

Steps to Prevent & Reduce Infections in Lower Risk Congregate Living Settings

Screen & Monitor

Monitor staff and residents for illness. A line list can help you keep track. The provincial [self-assessment tool](#) provides next steps for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms.

Test all symptomatic staff and residents for COVID-19. Use a Rapid Test when symptoms are present to help determine the cause of illness. Where able, attend an assessment centre for PCR testing to access treatment for COVID-19.

Isolate & Cohort

Isolate ill residents and staff. Cohort ill residents if able. See the Public Health Ontario (PHO) document [Cohorting in Outbreaks in Congregate Living Settings](#) for more information. Staff and visitors should leave the home immediately if ill.

WHO	ISOLATION REQUIREMENTS	FOR 10 DAYS – FOLLOW PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES:
Cases In the Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolate for a minimum of 5 days.• Isolation can end once fever is resolved, and symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear a well fitted mask.• Physical distance from others.• Avoid non-essential visits to highest risk settings and immunocompromised people.
Cases who leave the home regularly (e.g. work, school, other)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If symptomatic: Isolate for a minimum of 5 days.• Isolation can end once fever is resolved, and symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms).• If no symptoms: Can leave for work or school following public health measures.• Isolate from others while in the home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear a well fitted mask.• Physical distance from others.• Avoid non-essential visits to highest risk settings and immunocompromised people.

WHO	ISOLATION REQUIREMENTS	FOR 10 DAYS – FOLLOW PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES:
Close Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No isolation required unless symptoms develop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch for symptoms and isolate immediately if symptoms develop & test. Wear a well fitted mask. Physical distance from others. Avoid non-essential visits to highest risk settings and immunocompromised people.

Review & Implement Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) Measures

- Stay up to date with immunizations
- Hand hygiene
- Cover your cough
- Clean and disinfect
- Distancing
- Appropriate use of PPE

Do you have an Outbreak?

An outbreak involves more than one case of illness, all with a common association (person, place, time).

Homes that are not required by legislation to report outbreaks to Public Health or do not have vulnerable resident(s) are not required to report the outbreak to Public Health. Homes that have 2 or more residents with 2 or more new or worsening episodes of diarrhea/vomiting within 48 hours are encouraged to call Public Health for guidance.

Use the applicable sections of the Public Health Ontario [CHECKLIST](#) Managing COVID-19 Outbreaks in Congregate Living Settings to manage a COVID-19 outbreak.

The IPAC measures listed above are helpful in reducing the spread of other respiratory viruses such as influenza and the common cold. Antiviral medication for influenza is used for treatment and prophylaxis of those who are at risk of severe complications and outcomes from the flu. These are prescribed by a health care provider and ideally given within 48 hours of illness or exposure to influenza.

Additional Resources for Congregate Living Settings can be found on the Public Health Ontario Website: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>. Enter Congregate Living Settings in the search field.



Southwestern Public Health: 1-800-922-0096 x 1232 (St. Thomas) or x 3500 (Woodstock)

Middlesex-London Health Unit: (519) 663-5317 x 9012 or OFT@mlhu.on.ca

Huron Perth Public Health: 1-888-221-2133 x 3284 or idteam@hp-ph.ca; after hours 1-800-431-2054