



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Weekly Stakeholder Bulletin #5

Novel Coronavirus

Date issued: March 4, 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.

What's New

- It is always good practice for every home to be prepared for a possible situation where you may be ill and need to stay home for an extended period of time.
 - Fill prescriptions to have sufficient supply
 - Stock up on essentials but avoid “panic buying”
 - Share your plan with friends and family and check in on vulnerable and elderly neighbours
- The Public Health Agency of Canada has [great tips](#) for people to help them be prepared, including items to have on hand if you or a member of your family become ill with COVID-19.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada has also developed a guidance document for [schools and childcare settings](#).
- Individuals should continue to think about action they can take to stay healthy and [prevent the spread of any illness](#), especially respiratory infection
 - Encourage people to stay home if they are sick
 - Practice frequent [hand hygiene](#) and [coughing/sneezing etiquette](#)
 - [Clean](#) and disinfect frequently touched object and surfaces using a regular household cleaners or wipes
- Public Health is currently working on a printable handwashing and cover your cough poster. It will be sent to you via email once it has been created.
- Employers could help reinforce the infection prevention messages above with employees (e.g. encouraging people to stay at home if sick)
- Employers are advised to consider how best to lower the potential impact of COVID-19 in their [workplace](#) through “business continuity planning.” That is, they are advised to develop a plan or review their plans for how their business will run if a proportion of their employees are sick.



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EMERGENCY SERVICES

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- Returning travellers from Iran are asked to contact Region of Waterloo Public Health and self-isolate for a total of 14 days from the date they left (see Returning Travelers section for more information).

Current COVID-19 situation:

- Given the spread of the virus to other countries outside of China, we expect we will continue to see more cases in Canada and we are preparing for the arrival of the virus in Waterloo Region.
- Canada and other countries continue to focus on containment strategies to decrease the spread of COVID-19, including early identification of symptoms, testing, and in select situations, isolating people at higher risk of having or developing coronavirus infection.
- 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.
- We are engaging with our health care partners to prepare for seeing cases here in Waterloo Region and with our community partners around business continuity plans should we see a number of cases in our community.

Returning Travellers:

- Returning travellers from Hubei province, China (including Wuhan) or Iran are asked to self-isolate for a total of 14 days from the date they left Hubei or Iran. In Waterloo Region, they are advised to call Region of Waterloo Public Health at **519-575-4400 within 24 hours of their return to Canada.**
- Travellers to [affected areas](#) are asked to watch for signs and symptoms which may develop up to 14 days after departure. They are asked to avoid large crowds and places *where it would be difficult to self-isolate* if symptoms occur.
- If they experience symptoms within 14 days, they are asked to:
 - Follow-up with a health care provider and Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-575-4400.
 - They should call ahead before going to a medical office or an emergency department to allow health care staff to manage their case appropriately.
 - They should avoid contact with others (e.g. stay home from school, work or child care; avoid group activities, public places or taking public transit; and refrain from having visitors).



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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.

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.