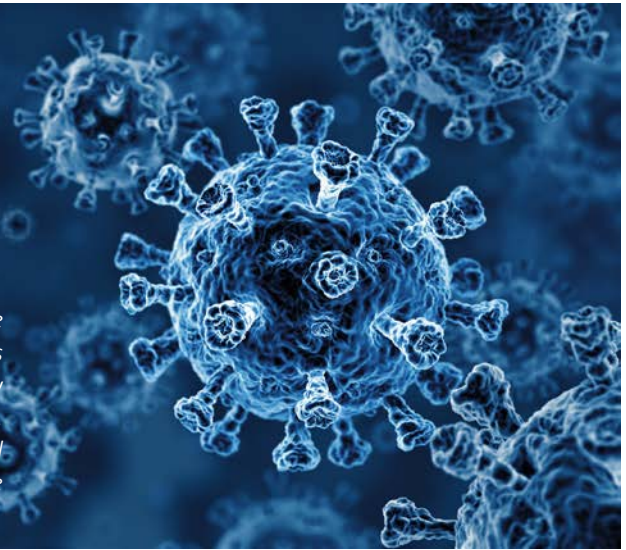




RTW_p ROADMAP

COVID-19 RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE ROADMAP

The journey for returning to the workplace after COVID-19 will be unique to every business and organization. How a business navigates through the recovery phase of the pandemic will depend on many factors including its workforce, operations and resources. However, the need for preparedness, thoughtful planning, and coordination will be fundamental for achieving and managing a safe and sustainable Return to the Workplace (RTW_p).



THE RTW_p ROADMAP

The *RTW_p Roadmap* is a framework designed to help employers build a dynamic Return to the Workplace plan and provide guidance through the recovery phase of the pandemic. The framework takes a gradual, staged, and constructive approach. Together, careful planning and methodical implementation will drive a safe and sustainable Return to the Workplace.

THREE STAGES OF THE RTW_p ROADMAP

There are three stages to the RTW_p Roadmap:

1. **Planning Stage** – in the planning stage businesses need to understand their legal requirements and consider all necessary public health measures for how to best prepare workers for returning to the workplace. Action planning, reviewing and developing policies, procedures, and training are key components for this stage.
2. **Implementation Stage** – in the implementation stage businesses need to prioritize and implement effective control measures for the protection of workers health and safety. Constant monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the controls are key components for this stage. Identifying gaps and quickly adapting to changes will help to ensure that businesses can remain open and safe.
3. **Operational Stage** – in the operational stage organizations are moving from a reactive state to a proactive state. This can be achieved through validating practices and implementing continuous improvement strategies to ensure the ongoing protection of workers health and safety during the pandemic and moving forward.



At each stage, public health and safety will be at the forefront, while balancing the needs of businesses and organizations. Based on evidence-informed health and safety advice, The *RTWp Roadmap* outlines control measures as *Action Items* to mitigate the risk of infection and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on People, Places, and Things as they relate to the workplace. These recommendations are meant to be used as a general reference. Due to individual circumstances, businesses will need to tailor their Return to the Workplace plan to comply with all applicable laws and requirements, and respond to unique concerns as they arise.

It is best practice to complete all *Action Items* before moving forward to the next stage. However, this may not always be possible as businesses may be coping with many moving parts at once obscuring the distinction between stages. It is important to recognize that *Action Items* are interdependent and can overlap in different stages. A truly sustainable plan is built with fluidity and integration in mind.

Checkpoints are meant to serve as progress indicators. Constant monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the control measures put in place are needed to stay current with emerging information, identify gaps, respond efficiently, and guide future actions. This will ensure your plan remains adaptable and applicable for keeping workplaces open and safe.

STEPS FOR USING THE RTWp ROADMAP

1. Complete the *Readiness Assessment*. This will give you an indication of potential areas of focus when developing your Return to the Workplace plan.
2. Identify the person or workplace parties who will be responsible for completing each *Action Item*. Engage with senior leadership, health and safety professionals, the Joint Health and Safety Committee, human resources, union(s), and others when preparing for business operations during the transition period and following the pandemic.
3. Set target dates for when each *Action Item* should be completed, which will help you track the development of your Return to the Workplace plan.
4. Start to build your plan using the *RTWp Roadmap* framework.

Contact a PSHSA Consultant or visit our website and connect through Live Chat for further guidance on using the Roadmap or any RTWp resources.

