TVET workshop with floor markings and CORONAVIRUS poster

Step 5: Prepare the Training Facility (Physical)

Based on the outcome of your risk assessment, prepare the facility.

- Ensure that the site has enough hand washing or hand sanitiser stations available so that all trainers and staff may clean their hands regularly.

- Update IT infrastructures, systems, and internet connection for better communication and ease of operation through ICT.

- Adjust the layout of workshop areas to comply with the physical distancing requirements; use back-to-back or side-to-side work stations where possible.

- Ensure that sufficient waste containers are in all classrooms, workshops and laboratories.

- Install transparent screens, walls and doors it needed, using screens or barriers to separate trainees/staff from each other.

- Use floor tape or paint to mark areas to help people keep to a 2-metre distance.

- Create relevant posters and signage and place in appropriate areas throughout the facility (on door entrances, beside wash stations, etc.).

- Finally, conduct a walk-through site visit to determine your level of compliance with health and safety requirements *(use the checklists provided in Section D)*.

Step 6: Prepare the Human and Administrative Systems

- Capacitate all trainers and facilitators on the use of e-learning/online systems.

- Review and update your CBET Curriculum and Training Plans to include health and hygiene in light of COVID-19.

- Revise Application/Registration Forms to accommodate electronic format on your website.

- Reduce the number of trainees coming into contact with each other by placing them in 'fixed teams' or permanent learning groups and maintain a record of seat plans.

- Stagger departure and arrival times (shift system) to limit contact of staff and trainees.

- Develop and communicate a protocol for the wearing and removal of masks.

- If possible, extend the hours of the training institute to ensure the delivery of the curricula as planned.

- Revise work-based learning partnerships/arrangements with employers (*see #16 in Part B, and Employer Risk Guideline in Part C – Best Practice).*

- Create a YouTube Learning Channel for the institution; include virtual simulation lessons as much as possible.

- Prepare an orientation programme for facilitators and trainees and include information on:
    - *health and hygiene with COVID-19*
    - *independent learning*
    - *discouraging learners from sharing learning materials/small tools while training.*

- Put in place counselling services to take care of any socio-psychological issues that trainees may have as a result of the pandemic.

- Keep activity time by trainees, visitors, clients, etc. in the Administrative Office/Reception Area as brief as possible.

- Develop and implement a plan to convert learning materials to on-line delivery.

- Identify relevant open source software and learning materials for use by trainers and trainees.

Part B: Resumption of On-Site Training Delivery

- Conduct an orientation programme with staff and trainees on Preventive Measures in the Workshop. It may be useful to meet with staff first, then afterwards with the trainees.

- Disinfect training premises
  - *mop or clean floors with disinfectants at the start of each shift, and doors, handles and railings must be cleaned with disinfectant twice a day*
  - *maintain a record of this activity*

- Keep doors and windows open for better ventilation if possible.

- If conducive, encourage outdoor classes, allowing for physical distancing of 1.5 metres per trainee.

- When indoors, where possible, provide each trainee with 4 square metres of space in a room. To achieve this, calculate the area of the room (length multiplied by width in metres) and divide by 4; this will tell you the maximum number of people you should have in the space at any one time.

- Provide alcohol, hand sanitiser, or a wash area in every training room, workshop and other heavily trafficked area.

- For face-to-face training, strictly follow the implementation of physical distancing requirements of 3 feet/1 metre between trainees (placing barriers, plastic dividers, cubicles where feasible).

- For Enterprise-Based Training, ensure formal arrangements are made with employers to comply with health and hygiene arrangements **(*See Risk Assessment for Employers p.28).*

- Monitor the flow of movement in the facility several times a day to ensure compliance with social and physical distancing among staff and trainees, and to make sure there is soap and sanitiser available at hand washing basins.

- Limit the number of students who may use labs, workshops or studios at any one time – e.g. stagger access times and restrict mixing between groups if possible.

- Avoid singing activities and the playing of musical instruments.

- Reduce the number of computers available for use in computer labs at any one time e.g. only allow every second computer to be used.

- Where possible, implement separate entrances and exits into classrooms and workshops, or stagger entry and exit times.

- Implement electronic or virtual methods for delivering student administrative and support services where possible and appropriate.

- Postpone non-essential work and activities, including sporting and social activities, until the all-clear is given by health authorities.

- Review tasks and processes that usually require close interaction and identify ways to modify or improve the processes on a timely basis; retain as an agenda item for discussion at the Quality Assurance Committee Meeting.

