

Ottawa Public Health

COVID-19 Update for Businesses and Workplaces

December 21, 2021

Following the media availability with Dr. Vera Etches regarding the [Letter of Instruction with new measures for Ottawa](#) (effective Monday, December 20, 12:01 am), the Province of Ontario [announced measures to reduce transmission of COVID-19](#). To help clarify which measures apply here in Ottawa, as outlined by Dr. Etches today, we remind residents that the stronger measure applies for a given setting and must be followed. This means:

- Ottawa's limit of six people per table in places where food and drink are served applies over the Province's limit of 10 people per table.
- Limit of 10 people indoors and 25 outdoors for gatherings is required as mandated by the Province.
- Capacity limits and additional measures are effective Sunday December 19, 2021 at 12:01 am as mandated by the Province.
- A 50 per cent capacity limit applies in more settings as mandated by the Province of Ontario, please visit [their website](#) for the latest details.
- The Province has mandated additional restrictions for places that serve food and beverages, requiring limited hours, no dancing and no karaoke.
- Places of Worship that opt-in to require proof of vaccination have capacity limit of 50 per cent per Ottawa's Letter of Instruction.

COVID-19 Prevention Measures

Updated: COVID-19 Screening Tool for Workplaces/Post-Secondary Institutions

The OPH screening tool for [Workplaces/Post-Secondary Institutions](#) was updated to reflect the new Federal Government travel rules and regulations with regards to variants of concern of COVID-19. The [Provincial Screening Tool](#) may not be updated to reflect this change. OPH strongly recommends using the OPH Screening Tools which align with the updated Federal Government direction.

If you use a software or paper screening tools for your workplace/organization, please ensure you are using the updated screening questions.

For more information on Federal travel rules visit the [Government of Canada COVID-19 and travel webpage](#) or contact the Public Health Agency of Canada at 1-833-784-4397.

Verify Ontario App – required for all settings where proof of vaccination is required

Effective January 4, 2022, all settings where proof of vaccination is required are required to use the enhanced vaccine certificate with QR code and the [Verify Ontario app](#). The [Verify Ontario app](#) will make it easier, more secure and convenient for business operators to verify proof of vaccination where required to do so. The QR code can be used digitally or by printing a paper copy. Individuals can download their enhanced certificate with QR code by visiting <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>.

Membership-based businesses that were previously *keeping a record of patrons who met entry requirements and not checking each visit will have to modify this practice. At this time, with the changes announced by the Province, our Bylaw Regulatory Services interpretation is that the Reopening Ontario Act requires the*

enhanced vaccination certificates be checked/scanned either visually or digitally every time.

NEW – OPH Community Exposures Webpage

Ottawa Public Health is working hard to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community and thanks businesses, sports, places of worship and other sectors for doing their part. Some of this work is done through contact tracing. Sometimes when there is an exposure in the community or workplace, it is not possible to identify all the people who have been exposed.

To help ensure quick notification of potential contacts and reduce the risk of further transmission of COVID-19 in our community, Ottawa Public Health will provide information on possible exposures on the COVID-19 [Community Exposures webpage](#). Most locations listed have the required public health measures in place, but despite these measures, there is still a risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Businesses, sport associations, places of worship, community groups and others are encouraged to subscribe to email notifications for our COVID-19 Community Exposures webpage to receive an email when the page is updated with new possible COVID-19 exposures. To subscribe, visit the [webpage](#) and click the **Receive Email Updates** button on the bottom of the page.

The Community Exposure webpage does not reflect all exposures Ottawa Public Health is investigating. Additional information about outbreaks in healthcare and other institutional settings, childcare and schools is available on the [Daily COVID-19 Dashboard webpage](#). While Ottawa Public Health does not typically disclose the location of possible COVID-19 exposures to protect individuals' privacy, this information is disclosed when needed to meet public health objectives such as prompt notification of potential contacts and reducing the risk of further transmission.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in helping share important public health information with Ottawa residents. For more information on COVID-19 visit [Ottawa Public Health's COVID-19 webpage](#).

COVID-19 Vaccination

NEW- Updated Third Booster Eligibility

Individuals aged 18 and over are eligible to schedule their booster dose appointment through the [Ontario's booking portal](#), by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre, through Indigenous-led vaccination clinics, [participating pharmacies](#) and primary care settings. Appointments will be booked three months (84 days) after a second dose as the province urgently expands booster eligibility to millions more individuals. Additionally, pharmacies and other channels may provide boosters for 18 and over at the three-month interval starting Friday, December 17, 2021 for walk-ins.

In addition, individuals aged 50 and over as well as all those currently eligible who have already booked their appointment at an interval of six months (168 days) can call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre to re-book for an earlier date at the three-month interval and can change their appointment through [Ontario's booking portal](#).

Testing

COVID-19 testing sites are experiencing an unprecedented surge and cannot keep up with demand. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, have tested + on a rapid antigen test or have been exposed to a positive case please self-isolate and follow the [guidance](#).

Reminders

Sick Leave Benefits for Workers

The Ontario government has extended its Worker [Income Protection Benefit program](#), which provides paid sick days, until July 31, 2022. Employees can continue to access this paid leave to get tested, vaccinated, self-isolate, or care for a family member.