



## Colwest Alpine Adventures – Covid-19 Best Practices

### Preamble:

Colwest Alpine Adventures (Colwest) is committed to the safety of our participants, staff and the general public. We are looking forward to the Avalanche Skills Training season of 2020/21. Our intention is to deliver the same high quality of instruction that past participants have become accustomed to, while implementing and maintaining the necessary safety protocols in order to minimize the impacts of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and follow existing Federal, Provincial, Municipal or Regional health orders.

Instructors on all Colwest programs are trained in current industry best practices for protecting the health and safety of everyone on our programs, as well as to continuing to limit the spread of Covid-19. Please refer to [WorkSafeBC Updates](#) and the [Provincial Health Officer Orders](#). For up-to-date information on COVID-19, please refer to [BC Centre for Disease Control](#).

- **Physical distancing:** removing the hazard from the trip or substituting the activity with a less hazardous one; for example, deciding not to engage in an activity.
- **Engineering solutions:** implementing modifications that alter the way the activity is done, including equipment, communications, and processes that reduce the exposure to risk and that allow appropriate incident response; for example, implementing radio communications.
- **Administrative decision-making:** implementing controls that alter the way the activity is run, including timing of itineraries, standard operating practices, and operational procedures; for example, implementing a policy to contract travel to a professional transportation company.
- **Using Protective Equipment:** requiring that appropriate equipment be worn or used by individuals to reduce exposure or consequence.

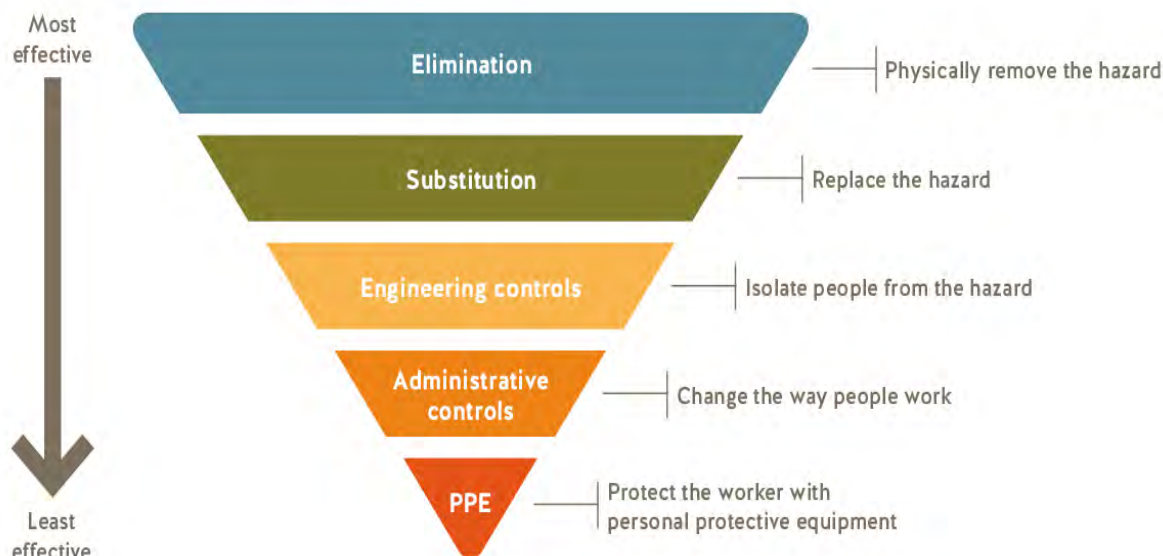
### Five Principles for Every Situation

| Five Principles for Every Situation   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Personal Hygiene:   | Stay Home if You Are Sick:  | Environmental Hygiene:  | Safe Social Distancing  | Physical Modification  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent handwashing</li> <li>• Cough or sneeze into your sleeve</li> <li>• Wear a non-medical mask</li> <li>• No handshaking</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine daily screening</li> <li>• Anyone with any symptoms must stay away from others</li> <li>• Returning travelers must self-isolate</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More frequent cleaning</li> <li>• Enhance surface sanitation in high touch areas</li> <li>• Touch-less technology</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with small numbers of people</li> <li>• Maintain distance between you and people</li> <li>• Size of room: the bigger the better</li> <li>• Outdoor over indoor</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spacing within rooms or in transit</li> <li>• Room design</li> <li>• Plexiglass barriers</li> <li>• Movement of people within spaces</li> </ul> |