- Where students are required to undertake work placement, or work experience as a component of training, engage with the trainees and employer organisation to assess the risks. Depending on the level of risk, you may need to consider adjusting the placement and training to ensure health and safety *(see Employer's Risk Assessment Guideline in Part C - Best Practice).*

- Particular care should be taken if a trainee routinely attends more than one setting on a part-time basis, or moves between a training provider and workplace as part of the work experience agreement. If possible, use block release in reducing movement between training sites.

Consider what is right for your local context, based on your risk assessment and your particular needs.

Using every other computer in the IT laboratory

Part C: Best Practices

A number of best practices are currently in use in a few NTAs/training facilities across the region that have already reopened. They include the need to prepare as soon as possible for the reopening of the facility, to ensure that appropriate strategies are defined and that the facility is ready to operate once confinement measures end.

Communication is key to building trust among stakeholders and partners. Therefore, it is important to ensure there are effective communication channels within the training facility and with the wider school community, the government, health authorities, parents, employers, trade unions, and other education training providers and partners.

Other best practices include:

- using IT instructors in facilities to train other trainers to transition to online delivery
- establishing COVID-19 Protocols for your facility
- developing a COVID-Response Safety Plan
- developing an information booklet/leaflet/brochure for trainees
- ensuring that the message is communicated to all trainees
- developing and implementing a Risk Management Register with mitigation strategies
- using a virtual platform to continue training and assessment
- implementing flexible working arrangements such as the staggering of shifts and work days

- partnering with telecommunication companies to increase internet access or bandwidth for training providers and trainees
- using the organisation's technology platform to allow staff to work from home where feasible
- training all instructors on the development of digital online/distance materials
- sourcing appropriate online learning materials for training delivery
- allowing Garment Production trainees to support health and safety in the country by producing and supplying masks as a business venture
- providing counselling for students who may be traumatised or severely affected by the pandemic
- providing a mentor for each trainee who is on work experience
- documenting or reporting on each stage of the re-opening process for review and continuous improvement

## Making of Posters and Signage for the Training Facility
(Examples provided)

Maintaining Physical Distance

- Social (physical) distancing works by limiting the number of people with whom you come into close contact (within 2 metres/6 feet).

- Maintain a distance between people while indoors and reduce the amount of time they are in face-to-face contact, to lower the risk of transmission.

- Health providers strongly advise that staff maintain distance from their learners:

  – *stay at the front of the room*

  – *stay away from their colleagues where possible*

- Ideally, adults should maintain 2-metre distance from each other. In particular, they should avoid close face-to-face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone (this may not be possible when doing practicals with clients who have complex needs or who need close contact care; these learners' educational and care support should be provided as normal).

- Trainees should also be encouraged to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible (this will not be possible for learners with special needs and it is not feasible in some training/assessment sites where space does not allow).

- When staff or trainees cannot maintain distancing, the risk may also be reduced by keeping learners in the smaller, class-sized groups described previously.

- Make small adaptations to classrooms or workshops to support distancing where possible. That might include moving unnecessary furniture out of rooms to make more space; considering desk layout; and seating learners side-by-side and facing forward rather than face-to-face, or side on.

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19
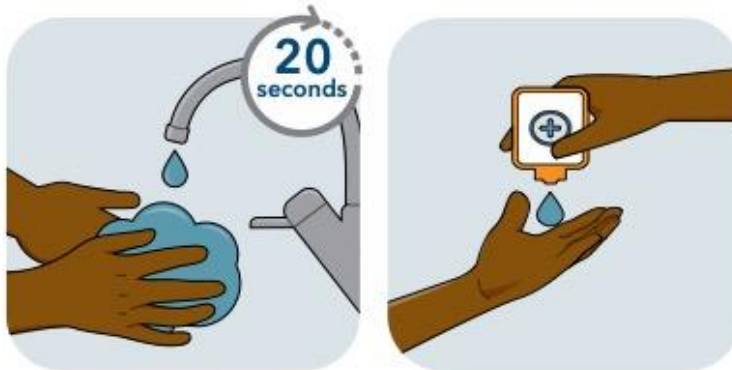
20 seconds

Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Wash your hands:

- When you arrive at the Workshop
- Before and after going on a break
- After using the washroom
- After handling cash or other materials that have come into contact with the public
- Before and after handling shared tools and equipment
- Before and after using masks or other personal protective equipment

