

COVID-19 UPDATE FOR SCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE SETTINGS IN YORK REGION

March 18, 2022

Dear Families:

The provincial government recently announced several updates to COVID-19 case, contact and outbreak management and Health and Safety Guidance for schools and child care settings.

Additionally, as of March 21, 2022, masks are no longer required for students, staff and visitors in schools, child care settings and on school and child care transportation. While they are not required, individuals can choose to continue wearing masks based on their own risk assessment.

York Region Public Health is strongly encouraging students/attendees, staff and visitors to continue wearing a mask for at least two weeks after March Break in areas with the 3 Cs: crowded settings, places where there is close contact or when spaces may be confined.

Students will no longer need to remain in cohorts and can play and learn with all individuals in the school and/or child care community. This includes both indoor and outdoor activities and during lunch and recess. Assemblies and in-person gatherings in schools will be permitted.

We would like to remind everyone to show kindness and consideration as we enter this new phase of the pandemic. This is an opportunity for families to lead by example and show respect for each other's personal decisions and comfort levels.

COVID-19 SCREENING REMINDERS

Daily screening is still required prior to entering schools and child care settings. Under the new mandate, school and child care settings will no longer be required to confirm that screenings have been completed. Parents/guardians should use the most recent [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#) and must not send children to school or child care if they are showing **any** symptoms of COVID-19.

IF YOUR CHILD DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS

If your child has symptoms listed on the [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#), your child should stay home and isolate, following the instructions provided on the screening tool.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/COVID19

For guidance on self-isolation of household members and close contacts – please refer to the [screening tool](#) instructions or ontario.ca/exposed.

If your child has symptoms that are not listed on the screening tool, and the screening tool does not advise self-isolation, your child should still remain at home until their symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours if nausea, vomiting or diarrhea). Your household members do not need to self-isolate if they have no symptoms.

WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD TESTS POSITIVE?

If you have access to an at-home PCR test or rapid antigen test (RAT) kit and your child gets a positive result, they must self-isolate immediately.

Your child who tested positive is:	Self-isolate at home:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fully vaccinated, or• Under 12 years of age	5 days after test date or symptom onset (whichever is earlier) and until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for stomach-related symptoms)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 years of age or older and not fully vaccinated, or• Immunocompromised	10 days after test or symptom onset (whichever is earlier) and until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for stomach-related symptoms)

Please refer to [Ontario.ca/exposed](https://ontario.ca/exposed) for self-isolation guidance for household member and social contacts.

Isolation Requirements for Asymptomatic Close Contacts

If you are **NOT** symptomatic and **DO NOT** live with a symptomatic individual or a confirmed COVID-19 case, you are **not required** to isolate.

If you are **NOT** symptomatic and **LIVE** with a symptomatic individual or a confirmed COVID-19 case, you are **not** required to isolate if one of the following applies:

- Household members are 18 years of age and older and have received a booster dose
- Household members are under 18 years of age and are [fully vaccinated](#)
- Household members have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days (RAT or PCR test)

Even if they are not required to isolate, household and non-household close contacts of a COVID-19 case or symptomatic individual, must **self-monitor** for 10 days (from last exposure) and **wear a well-fitted mask in school and child care settings**. They must also avoid activities such as high-contact sports and playing wind instruments where masking and/or physical distancing cannot be maintained.

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TRAVEL

Travel rules and regulations are enforced by the federal government. Under [current federal travel requirements](#), individuals returning from international travel must **wear a mask at all times when in public spaces (including schools and child care) for 14 days upon return to Canada**. They must also maintain a list of all close contacts and monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. During this time the only occasion when a mask should be removed at school is during meals and outdoor recess if physical distancing is maintained.

Please refer to the [Government of Canada website](#) for travel requirements and exemptions.

COVID-19 VACCINES

York Region Public Health encourages all individuals five years of age and older to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Getting vaccinated continues to be the most effective public health intervention we have for reducing the likelihood of severe outcomes from COVID-19. Visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine to learn more and find a vaccine clinic.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit york.ca/safeatschool for more information and resources on COVID-19.

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