Physical distancing remains the most important criterion to comply with standing [WorkSafeBC Updates](#) and the Provincial Health Officer Orders, but while the controls are listed in order of effectiveness, all four types of controls should be considered, as they often work best in combination.

In an effort to reduce potential Covid-19 transmission between course participants, all theory portions of our course curriculum will be delivered in an online, virtual manner.

## Hierarchy of controls



For up-to-date information on COVID-19, please refer to [BC Centre for Disease Control](#).

## Colwest Alpine Adventure - Operations

### 1. Employment Policies

#### 1. Employer Responsibilities

- Communicate with instructors about potential exposure to COVID-19. A system has been developed whereby workers are able to inform management of concerns related to being exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace. Workers should know and understand their workplace health and safety responsibilities - and those of others
  - Workers have three key rights: the right to know about hazards in the workplace;
  - the right to participate in health and safety activities in the workplace;
  - and the right to refuse unsafe work.
- Workers in B.C. have the right to refuse work if they believe it presents an undue hazard. An undue hazard is an “unwarranted, inappropriate, excessive, or disproportionate” risk, above and beyond the potential exposure a general member of the public would face through regular, day-to-day activity. In these circumstances, the worker should follow some specific steps within their workplace to resolve the issue. The worker would begin by reporting the undue hazard to their employer for investigation and the employers would then need to consider the refusal on a case-by-case basis, depending on the situation;
- If the matter is not resolved, the worker and the supervisor or employer must contact WorkSafeBC and a prevention officer will then investigate and take steps to find a workable solution for all involved;
- Employers must regularly assess all the hazards within their operations, taking appropriate steps to eliminate or control them. Such controls will include adhering to current public health orders, public health advice as well as implementing best practices to keep your instructors and participants safe;

- Colwest has established a workflow in the workplace that is consistent with current industry best practices and compliant with directives from the BC PHO. This workflow will cover all areas of the operation including but not limited to PPE requirements and sanitation;
- In situations where a worker has the symptoms of COVID-19 they will be required to stay home and Colwest will offer sick pay.

### *II. Worker Responsibilities*

- All workers will undergo a detailed training session on the current workflow procedures upon being hired for the season. At the beginning of each shift Colwest will conduct remind all workers to review any updates in our workflow;
- Workers are expected to exercise all reasonable measures to limit their exposure to the COVID-19 virus while not at work. Prior to beginning a work shift each worker must conduct the self-assessment tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) and fill out a health declaration which includes current health status, recent travel, recent illness or contact with others who may have the COVID-19 virus. Alternatively, workers may choose to work longer shifts and/or remain with one operation so as to eliminate the need for the self-isolation period;
- Any employee experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19 while at work will immediately report to Colwest management and prevent any contact with students. Any employee who experiences symptoms associated with COVID-19 while away from work will notify Colwest, and will not be permitted to come to work until they are past the recommended isolation period;

### *III. Instructors Must*

- Practice physical distancing by working more than 2 metres (6 feet) apart from co-workers whenever possible;
- Continue to follow all safe work procedures. If it is unsafe to work, advise Colwest;
- Stay home if they are sick or might be sick. Use the BC Ministry of Health for self-assessment: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>;
- Avoid touching their face
- Wash their hands at the start of their shift, before eating or drinking, after touching shared items, after using the washroom, after handling cash or credit/debit cards, after touching common items, after each delivery if contact was made, and at the end of their shift. Remove jewelry while washing

## **2. Transportation**

### **a) Physical Distancing & Protective Equipment**

#### *I. Meeting Areas:*

- Physical distancing is paramount;
- Respect all physical distancing guidelines, and if possible, schedule participants to interact with others at different times;
- Will be outside whenever practicable.