Safe Working Environments and the Hierarchy of Controls

Hierarchy of Controls

A hierarchy of controls has been developed with elements closer to the top of the inverted triangle helping to eliminating the spread of COVID-19. Those closer to the tip of the triangle are for managing exposure. The hierarchy of controls first focuses on physical distancing to eliminate exposure to COVID-19; adjusting the workshop to enable physical distancing; adjusting processes and administrative controls; and providing PPE to help manage exposure.
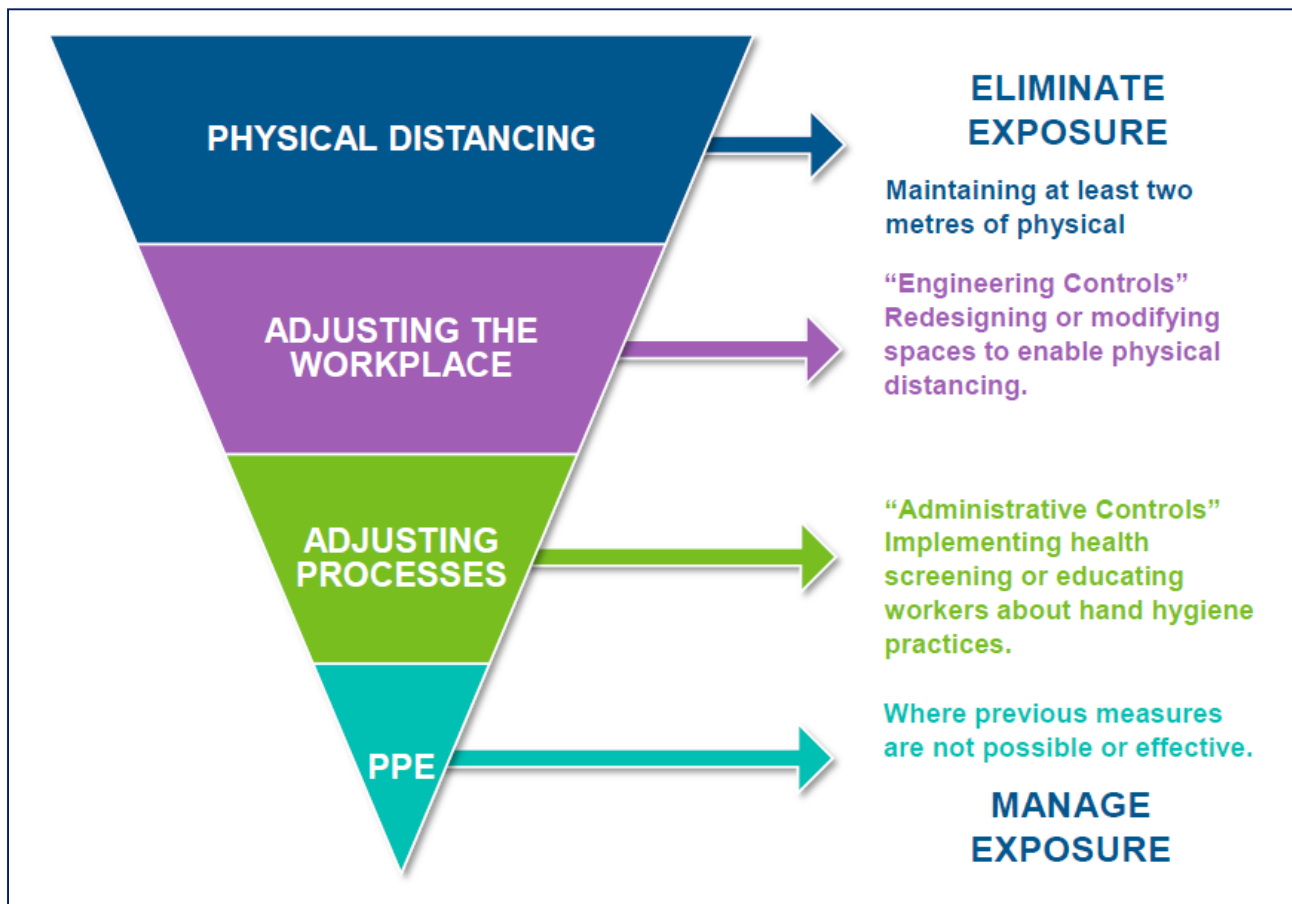
Safe Working Environments

The following guidelines are provided to ensure the health and safety in TVET environments, facilities and spaces for staff and learners.

Physical Distancing	Adjusting the Workshop	Adjusting Process	Providing PPE
Eliminate Exposure	Rearrange desks	Encourage trainees to practice good hand washing and hygiene techniques	Manage Exposure
Use technology	Space out work stations	Wash hands before and directly after use of tools and equipment contact	Use technology as much as possible
Maintain a physical distance of two metres from others	Install barriers or plexiglass between trainees.	Use gloves as much as possible	Maintain a physical distance of two metres from others
Restrict the number of learners onsite	Ensure proper and adequate ventilation in the room.	Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting	Restrict the number of staff onsite after classes
Manage traffic flow and use floor markings			Manage traffic flow and using floor markings

Face Coverings – Using Face masks

- Face coverings are mainly intended to protect others and not the wearer. It is advisable that all learners and staff wear masks.

