Postsecondary Education Health Measures Framework for Fall 2021

August 31, 2021
Ministry of Colleges and Universities

Ontario

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Note: This Postsecondary Education Health Measures Framework provides guidance to the postsecondary education sector. The guidance is subject to change and is not intended to replace medical or legal advice. In the event of any conflict between the Postsecondary Education Health Measures Framework and any applicable legislation or any orders or directives issued by the government, including the Minister of Health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the legislation, order, or directive prevails.

1.0. Overview and Planning for Fall 2021

The *Postsecondary Education Health Measures Framework for Fall 2021* (the Framework) is intended to provide guidance to Ontario's postsecondary education (PSE) institutions to support the continued health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

The guidance in this Framework is aimed at supporting PSE institutions in their respective planning and decisions for all on-campus and in-person activities, including the range of activities from academic delivery and research to events and athletics. The Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) will continue to align guidance or direction to the sector with the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH).

In addition, the Framework outlines key planning principles for Fall 2021 for the PSE sector, information about mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies and related requirements and information about Continuity of Education Plans, which publicly-assisted colleges and universities are to have in place for September 2021.

PSE institutions are encouraged to work closely with local public health units to support the safety of their campus community (i.e., students; faculty; staff).

The requirement for mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies has not yet been implemented for Indigenous Institutes. The ministry will be consulting with Indigenous Institutes to determine whether mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies would be implemented for these institutions.

MCU has worked with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) in the development of this Framework.

1.1. Fall Planning

Ontario entered Step 3 of the *Roadmap for Reopening Ontario* on July 16, 2021 and at the time of the release of this document remains in Step 3. In Step 3, PSE institutions are subject to the requirements outlined in *O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step* and other applicable legislation.

The province recently amended *O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step* under the ROA to change the requirements related to indoor physical distancing and capacity limits for indoor instructional spaces (i.e., indoor instructional areas such as classrooms; laboratories; libraries; in-person experiential learning, etc.) so that PSE institutions can implement their plans for a return to in-person instruction for Fall 2021.

At this time, the change in requirements noted above with respect to physical distancing and capacity limits for indoor instructional spaces does not apply to Indigenous Institutes, unless the Indigenous Institute implements a COVID-19 vaccination policy that is consistent with the instructions issued by the OCMOH for PSE institutions.

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves across the province, it is important that PSE institutions continue to adapt based on their specific local circumstances and needs of their campus communities, and more specifically, the safety and academic needs of their students. Coordination with local public health units continues to be key to being responsive and adapting PSE-specific measures.

PSE institutions continue to be subject to the rules set out under the ROA. PSE institutions are encouraged to consult with their own legal counsel on how orders, legislation, and any local requirements apply to their specific programs and operations.

The following are key principles for Fall 2021 that should inform all activities, planning, and decisions relevant to the PSE institution's campus community:

- PSE institutions are required (with the exception of Indigenous Institutes at this time) to implement mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies pursuant to instructions issued by the OCMOH. Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies are to be in place by September 7, 2021.
- Publicly-assisted colleges and universities are directed to have publicly-posted Continuity of Education Plans in place for September 2021 (refer to Section 5.0 in this Framework).

- The mental health and wellness of students, faculty and staff are of critical importance and should be prioritized.
- PSE institutions should reinforce and promote daily symptoms screening and avoiding coming onto campus when feeling sick.
- PSE institutions must continue to follow requirements for physical distancing and capacity limits as per regulatory requirements and/or based on public health advice.
- Hand hygiene (with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand rub) is an important aspect of infection prevention and control and should be promoted throughout campuses.
- Regular cleaning and disinfection protocols are important and should continue to be encouraged and emphasized in all PSE settings.
- Non-medical masks and face coverings are required in all indoor settings and advised whenever physical distancing is challenging or not possible on campus.
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems and filters should be maintained and inspected according to the manufacturer's instructions to ensure maximum air quality across campus, especially where windows are not available or cannot be opened.
- While virtual or hybrid modes of learning have an important place in the PSE landscape, especially considering impacts from emergency situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone benefits from the opportunity to participate in the on-campus experience. However, as part of the PSE institution's continuity of education planning, virtual or hybrid modes of learning should be available as alternative modes of delivery in situations where they are required, or as needed by the PSE institution.

