

For Service Providers and CLBC Staff – May 2020

**\*\* These requirements and guidance are valid only during the interim period of moving from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the COVID-19 response and during Stage 2: Recovery and are subject to change as deemed necessary\*\***

## **SECTION 1 – Working Together to Keep People Safe**

### **Introduction:**

When the COVID-19 pandemic was initially declared in BC, the true nature and scope of its impact was unknown. Overwhelmingly, service providers, home sharing providers, families, CLBC staff and individuals responded to this difficult and uncertain time by doing what was necessary to keep people safe and by maintaining essential services. This included not only following directives and guidance from the Public Health Office and CLBC but often, simply “doing what needed to be done”. CLBC acknowledges the phenomenal effort and care that has gone into this emergency response, and appreciates that we can only serve people and keep them well and safe by working together as a community.

The BC Government is now moving the province into the next phases of the COVID-19 response with an approach that focuses on continuing to slow the spread of the virus and keep people safe, and balances physical and mental health considerations with the need for people to return to work and resume their daily lives.

As the province re-opens there is new guidance regarding group sizes, access to businesses and services, transportation, and public spaces. [BC's Restart Plan – Next steps to move BC through the pandemic](#) outlines BC's new normal based on principles that apply to every person and every situation. Dr. Bonnie Henry outlines that these principles are the foundation of how everyone in BC needs to move forward and will remain in place for the weeks and months ahead.

Community Living supports and services are likely to continue looking different than their pre-COVID-19 forms as the guidance from BC Government and the Provincial Health Officer evolves throughout the provincial phases of reopening.

Understanding that this is a period of uncertainty, anxiety, fear, and risk for many, CLBC is committed to working collaboratively with service providers, home sharing providers and families to support the move into this next stage with *Stage 2 Recovery: Interim Guidance and Requirements*. This stage requires careful and measured work toward service recovery while ensuring the safety and well being of individuals and all those who support them.

CLBC recognizes that service providers are independent organizations that know the individuals they support and the unique circumstances of those individuals and their families. Agencies are in the best position to ensure that all guidance and regulations are consistently implemented. Service providers are responsible for ensuring that they meet existing and emerging expectations of regulatory bodies as required and that they comply with the Service Terms and Conditions and continue to achieve the Outcomes set out in Schedule A. CLBC's role is to work collaboratively with service providers to:

- support their awareness of these regulatory requirements and guidance during this phase of pandemic response.
- support them in their efforts to plan and implement service recovery in a way that maintains the health and well-being of all involved.

**Goals:**

As CLBC and service providers move from Stage 1 to Stage 2, gradual service recovery, the transition must be collaborative and intentional, and guided by the following goals, developed by the Re-imagining Community Inclusion Steering Committee:

*Over-arching*

- Minimize risk for those who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (Older and/or physically vulnerable adults e.g. those with chronic conditions) by continuing Stage 1 approaches as much as possible for now.
- Support emotional and physical wellness of those who are not at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (i.e. younger and physically healthy adults) by gradually increasing their participation in employment and leisure activities. This is with a small and consistent group of friends/family/colleagues to start.
- Ensure that those who are not at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 that cannot consistently practice physical distancing are supported to access community at times and in ways that keep them and others safe.

*All Stakeholders*

- Continue strategies that are known to reduce the likelihood that COVID-19 will be passed from one person to another. This protects the health of individuals, families, home sharing providers and agency staff. Emotional wellbeing is supported in other ways.
- Take steps to mitigate harm. For many individuals, this will still involve staying home some, most, or all of the time.

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- Be prepared to initiate stricter measures again (e.g. move back to the social distancing requirements of Stage 1) if required by the Provincial Health Officer due to a significant increase in COVID-19 cases.
- Be prepared to make changes to our approach as new medical information emerges. Access current information in order to make informed choices for themselves, their families and the people they support.