- Wearing a reusable non-medical mask does not protect the person wearing the mask, but may help protect the people around them.

- In situations where maintaining consistent physical distancing is challenging, the use of masks is recommended as another tool that may help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.

- To be at all effective, masks must be worn properly *(See poster below)*. When masks are not worn properly they will not prevent the spread of COVID-19 to others and may also put the wearer at greater risk of infection.

When wearing a mask, you must:
- wash your hands immediately before putting it on and immediately after taking it off
- practice good hand hygiene while wearing the mask
- ensure your mask fits well (doesn't gape) and that it covers your nose, mouth and chin
- do not share your mask with others
- avoid touching your mask or face while wearing the mask
- if you need to adjust your mask, wash your hands immediately afterwards
- do not dangle your mask from one ear, or pull it below your nose or your mouth so that it is covering your chin
- masks may become contaminated on the outside, or when touched by your hands, so avoid touching your face mask while wearing it
- change your mask as soon as it is damp or soiled; while medical masks should be disposed of following use, reusable non-medical masks must be thoroughly washed and dried before use
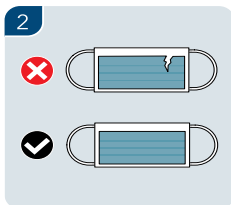

Use of masks on the Construction Site
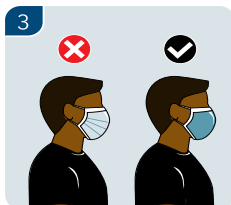
Make sure that you are wearing your mask correctly.

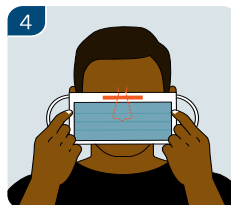**Help prevent the spread of COVID-19:** How to use a mask
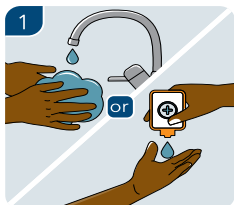
1 Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before touching the mask. If you don't have soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2 Inspect the mask to ensure it's not damaged.

3 Turn the mask so the coloured side is facing outward.

4 Put the mask over your face and if there is a metallic strip, press it to fit the bridge of your nose.
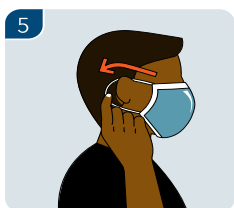
5 Put the loops around each of your ears, or tie the top and bottom straps.
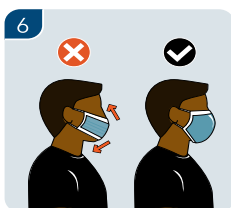
6 Make sure your mouth and nose are covered and there are no gaps. Expand the mask by pulling the bottom of it under your chin.

7 Press the metallic strip again so it moulds to the shape of your nose, and wash your hands again.

8 Don't touch the mask while you're wearing it. If you do, wash your hands.

9 Don't wear the mask if it gets wet or dirty. Don't reuse the mask. Follow correct procedure for removing the mask.

Removing the mask
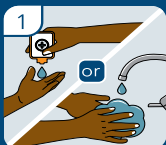
1 Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2 Lean forward to remove your mask. Touch only the ear loops or ties, not the front of the mask.

3 Dispose of the mask safely.
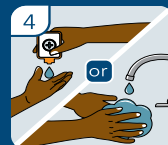
4 Wash your hands. If required, follow the procedure for putting on a new mask.

© CANTA Guidelines for the Safe
Operation of TVET Facilities
(August 2020)

Recommendations for Continuous Improvement in the Training Facility

As a quality assurance strategy, CANTA encourages continuous improvement in the TVET system. In light of the pandemic, the following recommendations are made:

- improve internet infrastructure and access to the internet
- expand access for learners to online digital application and platforms
- utilise inclusive digital and analogue technologies for distance learning and support to learners
- support teachers and trainers to operate in the new environment
- provide support, career guidance and digital skills development for learners
- increase distance and short course learning options for core, entrepreneurial and employability skills to vulnerable groups and individuals
- strengthen systems for the recognition and validation of digital learning
- increase investment in digital solutions for practical skills development
- improve social dialogue and coordination among education and training institutions, employment services and community associations
- monitor and evaluate the response to all the changes and adjustments that have been made since the reopening of the facility; document each and evaluate the level of success for further attention on future planning exercises

COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Employers

The risks associated with exposure to COVID-19 is not the same for all businesses and will depend on a range of factors, including the industry and nature of your work, your business size, workforce demographics and characteristics, etc. Consult with workers, along with your Ministry of Health/Labour, for any health and safety procedures when identifying risks and control measures for your workplace.

