



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health
Public Health and Emergency Services
January 15, 2021

Highlights

- Our local situation remains serious. In the coming weeks we will see if our actions and the enhanced measures are working to bring COVID-19 under control.
- The stay-at-home order builds on our recommendations.
- Staying connected with your friends and loved ones can help reduce feelings of isolation.

Overall trends

- Thank you Bruce
- I would also like to wish Chair Redman well in her recovery.

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- We continue to see high numbers of new cases every day, with multiple outbreaks being declared daily, and continual hospitalizations, ICU admissions.
- Our incidence rate continues to increase:
 - It is now at approximately 185 cases per 100,000 per week.
 - Up from 160 cases per 100,000 per week last week.
- We are managing 1,092 active cases in Waterloo Region and 42 active outbreaks, our highest to date.
- Taking into account interim data, our latest per cent positivity has increased again to 7.3 per cent up from 5.5 per cent last week.
- Our reproductive rate is currently at 1.2.
- These indicators show that our situation locally is quite serious.
- In the coming weeks we will see if our actions and the enhanced provincial measures are working to bring COVID-19 under control.

Stay-at-home order

- I want to recognize that many Waterloo Region residents have been following Public Health's recommendations to avoid social gatherings and only leave for essential trips.
- The stay-at-home order builds on our recommendations, given the seriousness of the situation in Waterloo Region and Ontario.
- The new measures announced yesterday and the continued commitment of Waterloo Region residents to do everything we can to support those measures will be critical to our community's ability to slow the spread.
- We're asking you to stay home as much as possible, avoid social gatherings and only leave for essential reasons. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Getting groceries or take-out
 - Medical appointments or picking up prescriptions
 - Work
 - Exercising outdoors
- If you live alone, you may still consider joining one other household exclusively.
- Ontarians are asked to work remotely, as much as possible, in all industries.
- The more we stay apart, the harder it is for COVID-19 to spread.

Closing remarks

- I know these measures are not easy, that many may be feeling isolated.
- We are apart, but we do not have to be alone.
- Staying connected with friends and loved ones can help reduce feelings of isolation.
 - Make it part of your routine. Schedule phone calls or video chats with loved ones.
 - Be honest. If you are not doing well, share your feelings and concerns.
 - Thinking about the things we are grateful can help us counter feelings of stress.
 - Think outside your circle. Reconnect with an old friend or coworker.
- And remember, it's okay to not be okay. If you are struggling there is local support available for you.
- Our personal protective measures are now familiar but still very important:
 - Avoid social gatherings
 - Limit non-essential trips outside your home
 - Practice physical distancing
 - Wear a mask or face covering
 - Wash your hands often
 - Avoid enclosed, poorly ventilated spaces and crowded places
 - Stay home when you are sick
- There are difficult days still ahead of us, but there is also much to be hopeful for.
- By working together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19.
- Thank you.