

COVID-19 Class Order: *Revised* effective June 16, 2021

What is a class order?

A class order is a legal order that enables Halton Region Public Health to enforce self-isolation requirements for a group of individuals that it applies to. These efforts are being made to protect the local community from potential exposure to COVID-19. Self-isolation, and contact tracing to reach those who need to self-isolate are important to protect the community from COVID-19 transmission.

Under what authority has this class order been issued?

On May 22, 2020, Halton Region's Medical Officer of Health issued a class order under Section 22 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. This order was revised once on October 5, 2020. The *Health Protection and Promotion Act* authorizes a class order to be issued to address the risks presented by the potential spread of COVID-19 to people who reside or are present in Halton Region. The revised class order issued June 16, 2021 is essentially the same as the May 22nd order, with some changes related to self-isolation requirements.

Why did the Medical Officer of Health issue this class order?

The class order was first issued on May 22, 2020, and is now revised effective June 16, 2021, in order to strengthen Halton Region Public Health's ability to reduce the illness and loss of life from COVID-19, and preserve and protect the capacity of our health care system to respond and provide care for those who need it.

Halton Region and Ontario have now experienced outbreaks and community transmission of Variants of Concern (VOCs) of the COVID-19 virus even in vaccinated individuals. It is therefore more important than ever to ensure that all those who need to self-isolate do so, for the protection of all residents.

While the vast majority of people who have or may have COVID-19, as well as their close contacts, have been compliant with instructions from public health authorities to self-isolate, there are individuals who do not take these measures seriously enough or whose life circumstances make it difficult to comply. Halton Region Public Health is available to provide support to those who need assistance. However, this class order is a legal tool to help us ensure that everyone who needs to self-isolate, complies with that direction.

What has changed in the revised class order?

The revised order reflects recent changes in provincial direction and guidance. The requirement to self-isolate has changed for some close contacts.

Fully vaccinated individuals who are a close contact of a confirmed case or probable case of COVID-19 **may** be relieved of the requirement to self-isolate by Halton Region Public Health, if:

- You received your second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series, or first dose of a one-dose vaccine series, 14 days or more before the day on which you last had close contact with the confirmed case or probable case of COVID-19;
- Your vaccine history has been confirmed by Halton Region Public Health;
- You are asymptomatic; and
- You are not a resident of a long-term care or retirement home, a patient admitted to a health care setting, or an individual with an immunocompromising condition (e.g., organ or stem cell transplantation recipients, undergoing chemotherapy or immunosuppressive therapies).

Fully vaccinated individuals who meet these requirements may still be required to self-isolate if Halton Region Public Health has information that links their exposure to a Variant of Concern of the COVID-19 virus for which vaccine effectiveness is not well established.

Even if relieved of the requirement to self-isolate:

- You must report your exposure to your employer and follow any restrictions from work as specified by your employer;
- If you develop new symptoms (even mild symptoms) of COVID-19, you must:
 - Self-isolate immediately; and
 - Report your symptoms to Halton Region Public Health.

The changes also clarify that Halton Region Public Health may require people to self-isolate to prevent COVID-19 transmission in circumstances beyond the categories itemized in the Order.

Who is required to self-isolate under this class order?

The June 16, 2021 order applies to all persons residing in or present in Halton Region who:

- a. Are a confirmed case or probable case of COVID-19;
- b. Have new symptoms (even mild symptoms) or worsening symptoms of COVID-19, have been tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting the results of their test;
- c. Otherwise have reasonable grounds to believe they now have symptoms (even mild symptoms) of COVID-19, or have had such symptoms within the past 10 days;
- d. Are a close contact of a person identified in (a) even if they do not themselves have any symptoms of COVID-19;
- e. Have been advised to self-isolate by Halton Region Public Health in circumstances other than those in a., b., c. or d. above; or
- f. Are a parent, or person with responsibilities of a parent, of a person under sixteen years of age identified in a., b., c., d. or e. who resides or is present in Halton Region.

People in Categories a., b., c., d. and e. above must self-isolate and follow other directions in the class order.

If you are a person described in e. above, you must remain in self-isolation for the duration specified by Halton Region Public Health.

The purpose of Category f. is to require parents and others who have the responsibilities of a parent to ensure compliance with the class order by any person under 16 years of age.

Parents and others must self-isolate only if they themselves also fall within Category a., b., c., d. or e..

Further details on the symptoms of COVID-19 and the definition of “close contact” are included in the class order.

When is the class order effective? How long must people self-isolate?

The revised class order is effective from June 16, 2021 at 12:01 a.m. and will remain in effect until such time as the Medical Officer of Health determines it is no longer required.

