

Nova Scotia Department of Business

Stakeholder Communique - May 27, 2020

### **What can reopen and when?**

Starting June 5, the following can open if they can follow plans that their sectors develop and Public Health approves:

- Restaurants for dine in as well as takeout and delivery
- Bars, wineries, distilleries, and taprooms – but not lounges at this time. This will be reassessed in the weeks to come.
- Personal services such as hair salons, barber shops, spas, nail salons, and body art establishments
- Fitness facilities
- Veterinarians
- Dentistry and other self-regulated health professions such as optometry, chiropractic, and physiotherapy
- Unregulated health professions such as massage therapy, podiatry, and naturopathy

### **Are day cares still opening June 8?**

Public Health continues to work with the childcare sector on a plan to reopen safely. June 15 is now the goal but the reopening date will be confirmed and shared with Nova Scotians once the plan is fully approved. The primary focus is the safety of children.

### **What about increasing the gathering limit, bigger bubbles, opening day cares and day camps?**

We hope to have more information about other aspects of reopening Nova Scotia soon.

### **What health services are resuming?**

The Nova Scotia Health Authority is gradually reopening health care services and procedures. Key areas are outpatient clinics, diagnostic imaging, laboratory services, and surgeries. There is more information on their website: <http://www.nshealth.ca/servicereintroduction>

### **What about businesses that didn't have to close but did anyway, can they reopen?**

Yes and many have already started to reopen with modifications. While government doesn't need to approve their plans, every business should have one and be ready to produce it if asked by an inspector, employees, or customers. They also need to make changes to accommodate social distancing, increased cleaning and other measures. For those who need help with planning, there is information on our website.

### **It seems like everything is opening all at once – why?**

Nova Scotia has done things a little differently. We've consulted with a wide range of sectors and regulatory bodies that were required to close to provide guidance and understand what they need to

reopen safely. If they are ready, can reopen safely and have approved plans, they can reopen on June 5. We will be keeping a close eye on how things are going to ensure we don't have a spike in virus rates.

**Where can I find out what to expect when I go to a business? How do I know what their plan is?**

You should contact the business to ask what to expect. Many businesses will be following plans developed by their industry associations. Some will have their own plans.

**Why are you letting businesses develop their own plans? They aren't public health experts.**

Businesses know their operations better than we do. Their sector associations are taking our guidance, applying it to their individual situations, and submitting their plans for approval. For those that weren't required to close under the public health order, we have information on our website to help them with planning. While government doesn't need to approve those plans, every business should have one and be ready to produce it if asked by an inspector, employees, or customers.

**What kinds of public health protocols do businesses need to follow in order to reopen?**

The rule for physical distancing (2 metres/6 feet) remains in place. Businesses, workplaces, and other organizations need to find ways to respect that. If a business is too small to ensure 2 metres distance between people, then the gathering limit applies.

There are some exceptions to the physical distancing rule, like getting a haircut. In those cases, the industry plans need to detail how they will do these kinds of activities safely.

All businesses, workplaces, and other organizations should increase cleaning, especially high touch surfaces and washrooms.

**What guidance have you given industries to develop their plans?**

Through our consultations, we discussed the different situations in different industries and what steps they might take to respect physical distancing and operate safely. With that guidance, industries are developing their plans and submitting them for approval. They are looking at things like work schedules, shared equipment, crowd control, and protective equipment for employees like masks and plexiglass dividers.

**What's an example of an industry with a good plan?**

One example is the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia. Their plan includes measures like operating at 50% of their seating capacity and ensuring 2 metres/6 feet between tables/booths/single seats. Also, they will ensure each group/table of patrons does not exceed the gathering limit.

**What about businesses that don't have an industry association? Did you consult with them? How will they know how to develop a plan?**

We aren't able to consult with individual businesses but we have information online to help them develop their plans. We will be adding more in the coming days.

**I'm trying to reopen a business/workplace/organization. What should I include in my plan?**

If you're in an industry that has an association, check with them first to find out if they have a plan for your industry. If not, there is information online (<https://novascotia.ca/reopening-nova-scotia/>). Also, here are some things to consider, depending on the nature of the setting you are in:

- Support people with their personal measures (e.g. handwashing/sanitizer, tissues/waste baskets, public washrooms, shower before entering swimming pool)
- Support physical distancing with measures such as limiting the number of people, floor markings, telework, live streaming
- Use non-medical masks when physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Use PPE in the workplace as determined based on a risk assessment by an employer or individual
- Screen/assess for symptoms of COVID-19 (active or passive)
- Use physical barriers (e.g., plexiglass) when physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Increase cleaning (washrooms, common spaces, high-touch surfaces, shared equipment)
- Consider no touch options for bathrooms
- Increase ventilation such as keeping doors and windows open where possible
- Increase protective measures for vulnerable populations such as retail hours just for seniors
- Consider managing merchandise with fewer items available for display/touching. Frequently clean items that are on display
- Keep a record of clients' appointments
- Replace items that customers would often shared with single-use items (e.g., menus)
- Avoid or manage lineups where possible
- Consider doing outdoor business where feasible (e.g., sidewalk sales)
- Keep the environment quiet so people don't have to raise their voices to be heard
- Offer hand sanitizer, tissues, and waste baskets in highly visible places

#### **Which business sectors did you consult with?**

- Retail Council of Canada
- Restaurants Canada
- Cosmetology Association of Nova Scotia
- Black Beauty Culture Association of NS
- Nova Scotia Registered Barbers Association
- Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia
- Campground Association of Nova Scotia
- Atlantic Lottery Corporation
- Halifax and Sydney chambers of commerce
- Greater Halifax Partnership
- Cape Breton Partnership
- Wineries and craft breweries
- Crown corporations: Innovacorp, Develop NS, NSBI, Events East

#### **What health sectors did you consult with?**

- Regulated Health Profession Network
- Numerous dental associations

- Unregulated health professions

**What other organizations did you consult with?**

- Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities
- First Nations communities
- Licensed child care centres
- Universities and NSCC
- Sport and recreation organizations
- Museums and libraries
- Faith organizations
- Nova Scotia Residential Agencies Association
- Diversabilities
- Autism Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Veterinary Medical Association