

June 26, 2023

MEMORANDUM TO: Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
(MCCSS) funded, licensed and/or directly-operated service
providers

FROM: Diane Gammon
(A) Regional Director, West Region

RE: **June 23, 2023, Updates: COVID-19 Guidance and
Direction**

I would once again like to recognize and thank you for your continued commitment to helping to ensure the health and safety of individuals and staff in congregate living settings throughout the challenges of the past three years.

I am writing today to share that on June 23, 2023 the Ministry of Health (MOH) released an updated version of the [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Other Congregate Living Settings for Public Health Units](#) in alignment with direction provided to other sectors.

Highlights on the changes impacting MCCSS funded, licensed and/or direct operated congregate living settings include:

Masking requirements and recommendations:

- Masking is required as part of a personal risk assessment for staff, students and volunteers.
- Masks are required for staff as part of return-to-work protocols following COVID-19 infection (see below).
- Staff may consider wearing a mask when providing prolonged, direct care indoors or outdoors (defined as one-on-one care within two metres for greater than 15 minutes) for residents/clients at high risk of severe outcomes (e.g., immunocompromised).
- Masks are recommended, but no longer required, to be worn indoors by visitors and caregivers when visiting settings that are not in outbreak.

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Staff return to work in highest-risk settings:

- As of this recent update, MOH is retiring the “Management of Staffing in Highest Risk Settings” guidance document which provided recommendations for Return to Work in highest risk settings with critical staffing shortages.
- Upon return to work, staff must follow measures to reduce the risk of transmission such as ensure they are wearing a well-fitted mask for 10 days from symptom onset/positive test. See Appendix 1: Case Definitions and Disease Specific Information for COVID-19 for more information.
- In general, staff with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms may return to work once they no longer have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours if vomiting/diarrhea).

Visitors:

- General visitors who test positive for COVID-19 should avoid non-essential visits to anyone who is immunocompromised or at higher risk of illness for 10 days.
- Where visits cannot be avoided (e.g., essential caregiver), the visitor must wear a medical mask and maintain physical distancing while in the setting.

COVID-19 Therapeutics

- Congregate living settings are encouraged to provide information on COVID-19 therapeutics and encourage residents/clients to speak with their primary care provider to come up with a treatment plan in case they get sick, as appropriate.

Unless otherwise noted, the changes listed above will come into effect on June 26, 2023. Service providers should anticipate that some pandemic response measures may be reinstated if the province enters a high-risk period of respiratory virus transmission, such as during the fall respiratory virus season.

For questions or concerns related to any of these updates, please continue to reach out to your Program Supervisor and/or Ministry contact.

Placing agencies and/or service providers that contract with a third party for the provision of services are asked to please share relevant information with any unlicensed outside paid resources (OPRs) and/or third parties.

Aussi disponible en français

Sincerely,



Diane Gammon

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