



**Intent:** The intent of this document is to provide best-practices guidance in relation to Physical Distancing for the University of British Columbia Okanagan community to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Physical distancing requires us to limit close contact with others by keeping at least two meters (six feet) away from one another. For some, physical distancing will be difficult as many everyday tasks involve employees having to work closely together (e.g. retail services, manual material handling, maintaining/repairing equipment, confined space work).

Visit [ubc.ca/covid19](http://ubc.ca/covid19) and <https://ok.ubc.ca/covid19/> for more information about UBC's response to COVID-19, including frequently asked questions.

*Globally, our scientific knowledge surrounding COVID-19 is changing and expanding daily. This document is based on current scientific knowledge at the time of writing.*

### **Current Health Guidance Relating to Physical Distancing**

Throughout the current COVID-19 pandemic UBC has taken direction on infection prevention from the Provincial Health Officer, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and the Public Health Agency of Canada, and continues to do so. This guidance can be expected to evolve as these agencies continually monitor accumulating scientific evidence to determine how we can best prevent the spread of COVID-19.

As this document has been developed, the current health guidance from the above agencies, as it relates to physical distancing, can be summarized as follows:

- Physical distancing means limiting close contact with other people to slow the spread of an infectious disease by keeping at least two meters (six feet) away from one another.
- Physical distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak.
- Work/study from home and conduct virtual meetings, if possible.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- When outside of your home, practice physical distancing.
- Stay home if you are ill and have COVID-19 like symptoms.
- Avoid crowded places and non-essential gatherings.
- Greet people with a wave instead of a handshake.

### **Achieving Physical Distancing via the Hierarchy of Controls**

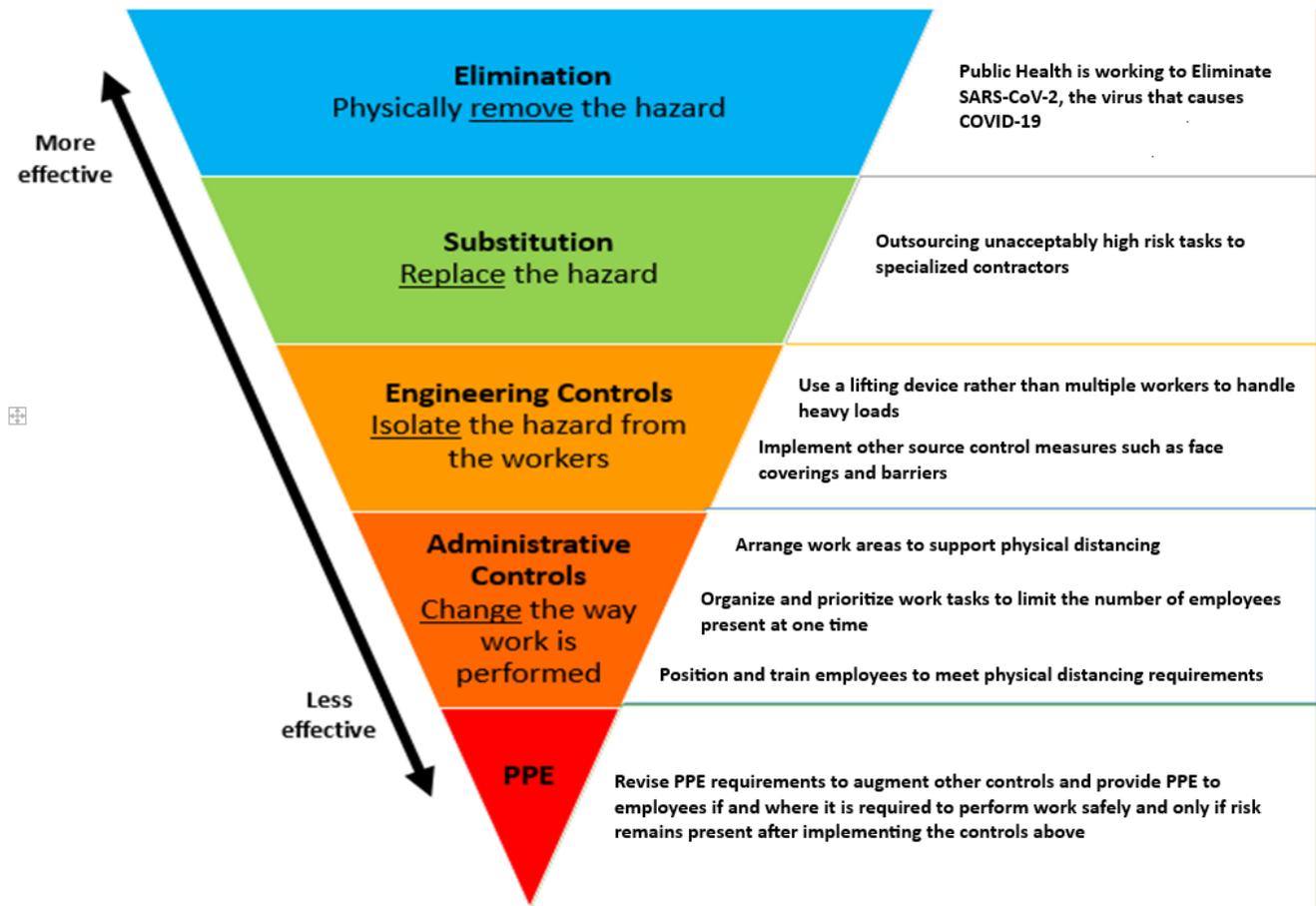
All reasonable precautions must be taken to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission within the campus community.

Where physical distancing requirements are not met following current work/study practices, tasks may not be assigned unless they can be amended to include controls that eliminate or limit the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Physical distancing is one of the primary controls that is effective in this regard.

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Not all common practices allow for easy physical distancing due to space constraints, equipment design, load-splitting needs, etc. Where working in close quarters is used to address another identified hazard, e.g. over-exertion, identifying and developing alternative measures to control the original hazard is the best practice (see additional guidance [here](#)). Where this is not possible, additional measures to address infectious risk should be monitored carefully to ensure they do not introduce additional risks.

The best practice for mitigating risk is to follow the Hierarchy of Controls. Note that the examples provided are not exhaustive. Contact Health, Safety and Environment for assistance in finding options suitable for your needs.



It is important to note that while the controls are listed in order of effectiveness, all types of controls should be considered and generally work best in combination.

### Advice on Physical Distancing at UBC Okanagan

If you have any questions or require advice about Physical Distancing at UBC Okanagan, please contact Health, Safety & Environment at [HSE.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:HSE.ok@ubc.ca).