### *Individuals and Families*

- Assess their own risk and comfort level with making changes, with support as needed. They work within public health guidance and make decisions based on their own situation.
- Families start returning to the typical level of involvement and support they provide to their family member.

### *CLBC & Service Providers*

- Prioritize support based on individual needs and family circumstances.
- Continue to modify support where possible to adopt approaches that have proved most effective.

### **Overview:**

This document provides direction, guidance and resources for the Stage 2: Recovery process and is intended for all service providers including Individualized Funding Host Agencies, Person Centred Societies and Direct Funding Standard Agents as well as CLBC staff. It should be used together with:

- *Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers*
- *Stage 2 Recovery: Plan Template for Service Providers*
- *Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Confirmation*
- *Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Online Data Collection Survey*
- *Stage 2 Recovery: CLBC Staff Guide – Working Together*
- The respective communications for service providers and for CLBC staff (see *Section 6*).

The sections below describe for both CLBC staff and service providers, the process and expectations for working through Stage 2: Recovery together.

CLBC's requirements and guidance for Stage 2: Recovery align with guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, WorkSafe BC and Licensing, but do not replace or supersede it in any circumstance.

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*Section 2 - Requirements for Service Providers in Moving to Stage 2*, sets out general provisions, business considerations, and expectations around prioritization, and completion of self-assessments, plans and confirmations.

*Section 3* and *Section 4* of this document define the responsibilities of service providers and those of CLBC in working collaboratively throughout this process.

*Section 5 - Guidance for Service Providers in Moving to Stage 2* builds on the considerations outlined in the *Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers* to support service providers to plan for serving individuals who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (because of age and/or pre-existing health complexities), and for serving individuals who are not at high risk.

*Section 6 – Resources and Tools* includes links to important resources such as *Provincial Health Guidance and Reference* and *WorkSafe BC Guidance and Reference* to support service providers in recovery planning.

## SECTION 2: Requirements for Service Providers in Moving to Stage 2

Although supporting individuals and keeping them safe during the COVID-19 pandemic is a collaborative effort, CLBC expects contracted service providers to meet the following set of requirements during this move to Stage 2.

### General Provisions:

Service providers must plan for the transition to Stage 2 before moving out of Stage 1 of their COVID-19 response. This includes completing the steps outlined in *Section 3*.

Service providers are responsible for ensuring that they continue to follow Public Health Guidance and comply with all other relevant legal and regulatory requirements (e.g. WorkSafe BC, Licensing, etc.) as required.

Service providers are responsible for ensuring that their contractual obligations with CLBC are met.

Service providers must develop a plan for Stage 2: Recovery and a Confirmation and review them with CLBC before implementing changes.

Service providers are expected to work within their existing funding allocation by utilizing all unused funding, and re-deploying staff as appropriate to implement their recovery plan.

Where service levels have not been fully utilized during Stage 1, service providers will use them now to support individual. Where this is not possible service providers will notify CLBC.

Service providers are responsible for decision-making and prioritization in planning for Stage 2, in consideration of the guidance offered by CLBC, as well as the guidelines and direction from applicable government and regulatory bodies.

Service providers will ensure that individuals, families, home sharing providers and staff impacted by the move to Stage 2 are informed and supported during this transition.

Service providers must develop a plan for returning to Stage 1 should it be necessary to revert to this level of COVID-19 response.

Service providers will work with CLBC to support the return of on-site monitoring activities during Stage 2.

Service providers must continue reporting COVID-19 incidents to CLBC.

**Business Considerations:**

The initial COVID-19 response has highlighted many business considerations that are likely to continue to impact service providers in Stage 2, and which will be essential to a successful transition to Stage 2. Service providers must take these considerations into account during planning:

- The need for inter-agency cooperation and coordination where individuals receive service from more than one provider
- The need for inter-agency coordination where staff are employed by multiple providers
- Employee relations in this unique labour environment, including collective agreement or labour standards requirements
- The impacts of redeployment on available resources, including the need to continue to limit staff to working in as few locations as possible
- The impact of limited services and supports on contracted home sharing providers.

