

COVID-19: Summary of public health measures

March 24, 2020

This document provides a summary of public health measures that have been implemented to prevent and mitigate the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving rapidly. This guidance is subject to change. Please visit the Middlesex-London Health Unit website (<https://www.healthunit.com/news/novel-coronavirus>) regularly for updates and additional guidance.

1. What has been closed or discontinued?

Setting	Closure period	Supporting measures (if applicable)
Public schools	Ministry of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 14, 2020 to April 5, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial <i>Learn at Home</i> portal
Adult justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermittent inmate (weekend) sentences Personal visits 	Ministry of the Solicitor General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 13, 2020 until further notice March 14, 2020 until further notice 	
Youth justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person personal visits Non-essential reintegration leaves 	Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since March 16, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal visits by phone and video calling will continue, where operationally available and feasible
Indoor recreational programs	By order under the <i>Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 17, 2020 to March 31, 2020, with the possibility of extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment insurance (EI) For individuals not able to work who are not covered by EI, an Emergency Care Benefit of up to \$900 bi-weekly is available for up to 15 weeks. Applications will be available beginning in April. Mortgage relief programs Legislated job-protected leave to employees who need to be away from work to care for children because of school or day care closures, retroactive to January 25, 2020. Child care services for essential workers, and home child care services of less than six children may continue to operate.
Public libraries		
Private schools		
Licensed child care centres		
Bars and restaurants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dine-in 		
Theatres		
Concert venues		
All public events > 50 people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Places of worship 		

Setting	Closure period	Supporting measures (if applicable)
Long-term care homes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential visits 	Ministry of Long-Term Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 16, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential visits to those who are very ill or who require end-of-life care may continue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential patient trips outside of the facility 	Direction by MLHU Medical Officer of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of March 23, 2020 until further notice 	
Hospitals		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 21, 2020 to April 4, 2020, with the possibility of extension 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-essential visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LHSC: Effective March 20, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential visits to those who are very ill or who require end-of-life care may continue
Dentists, optometrists, physiotherapists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-emergency services 	Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 15, 2020 until further notice College of Optometrists of Ontario <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 16, 2020 to March 29, 2020. Ontario Physiotherapy Association: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Until at least after March 30, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency services may still continue
Drive Test Centres and Travel Point locations	Ministry of Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 23, 2020 until further notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test fees will not be lost and "Fail to Keep Appointment" penalty fee waived
Provincial parks	Ministry of the Environment, Conservation & Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 19, 2020 to April 30, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Penalty-free refunds will be automatically issued
Outside play structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of London Lower tier municipalities of Middlesex County 	Direction by MLHU Medical Officer of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of March 24, 2020 until further notice 	
City-operated outdoor recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports fields Golf courses Gardens 	City of London <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will remain closed until further notice 	

Setting	Closure period	Supporting measures (if applicable)
Non-essential businesses	By order under the <i>Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 25, 2020 to April 8, 2020, with the possibility of extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment insurance (EI) for employees For employees facing unemployment due to COVID-19 and do not qualify for EI, an Emergency Support Benefit will be available Eligible small business employers facing revenue loss, can access a 10% wage subsidy up to a maximum of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer. Business Credit Availability Program Teleworking and online commerce permitted at all times for all businesses.

2. What remains open?

Setting	Guidance	Supporting measures (if applicable)
Essential businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting, particularly of high-touch surfaces (e.g., door handles, faucets). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential businesses have been specified by the Province of Ontario. No cost child care services will be available to essential workers. Teleworking and online commerce permitted at all times for all businesses.
Hospitals	Ministry of Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passive screening (signage) Active screening of all staff and visitors Essential services only Essential visitors only Reporting of positive screening If COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed in a healthcare worker (HCW), the HCW must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and negative laboratory tests have been confirmed. 	

Setting	Guidance	Supporting measures (if applicable)
Long-term care homes	<p>Ministry of Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive screening (signage). • Active screening of all staff, students, volunteers, visitors, and residents. • Essential visitors only. • Reporting of positive screening. 	
Essential retail and businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery stores • Restaurant take-out and delivery • Gas stations • Hardware stores • Beer, wine, and liquor stores • Banks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a physical barrier or maintain a distance of 2-metres between staff and customers. • Limit the number of staff and customers in the premise. • Promote contactless payment. • Consider dedicated operating hours for seniors and people who underlying health conditions or living with disabilities. • Wipe down carts, shopping baskets, and pin pads between use. • Mark floors to show customers where to stand while in line to ensure proper distancing. • Remove self-service offerings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal time-of-day delivery restrictions have been lifted for food, medication and essential household items.
ServiceOntario locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients urged to complete transactions online and to not visit a centre unless completely necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended validation to expired and expiring driver's licences, health cards, Ontario Photo Cards, licence plate stickers, etc.
Shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active screening of all staff and clients. • Regular monitoring of clients who could be at high risk for complications from COVID-19. • Isolation of clients with respiratory symptoms. 	
Child care services for essential workers, and home child care services of less than six children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active screening of all staff, children and visitors. • Passive screening (signage). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be provided at no cost for essential workers.

