

COVID-19

Most instances of COVID-19 are not work-related and do not need to be reported to WCB-Alberta. However, there are a few exceptions.

When COVID-19 may be work-related

When a worker contracts COVID-19 as a direct result of the duties of their employment, they are entitled to compensation if the following conditions are met:

- The nature of employment involves sufficient exposure to the source of infection,
- and-
- The nature of employment is shown to be the cause of the condition,
- or-
- The nature of employment creates a greater risk of exposure for the worker.

Reference: Policy 03-01: Part II - Occupational Disease

In every case, WCB-Alberta adjudicates work-relatedness and benefit entitlement based on the specific and unique circumstances of each case.

Essential workers

A claim is likely to be accepted if a worker contracts the illness and is **performing what the province deems to be an essential service that puts them in regular contact with the general public.**

All workers

A non-essential worker will also likely be covered in the event of a widespread **outbreak at their place of work.**

Acute care & continuing care facilities

Locations of outbreaks in acute care and continuing care facilities are reported publicly when there are two or more cases, indicating that a transmission within the facility has occurred.

All other workplaces/facilities

Outbreaks at other facilities or in the community are reported publicly when there are five or more cases.

Questions and answers

When do I report a case of COVID-19 to WCB-Alberta?

Report it if it meets the specific criteria.

Do not report it if:

1. You were on vacation/or away from work at the time of infection.
2. You are not ill but must quarantine due to a suspected or confirmed exposure.

WCB will investigate all cases reported to determine coverage.

I am not an essential worker and there has not been an outbreak at my place of work, but a co-worker sneezed or coughed on me. If I catch COVID-19 am I covered or do I report it?

No. COVID-19 and particularly a pandemic coronavirus like COVID-19 can be caught through many different contacts in the community, home or work. This case is not considered work-related.

If I'm sent home to avoid getting sick, do I need to report it to WCB-Alberta?

No, if there is no illness, there is no claim. There's no need to report this to WCB-Alberta.

What happens if I was performing modified duties and my employer shuts down due to COVID-19?

You will be paid during the shut down. You won't suffer any loss of benefits due to work disruptions. If your employer does not pay you during the shut down, WCB will provide your wage replacement benefits during this time.

Will WCB accept COVID-19 claims where there are symptoms present but no medical reporting that confirms a diagnosis of COVID-19?

Yes, if it meets the specific criteria. If you think you have COVID-19, please call Health Link at 811 and follow their advice. They may instruct you to seek medical attention and undergo testing to confirm the diagnosis.

If you are not severely ill, 811 may instruct you to remain at home (in self isolation), until your symptoms fully resolve. If your symptoms persist or worsen, you should seek medical treatment and ask to have that reporting forwarded to WCB-Alberta.

What happens when I submit a COVID-19 claim?

Like any other claim, WCB-Alberta must determine whether your exposure to the disease arose out of the course of your employment and was caused by an employment hazard (in this case, workplace exposure to the virus).

We have a team of people who specialize in the adjudication of infectious disease claims and can appropriately apply policy and legislation. If your illness meets the conditions for coverage, WCB-Alberta will cover medical aid costs and any time lost due to the condition.

