



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner of Public Health & Emergency Services

September 8, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

Overall Trends

- The status of COVID-19 cases in Waterloo Region remains relatively stable.
- As of this morning's dashboard update, there are 32 active cases.
- A total of 72,195 tests have been performed in Waterloo Region with positive results for approximately 2.0 per cent of all tests.
- There are currently three outbreaks declared in long-term care and retirement homes.
 - The outbreak in a day camp has been declared over.
 - There are no new outbreaks in other congregate care settings or workplaces.
- We continue to engage in data quality work, with respect to positive cases reported on our dashboard, as a result of our, and other health units', transition to the new provincial data system.

Post-secondary community

- I was disappointed to learn about the large gatherings that were occurring over the weekend in the university district.
- These types of large parties cannot occur.
- **Your actions matter.** What you do makes a difference to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- For new and returning students to Waterloo Region – you are all an important and valued part of our community.
- As a community member, your cooperation and continued adherence to public health guidelines will ultimately influence whether our local businesses and

services can stay open and help prevent our health care system from becoming overwhelmed.

- New and returning students are reminded that in Waterloo Region, we have two face covering by-laws in place for enclosed public places and transit.
- We also continue to recommend the public health measures of:
 - Frequent hand washing
 - Physical distancing
 - Avoiding large gatherings
 - Getting tested when you feel unwell
 - And staying home when sick
- Together these measures, and by-laws, help us to protect each other and slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community
- We also encourage students to keep their social circles small, with 10 or less people, and continue to practice physical distancing with others not in the same circle.
- Although cases in younger adults can often present with milder versions of the COVID-19 illness, you can still unknowingly spread the virus, before you realize you're sick, especially if people are gathering in larger groups and without sufficient physical distancing.
 - The infection can then easily spread to family, loved ones and friends, including those who may be at high risk of serious illness.
- Public Health, along with the post-secondary institutions and various partners within the community, are taking the safety of the post-secondary community very seriously.
- We have been working with our local post-secondary institutions to support a safe school experience. We have:
 - Met with leads from the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College on re-opening plans
 - Identified a single point of contact at Public Health for questions about post-secondary settings
 - Answered a variety of questions, reviewed re-opening documents and residence plans
 - Hosted a meeting specific to understanding case and contact management processes and how Public Health will communicate with post-secondary institutions
 - Provided access to resources including the development of an outbreak resource package (currently being finalized)

Closing remarks

- It has been a long six months. We appreciate your efforts and choices as they have contributed to reducing the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- The pandemic continues. We are in this together and the progress we have made, is the result of everyone's efforts.
- Your actions make a difference and this is why we ask you to keep going.
- We all need to keep following the public health measures so that we can continue to successfully and safely reopen as a community, and stay open.
- Waterloo Region is a caring community that has a history of collaboration and innovation – we are very good at coming together to work towards a common goal.
- Let's continue to work together and protect each other.
- Thank you.