



## COVID-19 Update

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Public Health and Emergency Services  
December 29, 2020

### Highlights

- Case rates remain high but stable.
- We can slow the spread of COVID-19 by staying home, avoiding social gatherings and limiting the number of trips we make.
  - We cannot rely on the Provincial Shutdown measures alone. We each have a role to play.
- Thank-you Waterloo Region for the hard work, care, and resilience that so many of you have shown throughout the year.

### Overall trends

- Case rates in Waterloo Region remain high but stable.
  - There were some lower testing volumes over Christmas, so it is too early to say what the most recent numbers could be signalling.
  - Our incidence rate is currently at 92 cases per 100,000 per week
  - Our most recent reproductive number remains at 1.1.
  - We continue to have outbreaks being declared in long-term care and retirement home facilities.
  - Although we currently only have 8 workplace outbreaks, we are also monitoring a total of 135 workplaces where at least 1 employee has tested positive; 84 of which have 2 or more employees who have tested positive.
    - This is our highest number of workplaces being monitored to date, and is reflective of COVID-19 being widespread in our community, and therefore being commonly detected among people who work.
- COVID-19 is widespread in our community and across Ontario.
- We must continue to follow public health measures to protect each other and our health care system.

## Shutdown

- On Saturday, Ontario entered a Province-wide shutdown.
- We know this was needed to protect our health care system and help us flatten the curve.
- But we cannot rely on those measures alone. We also each have a role to play.
- By staying home, avoiding social gatherings, and by limiting the number of trips we make, we are protecting family, friends, neighbours and helping Waterloo Region as a whole.
- If we do not give the virus the ability to easily transmit from one person to another, we will start to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- We can do this. We can slow the spread of COVID-19 in Waterloo Region and emerge from the Province-wide shutdown in a better place.

## Closing remarks

- This year has been like no other.
- It has been a very difficult and challenging year for our community.
- Despite these challenges, I am grateful for the hard work, care, and resilience that so many in Waterloo Region have shown throughout the year.
- I would like to thank our many health care and community partners for the incredible work they are doing each and every day. Our community partnerships have been invaluable.
- I am grateful for the efforts of so many residents who have been doing what they can to adhere to public health recommendations, and this for a very long time... including more recently forgoing traditions and celebrations this time of year.
- I am also thankful for the many in our community who through acts of kindness are helping each other through these difficult times, in ways that are not known to the general public.
- And last but not least, I am grateful to our Public Health and Paramedic Services teams and Regional staff who have worked tirelessly to support our community this year and provide the very best service they can.
- It is an immense effort to care for and protect our community, and I am grateful for all that you have done and will continue to do.
- I wish everyone a safe and happy new year.