1.2. Mental Health, Well-Being, and Academic Success

It is important that all PSE institutions take appropriate actions so students, faculty, and staff can easily access mental health and addiction supports, services and resources. This may include augmenting existing mental health and addiction services and the provision of onsite or virtual services, with special consideration for diverse groups (e.g., considerations based on factors such as gender, race, Indigeneity, language, culture, geographic location, rurality, ability, age, socioeconomic status, and other intersecting identities).

One ministry-funded resource that students may find beneficial is *Good2Talk / Allo j'écoute*, a health helpline that has been supporting students since 2013. The helpline offers immediate

professional counselling to all students through several platforms that are accessible 24/7 year-round, toll-free, in both French and English. Good2Talk can be reached by telephone (1-866-925-5454), text (GOOD2TALKON to 686868), or Facebook Messenger through live chat.

PSE institutions are also expected to directly provide or be able to link students, faculty, and staff to on- and off-campus services that include resources on local or community-based health care services that are accessible by students, faculty, and staff. This should include supplemental or adjunct health services, including mental health and addiction, dentistry, physiotherapy, and resources on organizations that deliver specialized services for diverse groups as previously noted.

1.3. Virtual Learning

The government's continued investment in Ontario's virtual learning offerings and support is intended to support PSE institutions in providing flexible learning options and the ability to respond to future emergencies and situations with elevated risks while protecting the quality of education for students. PSE institutions have the flexibility to deliver academic instruction in the mode that best suits the needs of students, including virtual and hybrid delivery models, and in full alignment with public health advice.

1.4. International Students and Education

International students come to Ontario to access a world-class education, and to experience living in a diverse and vibrant province. While COVID-19 response measures are in place to protect the public's health and well-being, MCU recognizes that these response measures have been particularly challenging for international students and for Ontario's Designated Learning Institutions.

Ontario welcomes international students to the province and MCU remains committed to working with PSE institutions, in consultation with the provincial and federal governments to support international students in safely coming to Canada and Ontario.

Designated Learning Institutions must continue to be mindful of the trajectory of COVID-19 abroad and its impacts on public health decisions in relation to international students.

Designated Learning Institutions are reminded that commitments as per 2020-21 approved COVID-19 Readiness Plans remain in place and PSE institutions must continue to implement and update those plans as necessary based on federal, provincial, and local requirements.

PSE institutions are expected to have staff specially trained to guide and support international students in navigating Ontario's health system and accessing health care and well-being resources, as required. This includes directly providing students who are not covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) with information and support on how to obtain health insurance to minimize barriers to accessing health care (e.g., PSE institution health plans or plans similar to OHIP).

1.5. Communications

PSE institutions are strongly encouraged to maintain ongoing, consistent, and clear communication with students, faculty, and staff through multilingual and multimodal formats (if applicable) throughout the academic year. PSE institutions are also encouraged to provide information through media formats that are free and easily accessible on the PSE institution's public-facing website.

PSE institutions are to maintain consistent communication with the MCU, with respect to pertinent COVID-19 related updates. PSE institutions may contact MCU through the contacts listed below:

Colleges and Universities and Other Private Institutions
Ivonne Mellozzi, Director
Postsecondary Accountability Branch
Phone: 416-325-4081 | Email: Ivonne.Mellozzi@ontario.ca

Indigenous Institutes
Barry McCartan, Director
Indigenous Education Branch
Phone: 416-314-6165 | Email: Barry.McCartan@ontario.ca

Private Career Colleges, Language Schools, and other Designated Learning Institutions
Laura Adams, Director & Superintendent
Private Career Colleges Branch
Email: pcc@ontario.ca

1.6. Resources

PSE institutions may find a variety of helpful resources here, and/or through the hyperlinks in the lists below:

General

- COVID Alert Mobile App
- COVID-19: Stop the spread
- COVID-19 Self-Assessment
- COVID-19 Assessment Centres
- Public Health Ontario COVID-19 resources
- Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace
- COVID-19 (coronavirus) and Workplace Health and Safety
- Public Services Health & Safety Association
- Public Health Unit Locator
- Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance Documents

International Education

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): International Students in Canada
- Government of Canada – Travel, Quarantine and Borders: Find Out if You Can Enter Canada

Personal Protective Equipment

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 Prevention
- Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (PDF)
- Using masks in the workplace
- Organizations buying and selling personal protective equipment during COVID-19

Workplace Safety, Screening, Testing, and Vaccines

- Workplace PPE Supplier Directory
- Screening for COVID-19: guidance for employers
- COVID-19 vaccines and workplace health and safety
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Hierarchy of Controls
- COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms
- COVID-19: Physical Distancing Factsheet by Public Health Ontario (PDF)
- Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings (PDF)
- Congregate Living Setting Resources Toolkit (PDF)
- Reducing COVID-19 risk in community settings: A tool for operators
- COVID-19 Signage Questions for Businesses and Organizations (PDF)
- Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces during COVID-19
- Free rapid tests for organizations
- COVID-19 Guidance: Considerations for Antigen Point-of-Care Testing (PDF)

- [COVID-19 Provincial Testing Guidance Update](#) (PDF)
- [COVID-19 vaccination](#)

Mental health, Wellness and Addictions Support

- [Good2Talk](#)

Data

- [COVID-19 vaccinations data](#)
- [Ontario COVID-19 Data Tool](#)
- [COVID-19 daily epidemiology update](#)

2.0. COVID-19 Vaccination Policies and Procedures

On August 17, 2021, the Ontario government, in consultation with the CMOH, announced plans for mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies for high-risk settings, including PSE institutions. On August 30, 2021, the OCMOH issued Instructions for PSE institutions to establish, implement, and ensure compliance with a COVID-19 vaccination policy requiring its employees, staff, contractors, volunteers, and students who attend campus to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19.

The following subsections apply to those PSE institutions described in the OCMOH's instructions and provide additional information to support the implementation of mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies.

2.1. Supporting and Facilitating Full Vaccination Against COVID-19

PSE institutions are strongly encouraged to collaborate with their local public health units and community health partners to ensure safe, easy, and quick access to COVID-19 vaccines, which may include COVID-19 vaccination clinics or pop-ups on-campus to students, faculty, and staff.

PSE institutions should provide the opportunity for their campus community to take time off to get vaccinated or to recover from side effects after vaccination.

While COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at reducing an individual's risk of infection following a high-risk exposure, they are not 100% protective and vaccinated individuals may develop COVID-19 (known as breakthrough infections). As such, it is important for PSE institutions and their campus community to continue to promote and practice public health measures outlined in this Framework, as well as following any public health requirements, direction, and advice, including isolation requirements where applicable.

2.2. Disclosure of Proof of Vaccination

PSE institutions must require employees, staff, contractors, volunteers, and students who attend campus to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19. For those who were vaccinated in Ontario, they were provided the physical (hard copy) and email version of the receipt from the Ministry of Health with the individual's name, date of vaccination and product name (i.e., Pfizer,

Moderna, etc.) at the time of vaccination. COVID-19 vaccination receipts can also be downloaded or printed through the [COVID-19 vaccination provincial portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900. This version of the COVID-19 vaccine receipt contains a watermark and a digital signature to deter forgery.

While the physical or email COVID-19 vaccination receipt is the preferred method of demonstrating proof of vaccination, PSE institutions may also accept attestations of full vaccination against COVID-19 until October 29, 2021. At that time, MCU expects that all PSE institutions will have put in place the appropriate processes to accept the COVID-19 vaccination receipt as proof of full COVID-19 vaccination. Should the October 29th date need to change further based on any other provincial direction regarding proof of vaccination, the ministry will advise PSE institutions as soon as possible.

PSE institutions must continue to ensure all international students have the necessary information on vaccination requirements prior to arriving in Canada and have the supports, services, and resources upon arrival in Ontario.

PSE institutions must also remind international students to meet all federal requirements prior to or upon arriving in Canada.