Sometimes, public health officials may direct an individual to extend the period of isolation, depending upon symptoms and test results.

Are there any exceptions?

Yes, modifications to the class order can be made for the following people:

- a person who, in the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health, provides an essential service, for the limited purpose of providing that essential service;
- a person receiving essential medical services or treatments, whether related to COVID-19 or not; or
- where a person's isolation, in the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health, would not be in the public interest.

Please contact Halton Region Public Health at accesshalton@halton.ca or 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866 for more information

What does it mean to self-isolate under the class order?

Individuals who are affected by the class order are required to stay at home and not to have visitors, except as essential (for example, where a health care worker is visiting the home). The other things you must do while self-isolating are explained in the class order and the Public Health Ontario fact sheet, How to Self-Isolate, that forms part of that order.

While self-isolating, people must remain reachable for monitoring by public health. This helps Halton Region Public Health make sure they are doing what is necessary and to identify if they need support while self-isolating.

If a person with COVID-19 is homeless or their home is otherwise unsuitable or unsafe for isolation purposes, assistance with accommodations can be provided.

People in self-isolation should arrange to have groceries and other necessities delivered to them. If you need assistance, please see our list of resources at halton.ca/COVID19.

Why do I have to provide contact names and other information to public health? How is my privacy protected?

People required to self-isolate **must**, if asked, share with public health the names and contact information for all people with whom they had contact while likely infectious (and other information that may be requested). Providing this information is crucial. It enables public health to act to prevent disease transmission to others. Our shared ability to keep schools, businesses and other important community activities open in Halton Region and across Ontario depends on public health's ability to do this important work.

Public health understands that people will have concerns about their privacy. All information collected by public health is protected by Ontario's privacy legislation for health information, the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*.

I am required to self-isolate but need support to do so. Who should I contact?

Halton Region Public Health is available to assist residents who need help in order to properly self-isolate or while self-isolating. Individuals who need support can contact Halton Region Public Health by email at accesshalton@halton.ca or by calling 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

What should I do if my illness gets worse while I am self-isolating?

Seek **immediate** medical attention if your illness is worsening (for example, you have difficulty breathing) by calling **9-1-1**. Tell them of your COVID-19 diagnosis or symptom(s) and answer all screening questions accurately (including symptoms and travel history) so that you will receive appropriate care and the right infection prevention and control precautions are taken.

How could the class order be enforced if a person fails to self-isolate?

As is our general practice with these kinds of orders, Halton Region Public Health will attempt to engage directly with a person failing to self-isolate (or to take other important steps) to make sure that they understand what is required of them, and to see if they need support in an effort to gain voluntary compliance. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the MOH will consider the need for legal action to compel compliance.

Individuals who are required to self-isolate by this class order but fail to do so can be charged and fined up to \$5,000 per day. The *Health Protection and Promotion Act* also allows the MOH to go to court and seek an order to protect the health of the community, e.g., by taking the person into custody to be confined in a hospital or other appropriate facility until the self-isolation period is over, or requiring compliance with other public health directions.

For more information, contact Halton Region Public Health by email at accesshalton@halton.ca or call 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

Can a person challenge the class order?

Any person subject to the class order may request a hearing by the Health Services Appeal and Review Board to challenge its requirements. Refer to the class order for details.

How does the Medical Officer of Health's class order under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* differ from the federal order under the *Quarantine Act*?

The federal government's quarantine order is aimed at all travellers entering Canada, effective March 25, 2020. That order also imposes a 14-day home quarantine (self-isolation) on travellers regardless whether they have symptoms of COVID-19. See the Government of Canada's [instructions for travellers from outside Canada](#) for more information.

In some cases, individuals subject to home quarantine or isolation measures under the federal quarantine order may also be subject to the class order issued by Halton Region's Medical Officer of Health (for example, individuals who are diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also recently returned from travel).

More information:

If you have questions about the class order, please contact Halton Region Public Health:

- by phone: 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866; or
- by email: accesshalton@halton.ca.

Residents who have COVID-19 symptoms are encouraged to seek testing at an assessment centre:

If you are a resident of Oakville, Milton or Halton Hills:

- Book an appointment at a [Halton Healthcare Assessment & Testing Centre](#)
 - By phone: 905-203-7963
 - Online: [Online booking](#)

If you are a resident of Burlington:

- Book an appointment at [Joseph Brant Hospital COVID-19 Assessment Centre](#)
- By phone: 905-632-3737, extension 6550
- Online: [Online booking](#)

Revised June 15, 2021