#### *II. Transportation:*

- When more than one worker is traveling, physical distancing practices apply. Shared travel with more than one person must be minimized;
- Participants must drive independently or else only with those whom they will share their accommodation, or are part of a recognized family “pod”;
- Any type of common transportation method will not be utilized for any course activity.

#### b) **Engineering - Avalanche Safety Equipment**

At the start of each course day, throughout the day and at the end of each day, Colwest management will clean and disinfect any rented, or “common” equipment using an alcohol-based cleaner and/or disinfecting wipes.

Loaned equipment will be limited to the following companion rescue equipment (note, many course participants will have their own equipment)

- avalanche transceiver;
- avalanche shovel;
- avalanche probe;
- saw.

#### c) **Protective Equipment**

In the unlikely event physical distancing is not possible, course participants and staff must wear Personal Protective Equipment

- Appropriate personal hygiene (hand-washing, etc) is encouraged and facilitated by provision of hand sanitizer on all programs.
- Participants and staff are encouraged to utilize their own PPE (masks), but Colwest will have extra PPE (masks) on hand at all times in case any individuals have forgotten or misplaced their own.

### 3. **Communications**

#### *1. Pre-trip screening and Communication*

- Screening for course participants & instructors will take place in a 3-step process, including;
  - a prescreening questionnaire, a secondary questionnaire just prior to a course start date and an on-site, verbal confirmation. This communication is available on the Colwest website as well as via pre-trip communications.
- Anyone (participants or Colwest staff) who has Covid-19 symptoms, or has been in direct contact with another person who has tested positive for Covid-19 within the last 14 days will be asked to postpone their participation. If anyone is refused participation for these reasons a full course refund, less a nominal administration fee, will be offered. Staff will be replaced with equally qualified replacement.

#### *II. Participant briefings*

- An in-depth briefing on the course-specific COVID management plan will be conducted at the beginning of each course;
- A daily safety briefing will be conducted to remind participants of the guidelines and to confirm the absence of symptoms. Participants will be encouraged to immediately bring any symptoms to the attention of instructors;
- Physical distancing must be maintained during all briefings or meetings.

### 4. **Personal Equipment**

#### a) **Physical Distancing:**

- Contact with another individual’s personal items poses risk of indirect transfer of the virus. All personal items should be kept in locations where there is no risk of incidental contact by instructors or course participants;

- Only activities that can be conducted while maintaining recommended physical distancing of 2-meters will be offered. We have incorporated the necessary modifications into our programs. Maximum group size is 6 participants to 1 instructor;
- Field locations and training sites have been chosen specifically in order to limit any necessity for close contact between participants and/or instructors. Locations have also been chosen specifically to reduce any interaction with the general public, either visual or otherwise;
- In the event we are unable to maintain a 2-meter separation between participants/instructors, all involved will be required to wear a mask, and returned to the appropriate separation requirements as soon as practicable;
- Where practicable, each instructor and participant should utilize only their own communication (radios, satellite communication devices) and safety equipment or other gear throughout the duration of the trip to minimize contact spread of COVID-19;
- Mobile phones, water bottles, coffee mugs, headlamps, reading materials, and other personal items may have droplets on them and could transmit infection to another participant or instructor. These items must not be left in common areas;
- Personal gear and clothing, including Gore-Tex outer layers, insulating layers, leather gloves, backpacks, and ski boots may have droplets on them as a result of use and could transmit infection to another participant or instructor.

