

Public Health
277 Victoria Street
5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1W2

toronto.ca/health

January 4, 2021 (revised January 6, 2021)

To: All Employers and Persons Responsible for a Business or Organization in the City of Toronto Permitted to be Open under the *Reopening Ontario Act*

Re: Toronto Public Health Instructions for Workplaces

I want to acknowledge and thank you for all of your efforts to protect the health and safety of workers, volunteers, patrons, and customers. Given the continued rise in COVID-19 infections in the City of Toronto, more actions are needed to reduce the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

Key risk factors of potential transmission include:

- Close contact
- Closed spaces
- Crowded places
- Prolonged exposure
- Forceful exhalation

Physical distancing plays a key role in reducing the risks associated with gatherings (e.g., crowds), particularly in closed spaces, and has been proven to limit COVID-19 transmission.

Accordingly, I am issuing this Letter of Instruction to all employers in the City of Toronto permitted to be open under the *Reopening Ontario Act*, which requires them to take the additional measures set out in this Letter to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

These Instructions are being provided pursuant to Section 2(2) of Schedule 1 to Ontario Regulation 82/20: Rules for Areas in Stage 1 made under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*, S.O. 2020, c. 17 (“the *Reopening Ontario Act*”), formerly a regulation made under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (“EMCPA”) and now a continued section 7.0.2 order under the *Reopening Ontario Act*.

Note that the following businesses or organizations are currently exempt from these Instructions due to sector-specific legislation, directives and/or guidelines governing COVID-19 measures in these workplaces:

- i. A licensed child care program that is in compliance with guidance issued by the Ministry of Education;
- ii. Health care providers and health care entities as defined in Section 77.7 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* who are subject to the Chief Medical Officer of Health’s Directives issued thereunder;
- iii. Schools and school boards licensed under the *Education Act*, and,

- iv. Schools and private schools within the meaning of the *Education Act*, that are operated in accordance with a return to school direction issued by the Ministry of Education and approved by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

To the extent that anything in these Instructions conflicts with other applicable Provincial legislation or directives, those Provincial requirements prevail. Where conflicts do not exist, these Instructions are additional to any applicable Provincial requirements.

Effective immediately, I am instructing all persons responsible for a business or organization in the City of Toronto implement the following measures:

Immediate Notification to Toronto Public Health

1. Immediately notify Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 as soon as you become aware of **two or more people** who test positive for COVID-19 within a 14-day interval in connection with your workplace premises.
2. If **two or more people** test positive for COVID-19 within a 14-day interval in connection with your workplace premises, employers must:
 - a. Provide contact information for a designated contact person at the workplace premise and ensure that person is readily available to communicate with Toronto Public Health and implement any additional measures immediately as required by Toronto Public Health.
 - b. Ensure that accurate and updated contact information for all workers is available to be produced to Toronto Public Health within 24 hours of request in support of case management and contact tracing requirements for COVID-19.
 - c. Cooperate with infection prevention and control personnel from Toronto Public Health including allowing entry into the workplace premise for inspection and to support enhanced infection prevention and control measures and recommendations.

Businesses must ensure the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development and/or other relevant government authorities have been notified in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and other applicable law.

Infection Prevention Measures

3. Ensure **hand sanitizer** and **hand-washing facilities** are provided in work and rest areas. Hand sanitizer with 60-90% alcohol content is recommended.
4. Implement **rigorous and frequent environmental cleaning** in all high-touch areas and those areas accessible to the public, including washrooms, check-out counters, concession stands, and other high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, elevator buttons.
5. Conduct or have the property owner or landlord conduct a **regular review of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems** to ensure they are functioning well.

6. **Minimize instances of more than one individual in a vehicle** for driving associated with work. If unavoidable, ensure face coverings are worn in the vehicle (preferably medical masks) and drive with the windows open.
7. Ensure that **physical distancing of workers takes place by at least two (2) metres** throughout the workplace and during eating and rest periods (e.g., lunchrooms, change rooms, washrooms). Install one-way walkways to reduce close physical interactions.
8. **Implement physical barriers**, such as plexiglass, when physical distancing is not possible. Physical distancing is always preferable to the use of barriers.

Supports for Workers

9. In order to encourage forthright reporting of COVID-19 symptoms or contact among employees, **ensure that all employees are aware of income replacement and workplace-related benefits they are entitled to** if they have to isolate due to symptoms of COVID-19, being tested for COVID-19 or being a close contact of someone with COVID-19.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these Instructions:

“**employer**” means a person, company, or organization that employs people or has under its service a person engaged in work.

“**worker**” means any employee, independent contractor, manager, director, officer, owner, partner, shareholder, volunteer, student or any other person engaged in the business or organization’s activity at the workplace.

“**workplace**” means any land, premises, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a worker works.

ENFORCEMENT

Please be reminded that you are required to comply with the additional measures above pursuant to regulations under the *Reopening Ontario Act* including any successor legislation or regulations.

These Instructions, including any revisions to these instructions, are available on the City of Toronto public website: www.toronto.ca/COVID19.

Inquiries about these Instructions should be directed to: 416-338-7600.

Toronto Public Health posts information regarding how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 on its website that can assist local businesses and organizations in operating safely: www.toronto.ca/COVID19.

These additional measures are intended to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 where collective efforts of various sectors, including workplaces, are required to protect our communities.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. de Villa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Eileen de Villa
Medical Officer of Health
City of Toronto