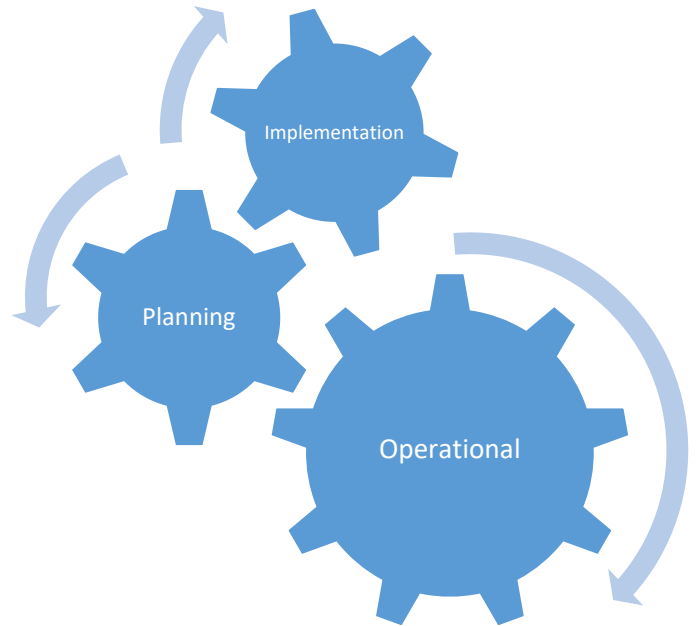


Figure 1: A multi-staged and interdependent process. Together, careful planning and methodical implementation will enable safe business operations leading to a sustainable Return to the Workplace.



RTWp ROADMAP

PLANNING STAGE

At this stage, businesses need to understand their legal requirements and consider all necessary public health measures for how to best prepare workers for returning to the workplace. Action planning, reviewing and developing policies, procedures, and training are key components for this stage.

ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
PEOPLE				
Identify key individuals/groups and clearly define their roles and responsibilities as they relate to managing Return to the Workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assemble a task force or dedicated team including members from Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resources, Facilities and Maintenance, Management, and Workers. ▪ Think about your organization from the top down and define roles and responsibilities. ▪ Important workplace parties include: employers; supervisors; workers; the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) or Health and Safety Representative (HSR); union(s); external stakeholders and partners. 			
Plan a gradual re-opening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize workers and business operations to be part of re-opening of offices/worksites. ▪ Identify tiers of necessity such as people and positions that need to be onsite and when; as well as those who can continue to work remotely. ▪ Delineate short term and long term strategies. ▪ Implement a methodical and phased-in approach. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
Engage the JHSC/HSR, workers, and union(s) in planning and procedures for returning to the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage the JHSC and HSR early in the process and throughout. ▪ The JHSC/HSR may assist in conducting Risk Assessments and Worksite Inspections. ▪ Help with disseminating information, education and communications to workers about what controls are being put in place to reduce exposure. ▪ Assist with incident investigations and complaints. 			
Develop and provide training for workers and supervisors for new processes, policies and procedures during the transition and beyond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orientation/education to raise awareness about pandemic emergency response. ▪ Onboarding of new workers. ▪ Re-introduction of returning workers. ▪ New job tasks and work sharing. ▪ COVID-19 specific health and safety training (e.g. infection prevention and control, hygiene, PPE, physical distancing, changes in the workplace and to business, limitations to work in one location, etc.) ▪ Clarity on who to communicate concerns. 			
Identify communication needs and establish a communications plan to share plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish communications plan which clearly articulates roles and responsibilities to each group. ▪ Identify and address additional communications needs. 			
Develop resources and systems to support worker's mental health and resiliency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some individuals may be suffering from depression, isolation, loneliness as a result of COVID-19. ▪ Other mental health concerns include pandemic-echo, burn-out and fatigue. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote healthy coping strategies. ▪ Support mental health (EAP, extended health care, psychological support). ▪ Support resiliency (e.g. developing a peer support program). 			
Mitigate risks for high rates of absence and staff shortage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff shortages can be a result of personal illness/incapacity or heightened vulnerability; self-isolation; staying at home to care for ill family members; looking after school-aged children in the event of school closures; work refusals; people opting to stay home. ▪ Consider the need to hire additional staff on temporary or permanent basis. ▪ Consider scaling business operations appropriately. ▪ Review and communicate work refusal procedures. ▪ Develop strategies for high risk staff. ▪ Review policies regarding paid and unpaid leave of absences. 			
Account for worker’s individual constraints and comfort levels of returning to the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies should address workers concerns in a non-discriminatory manner. ▪ Accommodations for worker’s request not to return to work (e.g. underlying health issues, child care, etc.) ▪ Consider implementing a self-disclosure policy for higher risk workers. ▪ Permit workers to work from home if possible. ▪ Consider arranging alternate, safe transportation to and from worksites for those who rely on public transportation. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
PLACES				
Perform risk assessment for worksite and job hazard analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage Health and Safety expertise (internal and external sources) ▪ Identify high, medium and low risk job tasks/categories. ▪ Understand the risk of exposure. ▪ Determine need and types of controls required to mitigate the risk. ▪ Prioritize risks. 			
THINGS				
Understand legal requirements and guidance, and how they apply to your business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be informed and understand how laws and directives apply. ▪ Consider directives from: the Ministry of Health; Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development; government; and public health authorities. ▪ Work with union(s); regulatory bodies; and professional associations. 			
Implement systems for screening, testing, and reporting of COVID-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have a system for active and passive screening. ▪ Familiarize workers with the symptoms of COVID-19 and how to self-monitor. ▪ Have a system for informing supervisors if a worker is sick or becomes ill. ▪ Inform supervisors and employers of their duty to report to whom and when (e.g. to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the JHSC/HSR, union(s), and the WSIB) 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider confidentiality and privacy; and disclosure of sensitive information. ▪ Develop systems for keeping track of workforce so there can be easy contact tracing (e.g. virtual check-in applications). 			
Implement systems for heightened Infection Prevention and Control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cleaning and disinfecting measures for worksites. ▪ Preventative materials inventory (e.g. janitorial and personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies). ▪ PPE requirements. ▪ HVAC changes. 			
Develop response procedures for potential positive cases or symptomatic workers/individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop procedures for responding when an employee, customer or other individual present in the workplace becomes ill. ▪ Outline steps to take if there was a positive case in the workplace (e.g. obligation to report and to whom, need for shut down or partial closure, environmental cleaning and disinfection). 			
Plan for a second wave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outline actions required for tightening control measures or a shut down in case of outbreak. ▪ Delineate short term and long term strategies. ▪ Develop contingency plans and risk management procedures. 			