b) **Engineering:**

- Where it is not possible to provide personal equipment due to operational safety requirements, instructors must wipe down and disinfect shared equipment with disposable wipes or a diluted bleach solution between uses by different individuals;
- Instructors who wear leather gloves or other impermeable gloves as hand protection during work may share tools and equipment without disinfecting the tools between each user and must continue to clean and wash hands to break the chain of infection;
- Personal safety equipment that is supplied or rented by Colwest (avalanche transceivers, shovels, beacons or saws, etc.) will be disinfected, sealed and stored for a minimum of 72 hours (3 days) prior to the next use.

c) **Administrative:**

- Colwest has established a storage/labeling system to help with organization of shared equipment; ensuring that all shared gear will be isolated for a minimum of 120 hours.
- Instructors have received training on cleaning tools and to ensure compliance and understanding of hand washing and hygiene, as well as the importance of not sharing personal equipment such as gloves, toques, etc.

## 5. Managing Covid-19 Symptoms

### 1. Covid-19 Symptoms

- The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and the common cold. Commonly these are fever / chills, cough, sneezing, sore throat, and shortness of breath. Additional symptoms may include muscle aches, fatigue, headache, loss of appetite, runny nose, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, loss of sense of smell or taste. Shortness of breath and chest pain can be signs of severe illness;
- People infected with COVID-19 may experience little or no symptoms, with illness ranging from mild to severe;
- Some people are more vulnerable to developing severe illness or complications from COVID-19, including older people and those with chronic health conditions.

## *II. What to do if someone shows symptoms*

Instructors or participants who determine they may have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 based on the [self-assessment tool](#), must:

- Immediately report your situation to the Colwest management;
- Call 8-1-1 to speak to a nurse from [HealthLink BC](#) and get advice about how what to do next;
- The affected person should proceed directly to self-isolation;
- After doing the self-assessment tool, if you still have questions, contact your healthcare provider or call 8-1-1 for guidance;
- If the symptoms are severe such as shortness of breath (e.g., struggling to breathe or speak in single words) or chest pain, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest Emergency Department
- If the person displaying potential COVID-19 symptoms is in a camp that does not have a reliable method to communicate verbally with a health care professional, and/or is does not have reasonable access to reliable ground transportation (i.e., a road), then that person should be moved to a location that does.

## *III. What to do if a guest or worker tests positive*

- Any worker who tests positive will be not be able to return to active duty until they are free of the COVID-19 virus;
- Close off, clean and disinfect affected instructors work areas immediately and any surfaces that could have potentially been infected/touched.

## *IV. Isolation procedures*

- If you have not traveled outside Canada you are required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of any Covid-19 symptoms. You may return to regular activities when;
  - At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms started, AND;
  - Your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Tylenol, Advil), AND You are better (improvement in runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)

*If Symptoms Worsen, as per the following guidelines - [BCCDC - If you are sick](#)*

- If it becomes harder to breathe, you can't drink anything or feel much worse, seek urgent medical care at an urgent care clinic or emergency department

If you or someone in your care has chest pains, difficulty breathing, or severe bleeding, it could be a life-threatening emergency. Call 9-1-1

## **6. Health Region Contacts**

### **Fraser Health Authority**

Phone: (604) 870-7903

Email: [HPLand@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:HPLand@fraserhealth.ca)

### **Island Health Authority**

Phone: (250) 519-3401

Fax: (250) 519-3402

Email: [gateway\\_office@viha.ca](mailto:gateway_office@viha.ca)

### **Interior Health Authority**

Phone: (250) 851-7305

Email: [workcamps@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:workcamps@interiorhealth.ca)

### **Northern Health - Communicable Disease Hub**

Phone (during business hours): 1-855-565- 2990

After hours phone: 1-250-565-2000, press 7 and ask for the Medical Health Officer on call

### **Vancouver Coastal Health Authority**

Phone: (604) 675-3800 Manager on call

Email: [EHVC@vch.ca](mailto:EHVC@vch.ca)