**Prioritization:**

Stage 1 service priorities were focused on maintaining residential services across the province. Planning and implementation of Stage 2 must continue to prioritize residential services, while also increasing service delivery of other support services. As service providers assess and plan for Stage 2: Recovery there are many intersecting factors that will impact their decisions around moving into this next stage:

- Many families and caregivers will be returning to work outside the home, in addition to those caregivers considered essential workers during the initial COVID-19 response;
- Those at risk of, or experiencing isolation continue to have a high need for outreach services;
- Home sharing providers who have been providing additional service may need to return to work outside the home and therefore require requiring additional support;
- Where Individuals are served by more than one service provider, a service change by one may result in significant impact on another; and
- Redeployment of resources to residential services during the initial COVID-19 response, and the limiting of staff who have been working at multiple sites may be impacting the resources available for the implementation of Stage 2.

Service providers, with their knowledge of the individuals they serve, caregivers' situations, and the services they provide, are in the best position to make decisions around prioritization. Service providers need to assess the impact that not receiving service may have on the person, family, other services, other service agencies or providers and caregivers, including home sharing providers. During this time of transition, it is important that service providers ensure those impacted by not receiving regular service are consulted and informed.

**Self-Assessment:**

CLBC, in consultation with service providers and in alignment with the direction of WorkSafe BC and the BC Government, has developed *Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers* a tool that service providers can use to support their review of services and service locations and to facilitate planning.

The self-assessment tool consists of four sections outlining considerations when planning to safely move into Stage 2:

- Individuals supported
- Workplace considerations
- Staff considerations
- Service specific considerations.

Used together with *Section 5* of this requirements and guidance document, the self-assessment tool is intended to aid service providers in evaluating their readiness to reopen or re-establish services in alignment with the BC Government's [Restart Plan](#).

**Recovery Plan:**

In order to support transition to Stage 2, CLBC is requiring all service providers\* to complete and submit one *Stage 2 Recovery: Plan Template for Service Providers (Recovery Plan)* for each region that they operate in. Service providers will develop Recovery Plans that are appropriate to each setting and program for which they are responsible and the supported individuals in that home or facility. Along with the Confirmation, the Recovery Plan provided by each service provider will facilitate communication and understanding between CLBC and service providers.

**\*Person Centred Societies and Direct Funding Standard Agents are not required to submit a Recovery Plan.**

**Confirmation:**

In order to support transition to Stage 2, CLBC is requiring all service providers\* to complete and submit one *Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Confirmation (Confirmation)* for each region that they operate in. The Confirmation is the service provider's attestation that they have met their requirements for moving into Stage 2 including those of the BC Government, other regulatory bodies, and CLBC.

**\*Person Centred Societies and Direct Funding Standard Agents are not required to submit a Confirmation.**

**Completing the Online Data Collection Survey:**

All service providers\* are required to complete and submit one *Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Online Data Collection Survey* (Online Data Collection Survey) for each region that they operate in. This will provide CLBC with data:

- To meet government reporting requirements for COVID-19 Emergency Funding,
- To support any requests to government to extend Emergency Funding, and
- For learning purposes.

**\*Person Centred Societies and Direct Funding Standard Agents are not required to submit an Online Data Collection Survey.**

### SECTION 3 – Working Together: Service Provider Responsibilities

Before moving services into Stage 2, service providers must plan for the transition and implementation of Stage 2: Recovery. Service providers should review all relevant guidance and directions and can utilize *Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers* to support this work.

For each region that they operate in service providers are required to:

- Submit a completed *Stage 2 Recovery: Plan Template for Service Providers* to their designated liaison analyst (see below for more information);
- Submit a completed *Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Confirmation* to their designated liaison analyst (see below for more information);
- Complete the [Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Online Data Collection Survey](#). The link is also available on [CLBC's website](#); and
- Work together with their designated liaison analyst to:
  - Review the Recovery Plan and Confirmation, and
  - Discuss and address any outstanding issues or concerns.

