



**Northwestern
Health Unit**

www.nwhu.on.ca

INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

DATE: May 11, 2021

Effective: May 13, 2021 at 12:01 a.m.

TO: All persons responsible for a business or organization that is open in the area of the Northwestern Health Unit (“**NWHU**”), where one or more employees (including those hired under third party agencies, contractors, vendors, volunteers or students and any other such persons; collectively “**workers**”) or the public are regularly present

First of all, thank you for your efforts over the past year and for complying with the public health requirements. These measures aim to protect your staff, patrons, and our community. I ask for your continued support and compliance with the instructions set out below.

In the NWHU catchment area, we have experienced outbreaks and community transmission of Variants of Concern (**VOC**) of the COVID-19 virus.

With VOC of COVID-19 circulating in the community, it is prudent to take a thorough approach to cases involving workplace and community exposures. The VOC are more contagious which means that there could be more transmission of the virus happening as a result. Following public health measures is the best way to protect ourselves against the spread of COVID-19, including variants of concern. The goal of outbreak management is to identify the source of illness, control the outbreak and limit transmission to others.

Ontario’s strengthened shutdown measures continue to require persons responsible for a business or organization that is open to operate the business or organization in compliance with the instructions of public health officials. That includes these instructions issued by me.

These instructions will be enforced by public health officials and by provincial offences officers under one or more of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act, Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* and/or the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. Failure to comply is an offence. Among enforcement actions that may be taken, you may be charged and penalties imposed including fines, imprisonment and/or closure of premises.


These instructions shall be posted at: www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19/Pages/WorkplaceInstructions.aspx

Please see our website for further information: www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19

See Ontario’s shutdown measures at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/emergency-information>.

These instructions remain in effect until amended or rescinded by me.

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS CLOSELY

1. Implement all measures required by applicable law including all requirements established under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* (and other provincial orders and regulations), the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario and sector-specific guidance documents. Where these instructions impose one or more additional requirements, the requirements under these instructions must also be followed.
 2. Communicate to all workers:
 - 2.1. That every worker symptomatic for COVID-19 should be tested as soon as possible from the date of onset of symptoms at an assessment centre approved for diagnostic testing, not at a workplace screening site; and
 - 2.2. That every worker who is COVID-19 positive, is or becomes symptomatic for COVID-19, or has been identified as a close contact of a person with COVID-19 as determined by NWHU or another public health agency is required to self-isolate by the s.22 class order issued by me under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* on February 16, 2021 ("**Class Order**"); and
 - 2.3. Provide each worker with a copy of the Class Order.
 3. Implement workplace policies and practices to ensure the following:
 - 3.1. Active verification of completed screening prior to arrival on site, equivalent to the [Ontario COVID-19 self-assessment](#) and immediate exclusion of all workers whose screening results require self-isolation and or testing for COVID-19;
 - 3.2. Occupancy of the premises must be limited to only as many persons as can be accommodated such that 2m distancing between persons can be maintained;
 - 3.3. Physical distancing of 2m between persons must be maintained in all work areas, lunchrooms, change rooms, washrooms, subject only to para 3.4 below;
 - 3.4. If work arrangements or the workplace environment cannot be altered to allow the required 2m distancing at all times, the workers shall be provided with appropriate personal protective equipment including medical grade masks;
 - 3.5. Signage regarding COVID-19 safety measures available from the NWHU or other authorities must be posted throughout the workplace premises;
 - 3.6. Masks must be used correctly and consistently inside the workplace premises by all workers and visitors;
 - 3.7. Availability of adequate hand hygiene supplies;
 - 3.8. Appropriate cleaning and disinfection of workspaces with the focus on high touch surfaces;
 - 3.9. Support self-isolation for all workers diagnosed with COVID-19, with COVID-19 symptoms, and who are close contacts of a person with COVID-19 as determined by NWHU or another public health agency; and
 - 3.10. Be able to provide a log of all workers (to include first name, last name, phone number and, if possible, email address) present at the workplace during the period directed by NWHU and make this log available immediately upon request by the NWHU for case and contact management purposes; this log must be retained for a minimum of 30 days.
 4. Immediately exclude from the workplace every person identified as:
 - (a) diagnosed with COVID-19; or
 - (b) having the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and having been tested for COVID-19 and awaiting the results of their test; or
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- (c) otherwise having reasonable grounds to believe they have symptoms of COVID-19; or
 - (d) a close contact (meaning high-risk contact) of a person with COVID-19 as determined by NWHU or another public health agency unless that high-risk contact has no COVID-19 symptoms AND completed the 2nd COVID-19 vaccine dose 14 or more days prior to contact.
5. For every person identified in 4. above, immediately reiterate the information set out in paras 2.2 and 2.3 above. The Class Order requires these persons to confine themselves to their home or isolation facility until they have fully complied with all requirements of that Class Order.
- The Class Order provides that persons who are advised by the NWHU that they are permitted to leave their home/isolation facility or who require emergency medical attention may do so but only if and as required for those limited purposes.
6. If you become aware of two or more workers with COVID-19 at your workplace within a 14-day interval, immediately notify NWHU at 1-800-830-5978 or 1-866-475-6506 (after hours).
7. If you become aware of two or more cases of COVID-19 at your workplace within a 14-day interval, or upon notification by the NWHU, ensure that the following steps are taken immediately:
- 7.1. Notify the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, and any other relevant governmental authorities;
 - 7.2. Provide contact details of the most responsible decision-maker at the workplace premises and ensure that person is immediately available to NWHU;
 - 7.3. Be readily available for contact by the NWHU to implement any additional measures immediately as required by the NWHU;
 - 7.4. Cooperate with infection prevention and control personnel and any other personnel from the NWHU including allowing entry into the workplace premises for inspection and to support enhanced infection prevention and control and any other measures for public health management of the outbreak;
 - 7.5. Follow all NWHU directions pertaining to case and contact management and identifying workers who need to isolate, including that all directions as specified by the NWHU are communicated to workers; and
 - 7.6. Workers of a closed workplace premises shall not work in another workplace during their period of isolation.
8. If you become aware of two or more cases of COVID-19 at your workplace within a 14-day interval, or upon notification by the NWHU, immediately communicate to all workers:
- 8.1. Advise workers that two or more cases of COVID-19 at your workplace and that the NWHU has been notified of the situation; include further information if and as directed by the NWHU; and
 - 8.2. Reiterate the information set out in para 2 above.



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