2.3. Exemptions to Full Vaccination Against COVID-19

Medical Reasons

As outlined in the OCMOH's Instructions, individuals without proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 can provide written proof of a medical reason, provided by a physician or registered nurse in the extended class that sets out:

- a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19; and

- the effective time-period for the medical reason.

Individuals with a medical reason for not being fully vaccinated and who have provided proof of a medical reason, are allowed on campus but are required to submit to regular antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 and to provide verification of the negative test result in a manner determined by the PSE institution, and at intervals to be determined by the PSE institution. Intervals must be at minimum of once every seven days. Institutions can access necessary testing through the Provincial Antigen Screening Program (PASP) (see Section 2.4. below).

Non-Medical Reasons

As part of their vaccination policies, PSE institutions may choose to allow individuals who do not provide proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to come onto campus if they provide proof of having completed an educational session, approved by the PSE institution, about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination prior to declining vaccination for any reason other than a medical reason.

COVID-19 education sessions, at a minimum, must address:

- how COVID-19 vaccines work;

- vaccine safety related to the development of the COVID-19 vaccines;

- the benefits of vaccination against COVID-19;

- risks of not being vaccinated against COVID-19; and

- possible side effects of COVID-19 vaccination.

PSE institutions may decide to remove the option for an individual to provide proof of completing an educational session approved by the institution. If the educational session option is removed, PSE institutions are still required to make an education session available to the employees, staff, contractors, volunteers, and students. The OCMOH's instructions also require individuals who do not provide proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19:

- To submit to regular antigen point of care testing for COVID-19 and at an interval to be determined by PSE institutions (must be at minimum of once every seven days); and

- To provide verification of a negative test result in the manner determined by the PSE institution that enables it to confirm the result at its discretion. Institutions can access necessary testing through the PASP (see Section 2.4. below).

2.4. Rapid Antigen Screening Kits for PSE Institutions

Individuals who are partly vaccinated (have received one dose of a two-dose vaccine series, or a final dose of a two-dose vaccine series within the last 14 days), should undertake antigen testing until they are fully vaccinated.

Through the [Provincial Antigen Screening Program (PASP)](#), PSE institutions, including Indigenous Institutes, have access to free rapid antigen screening kits for individuals who are low risk of having COVID-19.

Rapid antigen testing should only be used as an additional screening tool and as an added layer of protection for workplaces beyond routine workplace screening measures and infection prevention and control measures, and altogether these measures can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Organizations can test on-site or at-home and get results in about 15 minutes without shipping to a lab. As outlined in the [COVID-19 Guidance: Considerations for Antigen Point-of-Care Testing](#) (PDF), rapid antigen testing may be performed at least one time per week, and up to two to three times per week for individuals who are not fully vaccinated.

To request access to free rapid antigen screening kits, PSE institutions will need to:

- Apply for the PASP online or via their local Chamber of Commerce and agree to the program terms and conditions as set out by either avenue.

- Notify their local Public Health Unit before testing begins.

- Review onboarding and training materials.

- Order or pick-up free test kits from the province of Ontario.

- Report de-identified data to the province each week.

- Properly handle and dispose of used test kits.

PSE institutions are responsible for the program implementation costs (e.g., human resource expenses; supplies).

For more information about the PASP and how to prepare for rapid antigen testing, please visit this [Get Free Rapid Tests webpage](#). PSE institutions can also apply for the PASP online through this [webpage](#).

Small and medium-sized businesses, with 150 employees or less, are also welcome to participate in their local Ontario Chamber of Commerce [COVID-19 Rapid Screening Initiative](#). Membership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce is not required to participate in this initiative. Any small and medium-sized businesses can apply for this initiative through the link above and click on the chamber or board of trade in your region to order your tests online.

2.5. Collection, Documentation, and Reporting

Per the OCMOH's Instructions, PSE institutions are required to collect, maintain, and disclose the statistical (non-identifiable) information outlined in the instructions (and summarized below) to MCU on a monthly basis.

