



## NewsHound

Your Veterinary News Source.



## COVID-19 screening FAQs

OVMA has received a variety of questions from members regarding the screening of staff and clients entering the workplace for COVID-19. Here are answers to the most commonly asked questions.

### Is COVID-19 screening mandatory?

As of Sept. 25, under the Reopening Ontario Act, all Ontario businesses are legally required to screen all workers, contractors, volunteers and outside service providers for COVID-19 as a condition of entry to any workplace. While client screening is not required under that act, under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, employers have a duty to take every precaution to mitigate risks to their employees and to the work environment. To fulfill this responsibility, OVMA strongly recommends that practices also screen clients entering the workplace, especially those clients staying longer than a few minutes and/or entering examination rooms.

### What screening questions must be asked?

There are three screening questions that must be asked:

1. Whether the individual has any new or worsening symptoms or signs of COVID-19.
2. Whether the individual has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days.
3. Whether the individual has had close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19.

Keep questions short and concise, as there's no minimum baseline for screening. OVMA provided three sample questions that can be used by clinics in the [screening form template](#) shared last week.

### When should the screening take place?

The screening process should be completed either prior to or immediately upon entry to the clinic. Use your discretion for delivery personnel if they aren't entering the practice or staying longer than a few minutes to drop off or pick up.

## Do we have to use a written questionnaire?

No. A few methods can be considered:

1. *Verbal* - Screening can be done verbally by asking the employee or client the screening questions and documenting the responses within the staff or client file once completed. A question template that can be laminated and placed on the counter for review by the client can be [found here](#).
2. *Online* - Online screening (e.g. fillable PDF form, Google Doc or website form) is also possible. The form can be sent to the client with a reminder 24-48 hours prior to an appointment to be completed and returned to the clinic. However, to ensure data protection and personal privacy, the individual's name should be the only personal identifier collected. Any additional identifier (e.g. contact information) will be subject to privacy law and confidentiality procedures.
3. *Written* - Using a paper-based system is not ideal, as you should be minimizing the amount of materials transferred between individuals. Should the practice be more comfortable with a written record, consider a screening log. A copy of the screening questions can be provided, and individuals can sign a log stating that they have cleared the screening protocols.



NewsHound e-newsletters provide timely veterinary news and updates.  
You're receiving this message because you're a member  
of the [Ontario Veterinary Medical Association](#).

© 2020 Ontario Veterinary Medical Association. All rights reserved.

### **Our mailing address:**

Ontario Veterinary Medical Association  
420 Bronte Street South, Suite 205  
Milton, ON, L9T 0H9

To unsubscribe, email [info@ovma.org](mailto:info@ovma.org) and write "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.