CHECKPOINT FOR PLANNING STAGE:

- There is a plan for a gradual re-opening that is informed by government directives and guidelines.
- There is a system for identifying, tracking and reporting potential cases of COVID-19 at the workplace.
- Roles and responsibilities of key workplace parties/individuals are identified.
- Risk assessments and job hazard analyses are performed to identify needs and types of controls required.
- PPE and other required controls are obtained.
- COVID-19 related education and training is developed for workers and supervisors.
- There is a plan in case of a second wave.

IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

At this stage, businesses need to prioritize and implement effective control measures for the protection of workers health and safety. Constant monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the controls are key components for this stage. Identifying gaps and quickly adapting to changes will help to ensure that businesses can remain open and safe.

ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
PEOPLE				
Ongoing support of workers mental health, resiliency and psychological wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote healthy coping strategies. ▪ Support mental health and resiliency (e.g. developing a peer support program). ▪ Review policies regarding access to EAP, extended health care, psychological support, etc. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
Support workers who were ill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine criteria for return to work/fitness for duty if a worker tested positive (e.g. requirement for negative test, mandatory 14 day quarantine period) ▪ Develop a return to work program for workers who may have been ill and consider work accommodations to support physical and mental health impacts. 			
Manage workers working from home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support workers social and psychological needs. ▪ Ensure workers are well equipped to do their work (equipment, computer, access to networks and VPN, etc.) ▪ Keep workers involved, engaged and productive while working remotely. 			
Facilitate working relationship between returning workers and workers who are remaining remote.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage working relationships. ▪ Manage work load and job sharing. ▪ Develop communication systems and protocols between onsite and remote workers. ▪ Promote engagement and team work. 			
Implement communication strategies identified in the planning stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure there is transparency and that staff are informed of new policies, procedures and protocols. ▪ Staff know how to access necessary information about the Return to the Workplace plan. ▪ Ensure staff know who to they should talk to if they have questions. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Messaging needs to be clear, accurate and consistent across all levels. ▪ Maintain current phone/text/email contact information of all employees and test organization-wide communication periodically. 			
<p>Communicate to customers and external stakeholders about expectations and changes during the transition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disseminate information in timely manner. ▪ Inform public, customers, and external stakeholders about enhanced safety measures, new protocols and changes in business operations. 			
PLACES				
<p>Minimize exposure to COVID-19 at work and maintain physical distancing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workplace redesign and reconfiguring space. ▪ Installing barriers and partitions. ▪ Posting signage and using visual cues and decals. ▪ Maintaining one-way traffic into/out of work areas. ▪ Spacing seats and work stations. ▪ Limiting number of people on site. ▪ Suspending large meetings and gatherings. ▪ Contact-less payments and deliveries. ▪ Curb side pickup and drop off. ▪ Limit sharing of documents, pens, papers, equipment etc. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
Promote good hygiene and enhance environmental cleaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inform workers about hygiene protocols (sneeze/cough etiquette and good hand hygiene practices). ▪ Increase workplace cleaning and sanitization. ▪ Provide access to hygiene facilities and hand washing stations with soap and water. ▪ Provide hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol-based) and disinfectant wipes. ▪ Use appropriate cleaning/disinfection products and provide education on its proper use and storage. 			
Ensure response procedures for potential positive cases or symptomatic workers/individuals are at the ready.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate area to temporarily isolate individual and ensure physical distancing. ▪ Have a plan for how they can be transferred from there to a health care facility or home. ▪ Clean and disinfect employee’s work area. ▪ Initiate contact tracing. ▪ Notify stakeholders. 			