# Take the Time to Wash Your Hands

## It's the most effective way to prevent the spread of germs

**Wet hands with running water.**

**Apply soap and scrub palms, backs of hands, wrists, between fingers and under nails.**

**Scrub for at least 20 seconds.**

**Rinse thoroughly under running water.**

**Dry hands with a single use towel.**

**Use the towel to turn off the faucet.**

**No soap and water? Use hand sanitizer.**

**Apply enough product on hands to cover all surfaces, and rub hands until they're dry.**

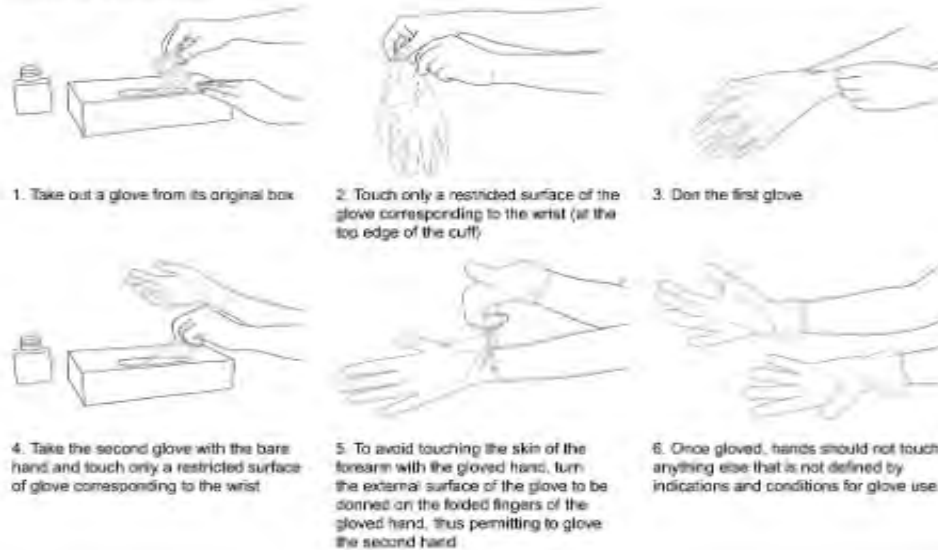
**CCOHS.ca**  
Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

## Appendix 2: Glove Donning and Removal

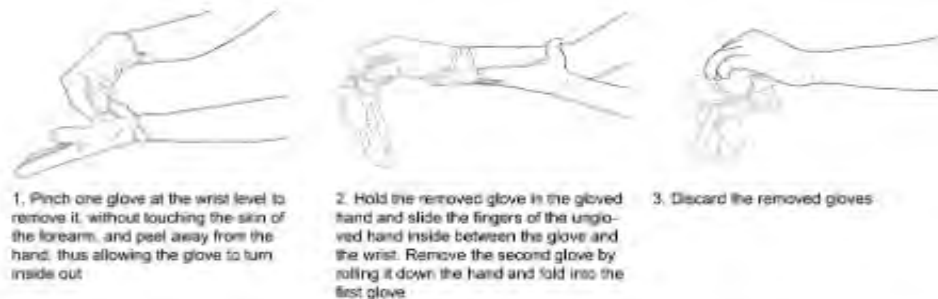
### Technique for donning and removing non-sterile examination gloves

When the hand hygiene indication occurs before a contact requiring glove use, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water.

#### I. HOW TO DON GLOVES:



#### II. HOW TO REMOVE GLOVES:



4. Then, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water

- [List of hand sanitizers authorized by Health Canada](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Cleaning and Disinfecting:](#)

### WorkSafeBC - [COVID-19 and returning to safe operation](#)

Feel free to contact us directly with any concerns that you have. These times are challenging and a learning experience for all of us. We are keen to get out skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing with you in BC's inimitable backcountry. Our goal is to help you safely enjoy and travel through our mountainous environment, while doing all that we can to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and get back to "normal". Take good care.

*Sincerely, Brad Harrison  
Owner/Operator, Colwest Alpine Adventures  
colwest.ca / 250-819-9774*