- Documentation that includes (collectively, "the statistical information"):

    o the number of individuals that provided proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19;

    o the number of individuals that provided a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19;

    o the number individuals that completed an educational session about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination where applicable; and

    o the total number of individuals to whom the OCMOH Instructions apply.

For PSE institutions that choose to temporarily use an attestation model to support disclosure of proof of vaccination, MCU is also requesting that those institutions report the number of individuals who provided an attestation rather than a COVID-19 vaccination receipt.

MCU may seek additional detail within the requested statistical information outlined above. MCU will communicate any additional required information as well as additional detail regarding reporting timelines and how to submit information in the weeks ahead. MCU may disclose any statistical information provided by PSE institutions pursuant to the OCMOH Instructions and may make it publicly available.

3.0. Health and Safety Measures and Guidance

To support the safety and well-being of students, faculty, and staff, PSE institutions should assess their campuses and implement appropriate COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures. PSE institutions are responsible for the oversight and implementation of these measures. Measures outlined below represent the minimum measures to be put in place. PSE institutions should take all precautions and implement all measures necessary to ensure a healthy and safe environment for students, faculty, and staff.

PSE institutions remain responsible for their compliance with any advice, recommendations and instructions from federal, provincial, and local public health officials and any applicable legislation or by-laws.

3.1. Hand Hygiene

PSE institutions should provide adequate access to hand hygiene stations throughout their campuses, particularly in high-traffic areas, entrances and exits, and places with high-touch surfaces; and install touchless motion-sensing appliances where possible. These stations can consist of soap and water, or alcohol-based hand rub (60-90%). Reminders should be posted for all students, faculty, and staff to wash their hands often. Refer to Public Health Ontario's [How to Wash Your Hands Fact Sheet](#).

3.2. Daily Screening

PSE institutions are required to actively screen all employees (i.e., faculty and staff) before they enter their workplace, according to requirements set out in [O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step](#). The screening can be done in person or on-line using [Worker and Employee Screening Tool](#).

PSE institutions should communicate to faculty and staff that only those who pass their daily screening are permitted on campus. PSE institutions should have clear occupational health and return to work policies in place for faculty and staff who do not pass screening and are unable to come to campus.

PSE institutions are strongly encouraged to clearly communicate and make available COVID-19 screening resources to students, faculty, and staff, and have clear policies in place to address missed classes and test/exams for students who have symptoms, are exposed to a known COVID-19 case, and/or failed their daily COVID-19 screening.

All students at PSE institutions are encouraged to complete a daily screening for [signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#). PSE institutions may wish to utilize online screening tools such as the [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) for ease and efficiency.

PSE institutions should advise students who have symptoms, have been exposed to a known COVID-19 case, and/or failed their daily COVID-19 screening not to come to campus and:

- Immediately self-isolate either at home or in a designated area on campus as instructed by a PSE institution staff member.
- Connect with their health care provider and/or take [Ontario's COVID-19 self-assessment](#) to determine if they are eligible for a COVID-19 test.
  - Anyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and/or have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 can receive a COVID-19 test at no cost.
  - Individuals can find their closest Ontario testing location [here](#) to take a COVID-19 test. Individuals can also check their COVID-19 test results [here](#).

As per *[O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step,](#)* PSE institutions must comply with passive screening requirements.

Screening notices and signage should be posted in a conspicuous location at all entry points and throughout campus facilities informing students, faculty, staff, and other visitors on how to screen themselves for COVID-19 before entering the campus premises and not to enter if they have symptoms, such as fever, cough or respiratory illness, or they have been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Please refer to this [document](#) (PDF) for information.

3.3. Face Coverings, Masks, and Personal Protective Equipment

Face Coverings and Masks

In accordance with *[O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step](#)*, students, faculty, and staff and any other persons are required to wear face coverings or masks (e.g., non-medical or cloth masks) to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission when in an indoor area of the premises of the PSE institution and in vehicles that operate as part of the PSE institution.