Key Considerations for Undertaking a Risk Assessment

Key considerations include (but are not be limited to):

- What is the latest advice from government and key industry, trade unions and employee associations on control measures?

- What is the current advice from health authorities on the current situation and numbers for COVID-19 cases in the local community/region?
  - *Information on the latest number and location of COVID-19 cases is available from CARICOM and OECS Secretariats, CARPHA and your own Ministry of Health/Health Authority.*

- What are the current legal requirements (e.g. public health orders, health directions) for my country/area and how do they apply to my business?

- Does the nature of the work undertaken by my business increase the risk of my workers being exposed to COVID-19?
  - *Does the work require regular and close contact between workers or with members of the community?*
  - *Can work processes or practices be reasonably modified?*
  - *Is working from home or modified shift arrangements possible?*
  - *Am I working in a high-risk (e.g. with vulnerable people) environment?*

- Does my workplace have facilities for hand washing and/or hand sanitising?
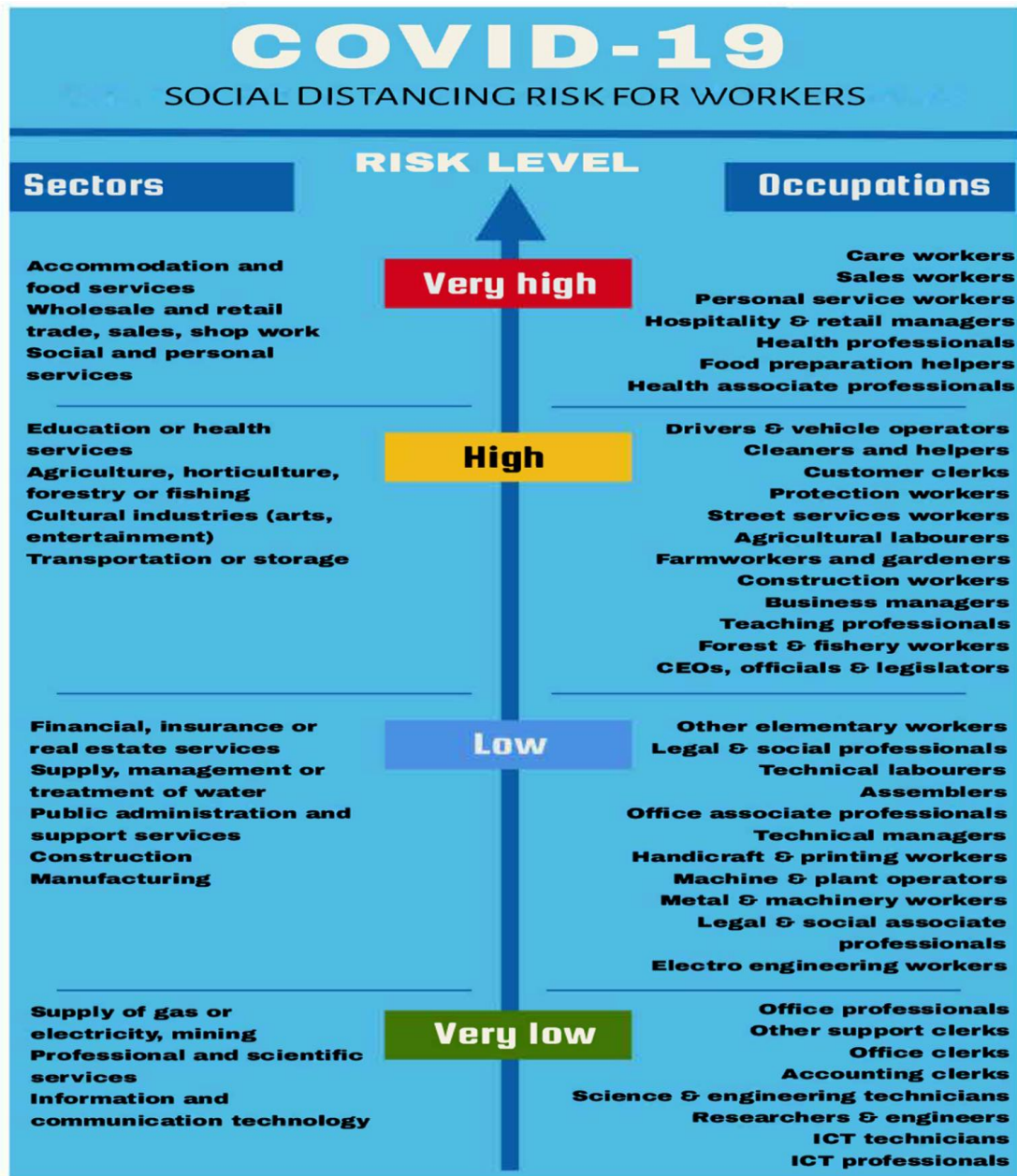 - *Are these sufficiently stocked and in good working order?*