THINGS				
Provide necessary personal protection equipment to workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct risk assessment to determine which workers need PPE and what type. ▪ Keep track of inventory and usage of PPE. ▪ Have contingency plan for shortages. ▪ Consider use of non-medical and cloth masks when appropriate. ▪ Train workers of use and limitations of PPE. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
Manage schedules of onsite workers to mitigate risk of infection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Separate workers into smaller teams or groups to minimize number of people in one location at any time. ▪ Alter work schedules and stagger start times, lunches, breaks. 			
Implement and enforce COVID-19 related policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mandatory masks for workers, customers, visitors. ▪ Travel restrictions and business interactions. ▪ Encourage workers to stay at home if ill. ▪ Sick leave policies. ▪ Reporting policies. 			
Increase capacity for working remotely or virtually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IT support and capacity. ▪ Network platforms. ▪ IT backup and security. ▪ Encryption for data transfer and communication. 			
Monitor for second wave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be prepared to tighten control measures or shut down in case of outbreak. ▪ Be prepared to activate business continuity and risk management procedures. 			

CHECKPOINT FOR IMPLEMENTATION STAGE:

- There are clear policies and procedures outlining the measures required to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Physical distancing measures are implemented in the workplace.
- Environmental cleaning and sanitization of the workplace is enhanced.
- There is a plan for what to do if a worker becomes ill at work.



- There is enough PPE available for workers.
- There is a contingency plan in case of PPE shortage.
- There are support systems for worker’s mental health and psychological wellbeing.
- Workers are equipped to perform their jobs effectively if working remotely and/or onsite.
- Actions to tighten control measures in case of an outbreak are in place and ready to be activated at any time.

OPERATIONAL STAGE

This stage of the journey is about moving from a reactive state to a proactive state. This can be achieved through validating practices and implementing continuous improvement strategies to ensure the ongoing protection of workers health and safety during the pandemic and moving forward.

ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
PEOPLE				
Accept new norms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitate change management to promote awareness, understanding, commitment and adoption among people to accept new norms. ▪ Provide ongoing internal communications. 			
Provide ongoing support to workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental and physical health. ▪ Care giving needs – child care, elder care, etc. ▪ Financial support. ▪ Reducing vulnerabilities. 			
Reassess organizational culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine cultural strengths. ▪ Assess changing attitudes and workplace behaviors. ▪ Address concerns (e.g. stigma). 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
Establish external communication plans about direction and changes occurring beyond the transition period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communications to customers, suppliers, investors and the community. ▪ Consider timing and appropriate delivery channels for messaging. 			
PLACES				
Continue enhanced hygiene and cleaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase workplace sanitation and cleaning. ▪ Provide access to hygiene facilities and hand washing stations with soap and water. ▪ Provide hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol-based) and disinfectant wipes. ▪ Use appropriate cleaning/disinfection products and provide education on its proper use. 			
Consider permanent changes or modifications to infrastructure and/or facility to support infection prevention and control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Automatic doors (sliding or revolving). ▪ No-touch activation. ▪ Foot pedal activation. ▪ Badge access instead of punch key access. ▪ Improved ventilation and air filtration system. 			
THINGS				
Audit compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure ongoing compliance to best practices are being followed. ▪ Measure success and identify areas of improvement. ▪ Consider elements of health and safety, engagement and productivity. 			