If there are outstanding issues to be addressed analysts will support service providers to problem-solve and address these concerns.

Service providers are expected to notify their liaison analyst in advance of any substantive changes to their plan or circumstances, or when any issues or concerns arise that require support.

**Service providers must submit a Recovery Plan and Confirmation to CLBC no later than June 30<sup>th</sup> and complete an Online Data Collection Survey by June 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

#### **Completing the Recovery Plan:**

Service providers are responsible for completing a Recovery Plan for moving their organization, services and supported individuals safely into Stage 2, through modification of their service delivery approach in alignment with the BC Government's Restart Plan, Provincial Health Officer directions and WorkSafe BC requirements, and with the requirements and guidance set out in this document.

Service providers complete the *Stage 2 Recovery: Plan Template for Service Providers* which requires service providers to identify, consider and mitigate risk factors specific to:

- Individuals\*,
- The workplace,
- Staff\*, and
- Services.

\*These risks should not be at the level of specific people, but rather at a group level, broken down by potential risk. For more information about risk categories and considerations see *Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers*.

The *Stage 2 Recovery: Plan Template for Service Providers* also asks service providers to identify any other issues or consideration and how they plan to address them. This will inform discussion with the designated liaison analyst.

### **Completing the Confirmation:**

Service providers complete the Confirmation as a declaration that they have:

- ✓ **Developed a recovery plan that addresses the transition to Stage 2;**
- ✓ **Met the requirements for a Plan and policies as laid out by WorkSafe BC;**
- ✓ **Met the requirements and guidelines provided by the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Government for Phase 2; and**
- ✓ **Met the requirements laid out by Licensing (as applicable).**

And that they have:

- ✓ **Reviewed and adhered to the guidance laid out in *Stage 2 Recovery: Interim Guidance and Requirements* (this document) in developing their agency plan**

In completing the Confirmation, the service provider must check boxes to indicate that they have:

- ✓ **Considered and evaluated the resources and risks of their plan including those listed below.**

These are organized into considerations in the following areas:

- Individual and Family Circumstances,
- Individual and Staff Risk Factors,
- Resourcing Implications, and
- Stakeholder Awareness and Readiness.

The CEO or Executive Director of the service provider agency must sign this form before submitting it to CLBC.

## SECTION 4 – Working Together: CLBC Responsibilities

In order to facilitate and support service providers in transitioning to Stage 2, designated liaison analysts will be expected to connect with service providers to ensure that materials developed for Stage 2: Recovery have been received and reviewed and to answer any questions. Service providers are expected to submit these documents by no later than June 30th.

Once service providers have submitted their *Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Confirmation*, CLBC will be responsible for leading the collaborative process. Liaison analysts designated to work with a service provider in their region during the COVID-19 Response will:

- Receive a Recovery Plan, and Confirmation from the service provider, specific to their region.
- Ensure that these forms are completed.
- Arrange a conversation with the service provider to review the Recovery Plan and Confirmation **together**.
- During the review with service provider, the analyst will:
  - Review and discuss any items that were not checked off on the Confirmation;
  - Discuss any concerns or issues identified by the service provider and plans to address them;
  - Confirm that the service provider has a plan to return to Stage 1 if necessary;
  - Discuss any additional or outstanding issues and concerns on the part of the service provider;
  - Identify any information that needs to be added to the Confirmation;
  - Remind the service provider to inform CLBC if there are any substantive changes or issues with Stage 2 planning or implementation.
  - Advise the service provider to contact the analyst at any time if new concerns or issues arise.

After the initial review conversation with the service provider, designated liaison analysts:

- Upload the Recovery Plan, Confirmation and notes to the N drive – Monitoring folder.
- If there are outstanding issues or concerns, consult with PSA to support resolution in collaboration with the service provider. This may require escalation to ISM as appropriate through regular processes.
- Once issues or concerns are resolved, inform service provider and upload notes to the N drive – Monitoring folder.
- Check in with the service provider two weeks after the review.
- Schedule a more fulsome follow-up conversation and status update for one month after the review.