- Does my workplace environment increase the risk of my workers, my trainees and/or clients being exposed to COVID-19 and can this be changed?
    - *What is the size of the workplace?*
    - *How many workers or others are at the workplace?*
    - *Is work done inside, outside or in vehicles?*
    - *Are there restrictive entry/exit points or high-touch points such as doors, elevators etc.? If so, what steps have I taken to reduce the risks at these points?*
    - *Can modifications be made to enable increased physical distancing (also known as social distancing)?*
    - *When last was my workplace emergency plan reviewed? Have I considered physical distancing considerations if the workplace needed to safely evacuate? (e.g. if there was a fire)*

- Do I have workers who fall within a vulnerable worker category?
    - *Vulnerable workers include the physically challenged, people 65/70 years and older with chronic medical conditions, and people with compromised immune systems.*
    - *If you have vulnerable workers in your workplace you must undertake a risk assessment that includes consideration of the characteristics of the worker, the workplace and the work. Seek medical advice as needed and keep information about a worker's medical condition confidential.*

- What are my current cleaning and disinfecting arrangements?
    - *Are they consistent with guidance provided by CARPHA/Local Health Authority?*
    - *Do I have, or have access to, sufficient and appropriate cleaning supplies, including detergents and disinfectants?*
    - *Have I identified and cleaned frequently touched surfaces?*
    - *Do I need to review arrangements (e.g. increase frequency) with the cleaners?*

- How prepared is my business if there is a case of COVID-19 in the workplace?

- Do workers understand the need to stay home if they are unwell, even if they think an illness is minor?

- Have I established and talked to my staff about the processes we will follow if COVID-19 directly affects the workplace (e.g. an infected person has been on site)?

- Can I get advice from industry and employee associations to stay informed on the risks?

- Do I have all workers' current contact details and their emergency contacts?

  - *Do I have records that will allow me to quickly identify which staff were in close contact with the infected person, e.g. work teams, shift rosters, who is eating in each lunchroom, response to unexpected issues such as plant breakdowns?*

  - *Have I trained workers about COVID-19, including how areas may need to be cleaned and disinfected in the event of any contamination and other risk controls?*

  - *Are formal arrangements in place for trainees or apprentices from NTAs in my business?*

  - *How will I stop individual workers with COVID-19 being stigmatised?*

  - *Are workers fearful of being at work? Have I checked in with them lately?*

- Is there an increased risk of violence in my workplace?
  - *Are customers likely to be stressed or frustrated, e.g. if products are restricted or no longer available?*

- What worker communication and support mechanisms are in place?
  - *Am I regularly checking that people are OK?*

  - *Do I have effective communication channels established to keep workers informed and consult them on key issues?*

  - *Is there any other support I may offer?*

  - *Have I considered how I will keep in touch with workers who may be more isolated because of working from home or other physical distancing arrangements?*

- Do the changes I plan to make to my business or changes arising from COVID-19 change the risk?
  - *Do they increase risks or introduce new risks I need to control?*

  - *Are there other things changing that might increase risks, like upset customers, working from home, increased demands, or shortage of safety supplies?*

- *Do I have processes in place to identify and respond to any other risks that arise once changes are implemented?*

- Do I have a plan to review my control measures to ensure they are effective?

Social Distancing Risk for Workers

COVID-19
SOCIAL DISTANCING RISK FOR WORKERS

RISK LEVEL

Sectors	Risk Level	Occupations
Accommodation and food services, Wholesale and retail trade, sales, shop work, Social and personal services	**Very high**	Care workers, Sales workers, Personal service workers, Hospitality & retail managers, Health professionals, Food preparation helpers, Health associate professionals
Education or health services, Agriculture, horticulture, forestry or fishing, Cultural industries (arts, entertainment), Transportation or storage	**High**	Drivers & vehicle operators, Cleaners and helpers, Customer clerks, Protection workers, Street services workers, Agricultural labourers, Farmworkers and gardeners, Construction workers, Business managers, Teaching professionals, Forest & fishery workers, CEOs, officials & legislators
Financial, insurance or real estate services, Supply, management or treatment of water, Public administration and support services, Construction, Manufacturing	**Low**	Other elementary workers, Legal & social professionals, Technical labourers, Assemblers, Office associate professionals, Technical managers, Handicraft & printing workers, Machine & plant operators, Metal & machinery workers, Legal & social associate professionals, Electro engineering workers
Supply of gas or electricity, mining, Professional and scientific services, Information and communication technology	**Very low**	Office professionals, Other support clerks, Office clerks, Accounting clerks, Science & engineering technicians, Researchers & engineers, ICT technicians, ICT professionals

Checklists and Templates

In keeping with the CBET delivery approach, checklists are developed and used to easily determine if any gaps exist in the level of compliance so that proper corrective action may be taken. The following checklists are to be used in association with the corresponding area in Parts A and B.