PSE institutions are encouraged to post signs conspicuously throughout all campus areas with instructions on the proper use of masks including how to safely put on and take off a mask. PSE institutions are expected to make accommodations where required for individuals who cannot wear a mask or face covering as per the exemptions included in *[O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step](#)*. Please visit the face coverings and masks [webpage](#) for more

information. A person does not need to present evidence to support any of the exceptions for the use of masks or face coverings.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as medical (surgical/procedure) masks, eye protection (e.g., goggles; face shields), and gloves should be reserved for work where they are required for occupational health and safety or as required by applicable law. If N95s are required, PSE institutions are to ensure that proper fit testing has occurred prior to the use of such PPE.

PSE institutions are encouraged to train staff and faculty on the use, care, and limitations of the PPE. Information on using PPE is available here. PSE institutions can also access more information about PPE here.

As per provincial requirements set out in *[O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step](#)* and through the following Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development webpage, all workers are required to wear appropriate PPE that provides protection of the person's eyes, nose and mouth if in the course of providing services they are required to come within two metres of an unmasked individual in an indoor area and they are not separated by a plexiglass barrier or some other impermeable barrier.

3.4. Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Systems and Filters

PSE institutions are strongly encouraged to prioritise the inspection and maintenance of their Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems and filters according to the manufacturer's instructions to ensure maximum air quality across campus, especially when windows are not available or cannot be opened.

While improved air quality through ventilation and filtration contributes to removing and diluting virus laden particles from indoor air, ventilation and filtration must be used in conjunction with all other public health measures to help minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Please refer to Public Health Ontario's resource on [Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems in Buildings and COVID-19](#).

3.5. Residences, On-Campus Housing, and Other Shared Spaces

Residences and other on-campus housing accommodations should be configured in accordance with the most recent and applicable health and safety measures and be consistent with public health advice.

Residences and other on-campus housing services should implement and communicate clear protocols and procedures in accordance with legislation and regulations, as well as local public health requirements and/or advice, that cover all aspects of residence life to mitigate risks of COVID-19 transmission and outbreaks.

PSE institutions should also ensure that consequences for not following policies and procedures are clearly communicated.

PSE institutions are strongly encouraged to:

- Ensure that masks are worn in common areas of residences.
- Assess their shared spaces and communal areas to ensure there is proper signage reminding students, faculty, and staff to practice physical distancing, masking, and hand hygiene.
- Where feasible, increasing spacing or using physical barriers between furniture to maintain physical distancing and reduce crowding.
- PSE institutions may implement measures such as limiting the number of guests, excluding them, and/or requiring the collection of visitor information to mitigate risks.
- Avoid multiple simultaneous and/or large residence life activities and events that promote crowding and increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Provide instructions and supply, where feasible, appropriate cleaning and disinfection materials.
- Designate spaces in specific residences or off-campus housing for isolation and quarantine purposes. Wherever possible, these designated spaces should be single rooms with private bathrooms.

In cases where students, faculty and staff residing in on-campus housing or other housing provided by the PSE institution must be relocated to appropriate accommodations for isolation/quarantine, PSE institutions should connect with their local public health partners to

obtain advice and support. PSE institutions should also have a plan to safely transport individuals to isolation/quarantine facilities, as well as a plan for the provision of care and supports, including food, access to academic materials and mental health supports.

3.6. Gatherings

It is understood that on-campus activities include a broad variety of indoor and outdoor gatherings that include social gatherings, performance arts events, athletic events, land-based learning and field work, and other events such as convocation where large numbers of individuals may gather.

With any of these types of gatherings resuming in Fall 2021, PSE institutions are reminded of the key principles outlined in Section 1.1 of this Framework, including but not limited to the use of masks or face coverings while in indoor settings, physical distancing, and cleaning and disinfection. Event organizers should remind participants to screen for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure before attendance. Ill individuals (e.g., those who fail COVID-19 screening) should be reminded to avoid attending in-person gatherings and seek medical advice.

PSE institutions should have policies in place that clearly communicate and ensure that gatherings are managed in a way that aligns with public health rules and guidance and maintain contact lists of attendees for the purpose of contact tracing. PSE institutions should also clearly identify and communicate any applicable penalties to students, faculty, and staff.