Setting	Guidance	Supporting measures (if applicable)
Primary care providers in a community setting	<p>Ministry of Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a system for virtual and/or telephone consultations (if possible). • Delay non-essential face-to-face appointments. • Active screening by telephone, behind a physical barrier, or by maintaining a 2-metre distance. • Passive screening (signage). • Reporting of positive screening. • Referrals to local assessment centres. • Clinical examinations and specimen collection using contact/droplet precautions. 	
Community laboratories	<p>Ministry of Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active screening by telephone, behind a physical barrier, or by maintaining a 2-metre distance. • Passive screening (signage). • Reporting of positive screening. • Separating patients who screen positive away from others. 	
Community pharmacies	<p>Ministry of Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active screening by telephone, behind a physical barrier, or by maintaining a 2-metre distance. • Passive screening (signage). • Reporting of positive screening. • Separating patients who screen positive away from others. 	

3. Travel measures

Sector	Prevention measures	Supporting measures (if applicable)
International travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a temporary restriction of travellers crossing the US-Canada border for non-essential services (“border closure”). • Canadians are advised to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada until further notice. • Canadians are advised to avoid all travel on cruise ships until further notice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadians abroad who are directly impacted by COVID-19 can apply for an emergency repayable loan to facilitate their return to Canada and to cover basic essential needs while they work towards their return. • Exemptions to 14-day self-isolation may be provided

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travellers returning from anywhere outside of Canada are requested to self-isolate for 14 days upon return and to monitor themselves for symptoms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those who develop symptoms are to immediately self-isolate, and seek assessment through Telehealth Ontario or their primary care provider. 	<p>to healthy healthcare workers, and workers who are essential to the movement of goods and people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislated job-protected leave to employees in isolation or quarantine due to COVID-19.
International industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The temporary restriction of travellers crossing the U.S.-Canada border for non-essential purposes does not apply to supply chains (trucking). International inbound flights into Canada have been consolidated to four major hubs only (Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montréal) There is an interim order requiring air carriers to prevent most foreign nationals and any person with a fever and respiratory symptoms from boarding flights to Canada. The Canadian cruise ship season for ships capable of carrying 500+ persons was deferred until July 1, 2020 	
Domestic travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are currently no restrictions on travel within Canada. 	

4. Who should self-isolate at home?

Type of person	Details
All travelers returning to Canada from abroad (i.e., anywhere outside Canada)	<p><i>On or after Friday, March 13, 2020</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government of Canada is advising ALL travellers returning to Canada from abroad since Friday, March 13, 2020 to self-isolate for 14 days after their return, whether they have symptoms or not. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If symptoms develop, self-isolate at home until you are symptom free for 24 hours or the end of 14 days, whichever is longer. <p><i>On or before Thursday, March 12, 2020</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you returned from Italy, Iran or Hubei province (China) before March 13, 2020, self-isolate at home, whether you have symptoms or not. If you returned from any other international destination (including the United States) before March 13, 2020, monitor yourself for symptoms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If symptoms develop, self-isolate at home until you are symptom free for 24 hours.
Anyone with respiratory symptoms, such as fever or cough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone with a fever or new or worsening cough should self-isolate at home until you are symptom free for 24 hours, regardless of travel history. This may be subject to change. • Those who think they have COVID-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has these symptoms, use the Ontario Ministry of Health’s online self-assessment tool.
Laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate at home until symptoms resolve, and two negative laboratory results from samples taken at least 24 hours apart. This may be subject to change.
Close contacts of a person diagnosed with COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone who is a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19 should self-isolate for 14 days from the time of last contact with the person and self-monitor for symptoms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If symptoms develop, continue to self-isolate at home, and report symptoms to public health. • Close contacts will be contacted and monitored by their local public health.
Probable cases of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are individuals who meet the provincial case definition as a probable case (symptoms AND exposure history) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If laboratory testing was ordered: Self-isolate until a negative laboratory result is available or until symptom free for 24 hours, whichever is longer ○ If laboratory testing was not ordered: Self-isolate until symptom free for 24 hours or the end of 14 days, whichever is longer.

5. General supporting measures for individuals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

Area	Supporting measure
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislated job-protected leave to employees who need to be away from work to care for children because of school or day care closures, or those in isolation or quarantine due to COVID-19, retroactive to January 25, 2020. • Employment insurance (EI) – the one-week waiting period has been waived for those in quarantine, effective March 15, 2020. • For individuals not able to work who are not covered by EI, but who are quarantined or sick due to COVID-19, or caring for a family member who is sick, an Emergency Care Benefit of up to \$900 bi-weekly is available for up to 15 weeks. Applications will be available beginning in April. • For individuals facing unemployment due to COVID-19 and do not qualify for EI, an Emergency Support Benefit will be available.

Area	Supporting measure
Child care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cost child care services to essential workers.
Health coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three-month waiting period for Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) covered waived. • Cost of COVID-19 services for uninsured people who not meet the criteria for OHIP coverage will be covered by the province.
Income taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due date for filing individual tax returns extended to June 1, 2020. • Deadline for paying any 2019 income tax money owed extended until September 1, 2020.
Mortgage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortgage deferral/relief programs.
Loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six-month interest free reprieve on student loan payments.
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary stoppage of time-of-use electricity pricing expected to be announced.