ACTION ITEM	CONSIDERATIONS	WHO WILL DO THIS?	BY WHEN?	STATUS
Adjust policies and contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine travel restrictions and limitations. ▪ Time-off and sick policies (e.g. to address quarantine periods, paid or unpaid leaves). ▪ Work from home (e.g. to address mandatory and optional work from home arrangements). ▪ Review contracts to address temporary layoffs, termination clauses, changing duties and compensation. 			
Enable technology for collaboration and ongoing remote work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Software. ▪ Access management. ▪ IT support and capacity. ▪ Virtual platforms. ▪ Networks. ▪ Encryption for data transfer and communication. ▪ Threat detection and security. 			
Improve pandemic and emergency planning for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency preparedness and respond planning. ▪ Contingency planning (business operation continuity, supply chain, procurement of PPE). 			
Assess how COVID-19 has impacted business and customer base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Modify business model to better fit life after pandemic (e.g. by offering multiple delivery channels for services). ▪ Consider productivity and profitability. 			
Capitalize on innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate ingenuity and innovation. ▪ Adapt to changing customer needs, demands and behaviors. 			



CHECKPOINT FOR OPERATIONAL STAGE:

- There are ongoing support systems for worker's needs including mental health, physical health, financial support, and caregiving needs (childcare, eldercare, etc.)
- Refresher training is provided for supervisors and workers about changes to policies and operational procedures to keep current on most up to date information and guidance.
- There is a plan in case of the need to tighten control measures at work or to shut down in case of an outbreak.
- Improvements are made to the emergency management and preparedness plan.
- Proactive measures are implemented for future emergency preparedness and infection control.
- Organizational culture is supportive of adopting change.
- There is ongoing compliance with best practices.



RESOURCES

BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND MANAGEMENT

- Canadian Chambers of Commerce [Pandemic Preparedness for Business](#)
- CCOHS [Business Continuity Plan & E-courses](#)
- CCOHS [Work-Life Balance](#)
- [Government of Canada - Resources for Canadian Businesses](#)
- Harvard Business Review [Managing Remote Work](#)
- PSHSA [Tips for Setting Up Your Home Office blog](#)

GOVERNMENT

- [Ministry of Health - Guidance for the Health Sector](#)
- [Government of Ontario – Plans for Reopening and Sector-Specific Guidance](#)
- [Health Canada](#) – Guidance for Employers, Employees and Essential Service Workers

JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

- PSHSA [An Introduction to JHSC](#)
- PSHSA [Effective Multi-Site JHSC webinar](#)
- PSHSA [Effective JHSC: Road to Success webinar](#)
- PSHSA [Maintaining an Effective JHSC During Emergency Situations COVID-19](#)
- PSHSA [Health & Safety Roles & Responsibilities – 5 steps to an effective OHS program](#)
- PSHSA [Health and Safety Resource Manual: Essential Tools and Information](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE

- Health Canada [Physical Distancing](#)
- PHO [Take Care of Yourself and Each Other](#)
- PHO [Physical Distancing](#)
- PSHSA [donning/doffing](#) PPE posters
- PSHSA [Infection Prevention and Control](#)
- [Sector-specific guidance](#) to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace
- [WSPS Post-Pandemic Business Playbook](#)

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AND WELLNESS

- Canada Human Rights Commission [Balancing Work and Caregiving Obligations](#)
- Conference Board of Canada [Mental Health and COVID-19](#)
- Mental Health Commission of Canada [Double duty: How COVID-19 is affecting caregivers of persons living with mental illness](#)
- [Mental Health Commission of Canada Self-Care & Resilience Guide](#)



- Ministry of Health [Resources for Ontarians Experiencing Mental Health and Addictions Issues During the Pandemic](#)
- [Ontario Chamber of Commerce Mental Health Resources](#)

RISK ASSESSMENT AND JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS

- PSHSA [Risk Assessment and Job Hazard Analysis Fast Fact](#)
- PSHSA [Hazard Management Tool](#)

FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE :

Contact a PSHSA Consultant or visit our website and connect through Live Chat for further guidance on using the Roadmap or any RTWp resources.