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CLBC requires that service providers have completed planning **before** implementation for Stage 2: Recovery can start. Analysts follow up with any service providers who do not submit the required documents **by June 30<sup>th</sup>** to discuss development of a plan.

CLBC staff should use the *Stage 2 Recovery: CLBC Staff Guide – Working Together* when working with service providers to review plans and to support them in their implementation of these plans. This guide reinforces the principles and lens that guide this work.

## SECTION 5: Guidance for Service Providers in Moving to Stage 2

CLBC recognizes that each service provider supports individuals with a range of needs, situations, and considerations, and that service providers and their staff are in the best position to implement policies and practices that will support the physical and emotional well-being of these individuals and their families. In order for service providers to make the best decisions possible during the transition to Stage 2 it is important they consider a variety of situations and factors.

In addition to the guidelines and requirements set by government and regulating bodies (see *Section 6*), and the service provider requirements outlined above, CLBC has worked with service providers to identify additional areas of consideration to support community living services transition to Stage 2.

[\*BC's Restart Plan – Next steps to move BC through the pandemic\*](#) identifies contact intensity and number of contacts as important considerations in limiting risk of transmission. When moving into Stage 2 service providers should consider how these factors come into play in different types of service environments, including: groups in an indoor space, groups in an outdoor space, individuals or groups in a vehicle, 1:1 in community, 1:1 in a home, and group living.

The guidance provided in this section is intended to support any areas identified in *Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers* as requiring further consideration for serving all individuals. It is divided by applicability to working with: all individuals, those at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19, those at high risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19, and those who are **not** at high risk of either severe illness from, or exposure and transmission of COVID-19.

### Working with all Individuals

The following guidance applies universally when working with individuals during Stage 2:

- Assess staff for symptoms/self-assess prior to supporting the person (regardless of location of support or other exposure control). **Staff must not come to work** if they are symptomatic, required to self-isolate, or have any reason to think that they might be contagious.
- Ensure clear hand hygiene, cleaning, and other exposure control and safety protocols are in place and are followed.
- Identify options to minimize touching high contact surfaces or coming in close proximity with others.
- Plan safe ways to support individuals to get outside the home and/or for caregivers to have breaks.
- Consider the health and safety of not just the individual but also their family, caregivers and/or house mates when planning support.
- If physical distancing is not possible, use other exposure control methods.

- Minimize the number of staff that work with an individual to keep their “bubble” of exposure small.
- Encourage staff who work with an individual have a small “bubble” to minimize the individual’s potential exposure.
- Avoid having staff at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 supporting individuals where there is a heightened risk of spreading COVID-19 from person to staff due to inability to maintain physical distancing, and/or lack of other exposure control measures.
- Assess and make use of the safest transportation option(s) to reduce risks associated with travel.
- Work with the individual and their network as necessary to ensure that any health and mental health needs continue to be met.

### **Working with Individuals at High Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19**

In addition to the guidance above for working with **all** individuals, there are critical consideration specific to those who are at high risk for **severe illness** from COVID-19 due to age and/or underlying health conditions (**not** those who are at a higher risk of **contracting** COVID-19).

[People who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#) \*are:

- Those with medical conditions including heart disease, high blood pressure, lung disease, diabetes, and cancer;
- Those with weakened immune system; and
- Those over 65 years
- Those between 50 and 65 may also be at heightened risk. CLBC recommends a discussion with this groups’ individual physician to assess the risk of severe illness from a COVID-19 infection.

\* With other people where the service provider is uncertain about the risk, the individual’s physician should be consulted.