Checklist 1 – Reopening of TVET Institutions

Planning Ahead

- ✓ Nominate a staff member or establish a committee to:
    - champion safe practices in the institution
    - teach proper procedures
    - convey information to colleagues and learners

- ✓ Develop a safe plan to ensure business continuity, if there is a suspected or confirmed outbreak of COVID-19 in the institution.

- ✓ Consider what is to be done if a staff member or student is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. *(How is the individual to be supported? What is necessary in order to ensure that the institution remains safe for others on the property?*

- ✓ Consider if you have appropriate cleaning products and PPE available to disinfect workshops following an outbreak. If you do not, consider options for hiring a cleaning company to do this work.

- ✓ Have a protocol in place for reopening the institution after an outbreak or quarantine period.

- ✓ Consult with staff about returning to the institution and ensure return-to-work arrangements are consistent with public health requirements.

- ✓ Arrange a contact person to whom learners may talk about any related health concerns.

- ✓ Conduct a risk assessment the risks resulting from any changes to work practices, procedures, or the work environment.

✓ Implement control measures to eliminate, or if not reasonably practicable, manage identified risks, taking into account:
  - local Ministry of Health Guidelines
  - CARPHA Guidelines
  - local Ministry of Labour Work Guidelines

✓ Communicate with staff and learners about new policies put in place or updated (e.g. incident reporting processes), and any changes to emergency plans.

✓ Review and, if necessary, update your emergency plan with the Management Team.

✓ Discuss how you will manage and respond to a potential further outbreak of COVID-19.

✓ Review working environment checklist *(No.2)* and redesign procedures and practices to ensure physical distancing, cleaning, and hygiene.

✓ Ensure workshop is supplied with cleaning, disinfectant, and hygiene products, and that all instructors and learners have appropriate PPE and are instructed and trained in their use. *(see posters on proper wearing of masks and hand washing)*

Checklist 2 – Keeping Learners in the Workshop Safe to Limit the Spread of COVID-19

Physical Distancing
✓ Erect posters around the workshop on keeping at least 1.5 metres distance between learners in the workshop.

✓ Form teaching groups of no more than 10-15 learners per group. Maintain the same group throughout the learning experience in order to easily identify individuals and reduce the spread of the virus to other groups.

✓ Erect signs at the entrances to meeting rooms to ensure the maximum safe capacity is not exceeded.

✓ If possible, introduce shift arrangements so fewer staff and learners are in the environment at once.

✓ Conduct meetings by phone or online (Zoom/Skype etc.) instead of in person. If in-person meetings are held, use a large space, keep meetings short and observe physical distancing

✓ Provide social distancing markers on the shop floor where trainees perform tasks.

Checklist 3 – Hand washing and Hygiene

✓ Provide sufficient wash basins and hand sanitiser stations for staff and trainees to use

✓ Ensure any areas frequented by learners are cleaned at least twice daily with detergent or disinfectant.

✓ Instruct trainees to wear gloves when cleaning and to wash their hands thoroughly with soap, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves.

✓ Clean frequently touched areas and surfaces (e.g. hand tools, equipment, handrails, tables, counter tops, door knobs, sinks, and keyboards) several times a day with a detergent or disinfectant solution or wipe.

✓ Instruct trainees to clean personal property that they bring to the workshop, such as their tools, mobile phones, tablets and iPads, with disinfectant/disinfectant wipes, before and after use in the workshop.

Checklist 4 – Cleaning the Workshop and Laboratories
(See separate document with details)

This checklist will assist you in implementing health and hygiene measures in the workshop and to conduct a review of your facilities.

Routine Cleaning
Do I have?
✓ Detergent, either as a solution that is mixed with water, or disinfectant wipes.

✓ A 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant solution/disinfectant wipes for routine cleaning.

When is cleaning done?

- ✓ The workshop is cleaned at the end of the work day using a detergent, or a 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant solution.

- ✓ Frequently touched surfaces such as tabletops, shelves, door handles, light switches, desks, storage cabinets, taps and cupboard handles are focused on.

- ✓ Objects and surfaces used repeatedly by the trainees frequently throughout the day are cleaned using a detergent, or 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant solution.

- ✓ Surfaces and fittings that are visibly soiled, or after any spillage, are cleaned as soon as possible using a detergent, or a 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant solution.