3.7. Cleaning and Disinfection

PSE institutions should maintain a regular cleaning schedule throughout the campus. Common areas and high-touch surfaces, such as washrooms and shared equipment, should be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition. This includes establishing cleaning and disinfection protocols for the safe use of tools, equipment, and other shared items used for all purposes across all campuses.

PSE institutions should utilize only cleaning and disinfecting products that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN), are not expired (expiry dates should be checked regularly) and are appropriate for use on the item that is to be cleaned and disinfected. Commonly used cleaners

and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Refer to Public Health Ontario's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#) fact sheet.

4.0. Outbreak Management Protocols

PSE institutions are strongly encouraged to have one or more individuals responsible for liaising with their local public health unit in a mutually feasible manner and ensure outbreak management protocols reflect the directions provided by provincial and local public health authorities. This protocol should be aligned with and reflected in the PSE institution's Continuity of Education Plan (refer to Section 5.0 in this Framework).

If a PSE institution is informed of any positive cases of COVID-19 among students, faculty, or staff regardless of the person's vaccination status, the PSE institution should immediately notify their local public health unit. PSE institutions can locate their local public health unit through this [webpage](#). The PSE institution and concerned individual(s) are required to follow the direction of local public health authorities during their outbreak investigation and management.

PSE institutions that offer designated residences for students, faculty, and staff should have designated facilities available either on- or off-campus for quarantine or isolation purposes for individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a known case, tested for COVID-19 and awaiting results (under investigation), tested positive for COVID-19, and/or as directed by the local public health unit. The best practice is for designated facilities to have individual rooms that are equipped with private bathroom facilities. It is important that these facilities have sufficient support services and a plan for safe implementation to support quarantining/isolating individuals (e.g., medical care, food delivery; translation services; social services). In general, congregate or group living settings are not acceptable for quarantine or isolation purposes.

4.1. Contact Tracing

Contact tracing, notification, and follow up is a process used by public health to identify, counsel, and monitor individuals who have had close contact with someone who is infected with COVID-19. Contact tracing can help PSE institutions identify individuals who have been in contact with a case of COVID-19 understand their risk to the PSE campus community and limit the spread of the virus.

Local public health units are responsible for COVID-19 case and contact management, including contact tracing. For more information, please visit this Public Health Ontario [webpage](#).

5.0. Continuity of Education Plans

Continuity of Education Plans (CEPs) are plans that outline in a transparent and fulsome way what the planned and established measures are for the continuity of teaching and learning in the event of an emergency. It is understood that CEPs are specific to each PSE institution based on their capacity, needs, priorities and local circumstances.

MCU is asking publicly-assisted colleges and universities to develop (or update) and publish their CEPs (if they have not done so already) so that students, faculty, and staff are informed of resources, protocols and procedures should an emergency occur. Indigenous Institutes and private PSE institutions are also strongly encouraged to prepare CEPs if they do not have them already.

Continuity of Education Plans are expected to include health and safety protocols that specifically apply to students, faculty, and staff, prioritise their safety, and support some form of continuity in teaching and learning (e.g., virtual delivery) in the event of a disruption. These plans should include:

- Information about protocols (including health, safety, and outbreak management protocols) in place in the event of an emergency (e.g., evacuation protocols).
- Information about continuity of education in the event of a disruption to in-person instruction.
- Links to useful resources in the event of an emergency (e.g., emergency contact information).

PSE institutions are encouraged to review existing regulations and consult with their legal counsel for advice on the development of their CEPs. PSE institutions are encouraged to conduct training exercises of their protocols and procedures with health and non-health partners, including students, faculty, and staff.

It is also important that all members of the PSE community of an institution know how to access information about emergency planning; therefore, the information included in CEPs, including

subsequent updates, should be transparent and clearly communicated, and be publicly posted by all publicly-assisted colleges and universities for September 2021.

Publicly-assisted colleges and universities are to notify MCU upon having published their CEP. Indigenous Institutes and private PSE institutions are not required to notify MCU but are encouraged to make any plans publicly available. For more information and questions on CEPs, please contact the appropriate MCU official through the information provided in Section 1.5. of this Framework.