This builds on the guidance for working with **all** individuals, and applies to those who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 the following guidance applies:

- Continue the approaches of Stage 1 COVID-19 response for now, rather than moving into Stage 2.
- Assess risks of continuing to isolate (i.e. enhanced conflict, caregiver burn out, etc.) vs. risks of exposure.

## Working with Individuals at High Risk of Exposure and Transmission of COVID-19

There are other potential situations or behaviours that may result in higher risk of exposure and transmission when supporting individuals in community living services. These include:

- Individuals who are at high risk of harm to self or others (due to behaviour or other complexities e.g. Multiple Complex Needs);
- Individuals who have difficulty in understanding or complying with the guidelines set out by Public Health, including physical distancing;
- Individuals who require personal care support in order to attend to important hygiene practices; and
- Individuals who chose not to follow Public Health guidelines aimed at reducing exposure and transmission of COVID-19.

This builds on the guidance for working with all individuals, and applies to those who are at higher risk for transmission or exposure:

- Carefully determine strategies for communicating new rules in a manner that is clear, addresses autonomy, and can support individuals who find the new rules challenging.
- Assess risks of continuing to isolate (i.e. enhanced conflict, caregiver burn out, mental health issues for the individual or those supporting them) vs. risks of exposure.
- Consider the individual's communication needs and behavioural support needs in developing strategies.
- Test support and exposure control strategies with the individual in safer situations prior before being in situations with higher risk of transmission.
- Provide support in ways and at times that will work best for the individual, and that keeps the safety of the individual, staff, and community members as priorities.
- Work with a behavioural consultant on plan as necessary.
- Work with the individual to ensure they are being assessed/self-assessing for COVID-19 symptoms regularly.
- Avoid community settings where physical distancing is not possible, or it is likely that physical distancing would be compromised for the person or members of the community due to the individual's support needs.
- If an individual is displaying symptoms and refuses testing:
  - treat as a presumptive case of COVID-19, and
  - reach out to their physician to discuss the case further and/or contact the local Medical Health Officer for advice.

## Working with Individuals NOT at High Risk When Moving into Stage 2

This builds on the guidance for working with **all** individuals, and applies to individuals who are **not at high risk for either** severe illness from **or** exposure and transmission of COVID-19 when moving into Stage 2:

- Follow BC Health guidelines regarding recommended number of people in a gathering. The recommended number includes individuals, staff and anyone else who may be present.
- Organize services and support into cohorts that enable the same small group to gather, rather than rotating the individuals that come together.
- Wherever possible look to outdoor spaces where physical distancing is possible to gather safely.
- See [How to Care for Person with COVID-19 at Home: Advice for Caregivers](#) for more details on working in congregate living situations such as staffed residential homes.

## **SECTION 6 - Resources and Tools**

[BCCDC Interim Guidance to Social Service Providers for the Prevention and Control of COVID-19 in their Facilities](#)

[BC- Key Steps to safely operating your business or organization and reducing COVID-19 transmission](#)

[BC's Restart Plan – Next steps to move BC through the pandemic](#)

[BC Government Letter to CLBC from Dr. Behn Smith](#)

[BC Government Virtual Mental Health Supports During COVID-19](#)

[BC Public Health and Safety Guidelines](#)

[CLBC Interim Policy Guidance during COVID-19](#)

[Government of Canada – COVID-19 and people with disabilities in Canada](#)

[Government of Canada – Infection Prevention and Control for COVID-19: Interim Guidance for Home Care Settings](#)

[Government of Canada – People who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#)

Stage 2 Recovery: CLBC Staff Guide – Working Together

Stage 2 Recovery: Plan Template for Service Providers

Stage 2 Recovery: Self-Assessment for Service Providers

Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Confirmation

Stage 2 Recovery: Service Provider Online Data Collection Survey

[WorkSafe BC COVID-19 and returning to safe operations](#)

[WorkSafe BC Forms & Resources \(May 2020\)](#)

[WorkSafe BC Returning to safe operations frequently asked questions](#)

[WorkSafe BC Safety Plan Template](#)