- ✓ Trainees are instructed to clean personal property such as mobile phones and laptops/tablets that have been brought to the training facility and handled in the workshop or during breaks, with a detergent or 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant solution/disinfectant wipes.

How do I clean safely?

- ✓ Read the product label and Material Safety Data Sheet for the cleaning product(s) before using, and make sure you follow all instructions, including the use of all required PPE. Also make sure the product is suitable for use on the surface you are cleaning.

- ✓ Instruct workers to wear gloves when cleaning and ensure they know to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water, or to use alcohol-based hand sanitiser if they cannot wash their hands, both before and after wearing gloves.

- ✓ If possible, use disposable gloves when cleaning and discard after each use. Otherwise, only use reusable gloves for routine cleaning and do not share gloves between workers.

What do I do after cleaning?

- ✓ Dispose of any disposable cloths in a garbage bag, or wash reusable cloths thoroughly.

Template for Developing a COVID-19 Safety Plan

Use this template to document how your facility will keep trainees and staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Provide as much information in response to each of the questions; this will help management and administrators know exactly what to do and what to expect. The last page will help you create a snapshot version of your plan to post in the training facility. This can act as a reference for staff and trainees and will let others who come into the TVET facility (e.g. quality auditors, external verifiers) know what is being done to help keep everyone in the facility safe. Review the Plan regularly and make changes as required.

How will you ensure that all staff and trainees know how, and are able to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19?

Consider: What guidance will you need to provide? How will you share information? Do you need new or more frequent types of communication? Where will you update yourself on new COVID-19 guidance?

Example: Ensure our procedures are up-to-date by a daily review of Ministry of Health (MOH) guidance.

Actions: [List your actions here. Note who is responsible for each action.]

How will you screen for COVID-19?

Consider: How you will stay current about what symptoms to look for? Will you use a screening checklist? Who will do the screening? Who needs to be screened and how often?

Example: To find out if staff and trainees are well when they come to the facility, we will ask each person some basic questions about their physical health and symptoms using the Ministry of Health list of COVID-19 symptoms.

Actions: [List your actions here. Note who is responsible for each action.]

How will you control the risk of transmission in the training facility?

Consider: What guidelines and administrative protocols you will use, including how you will maximise distance and separation, reduce transmission from surfaces and objects, and support good hand and respiratory hygiene. What changes will you make?

Who needs to be in the training facility? How will you gather ideas about different ways of working?

Example: We have a new policy that limits time in the storeroom to 10 minutes; we have marked out the seating area in the trainee lunch room and we have changed how we schedule shifts and breaks.

Actions: [List your actions here. Note who is responsible for each action.]

What will you do if there is a potential case or suspected exposure to COVID-19 at the training facility?

Consider: What is the contact information for the Ministry of Health/Health authority? What are your isolation procedures? How will you gather contact information for contact tracing if needed?

Example: We have designated a safe isolation area/sickbay and created a checklist with the procedures of what to do if someone gets sick, including key contact numbers.

Actions: [List your actions here. Note who is responsible for each action.]

How will you manage any new risks caused by operational changes?

Consider: Review existing critical risks and whether work practice changes will affect your current risk management strategy. Are any new risks introduced due to changes in trainee numbers or work practices of admin staff? What new risk controls are required?

Example: We will establish regular check-ins with staff and trainees about how they are coping with the change to shifts.

Actions: [List your actions here. Note who is responsible for each action.]

How will you make sure your plan is working?

Consider: How often will you schedule a review of your plan? How will you get input and ideas from employers and partners? Who is responsible for evaluating how things

are working and for adapting the plan as you find better/easier ways to do things? How will you communicate the changes?

Example: We will set up a weekly meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee, the Principal/Manager and the health and safety representative.

Actions: [List your actions here. Note who is responsible for each action.]

[Name of Training Facility] – COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN

(*This snapshot should be posted in a place where it may be seen easily by staff, trainees, and other people entering the training facility so they will know what actions are being taken*).

Measures We Are Taking

1) **What we will do if there is a potential case or suspected exposure to COVID-19 here**
   [List your measures here]

2) **How we are managing new risks caused by the changes made to the way we operate our business**
   [List your measures here]

3) **How we're making sure our plan is working**
   [List your measures here]

4) **How we're ensuring workers know how to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19**
   [List your measures here]

5) **How we're screening for COVID-19**
   [List your measures here]

6) **How we're controlling the risk of transmission here (name of facility)**
   – *Physical distancing and separation*
     [List your measures here]
   – *Cleaning*
     [List your measures here]

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Regional Guidelines

for

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Institutions

and

Implementation of

Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ)

in the Caribbean during COVID-19