



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Weekly Stakeholder Bulletin #7

Novel Coronavirus

Date issued: March 17, 2020

Purpose of bulletin: The purpose of this bulletin is to keep local stakeholders informed of the evolving international novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and its implications for Waterloo Region.

Key updates

- Phone lines continue to be very busy. Please visit our [website](#) first for the most up-to-date information.
- All individuals are encouraged to practice social distancing: keeping two arms' lengths (or 2 metres) distance from the next person
- As of March 13, the Government of Canada has warned against all international travel (outside of Canada).
- On March 14, the Government of Canada recommended that all travelers returning to Canada self-isolate for 14 days
 - This a broad recommendation from the Government of Canada.
 - For certain groups, such as health care workers and other essential workers, different recommendations may apply.
 - If you are not sure if you are considered an essential worker at your place of employment, speak with your employer.
- The Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario is recommending:
 - Ontarians avoid all non-essential travel outside of Canada.
 - The immediate suspension of all large events and public gatherings of over 50 people. Event organizers can get more information from The Public Health Agency of Canada guidance document: [Community based measures](#)
 - That all recreational programs and libraries close
 - That all daycares, private schools, churches and other faith settings close.
 - That all bars and restaurants, except those that do take-out and delivery also close.
 - The Chief Medical Officer of Health also issued a memo to Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Supportive Housing, Hospices and other congregate care settings on allowing only essential visitors.
- Use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether and how to seek further care. An automated click-through version of the tool is under development.



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- Region of Waterloo has eight laboratory confirmation cases of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Future cases will be updated daily on our website at 10:30 a.m. www.regionofwaterloo.ca/confirmedCOVID19
- Public Health Ontario developed guidance in [English](#) and [French](#) for environmental cleaning for non-health care settings.

Current COVID-19 situation

- On Wednesday March 11, the World Health Organization declared that the COVID-19 outbreak constitutes a pandemic. Ontario continues to implement enhanced measures, to ensure the province is prepared to respond quickly and effectively to any scenario.
- On Thursday March 12, the Minister of Education issued a [statement](#) to close all publicly funded schools in Ontario for two weeks following March break, in response to the emergence in Ontario of COVID-19.
- Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health is requesting that all hospitals further implement pandemic plans by carefully [ramping down elective surgeries and other non-emergent clinical activity](#). In doing so, hospitals can preserve capacity as cases of COVID-19 continue to grow in Ontario.
- On Monday, March 16, 2020 Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health recommending the closure of all recreational programs and libraries, private schools, daycares, churches and other faith settings, and all bars and restaurants except those with take-out and delivery.
- Region of Waterloo Public Health continues to work closely with local hospitals, health care and community partners, the Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario and national partners to monitor and respond accordingly to the COVID-19 situation.

Returning Travellers

All International Travel

- As of March 13th the Government of Canada has warned against all international travel (outside of Canada).
- On March 14, the Government of Canada recommended that all travelers returning to Canada self-isolate for 14 days
 - This is a broad recommendation from the Government of Canada.
 - If you are a health care worker or you are considered an essential worker, different recommendations may apply.



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- If you are not sure if you are considered an essential worker at your place of employment, speak with your employer.
- If you or your family have returned from Hubei province in China, Iran or Italy contact Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-575-4400 for further instructions within 24 hours of arriving in Waterloo Region
- If you travelled and returned before March 15th – continue to self-monitor for symptoms including fever, cough, or difficulty breathing up to 14 days from your date of return.
- If you develop respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, self-isolate and do not return to work until it's been 24 hours after you've been symptom free.

Prevent the spread of germs and viruses

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



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Avoid misinformation

- Region of Waterloo Public Health continues to provide up-to-date and evidence-based information on our website so that you and your audiences have the information you need to make informed decisions about your health.

Recommended resources

- Region of Waterloo Public Health webpage: regionofwaterloo.ca/2019NovelCoronavirus
- Ontario Ministry of Health webpage: ontario.ca/coronavirus
- Public Health Agency of Canada webpage: canada.ca/coronavirus

Who to contact if you have questions or need additional information

Please email publichealth@regionofwaterloo.ca.

This will ensure your questions are sent to an inbox that will be regularly monitored, and referred to the appropriate staff for follow-up.

Previous editions of the weekly bulletin are available upon request.