

## COVID-19 Public Health Guidance: For Community and Allotment Gardens

Last updated September 17, 2021

This document outlines guidance for staff, volunteers, and garden members at community or allotment gardens, to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. It does not replace guidance from the Province. This document is for information purposes only, and shall not be construed as legal advice.

On July 16, Ontario moved into Step 3 of the [Roadmap to Reopen](#). Residents, organizations, and businesses must abide by the public health measures for Step 3. See [O. Reg. 364/20, Schedules 1, 2 and 3](#), for regulations for Step 3. The Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts will continue to monitor the data to determine when it is safe to exit the Roadmap.

For specific questions about COVID-19 provincial regulations, please contact the **Stop the Spread Business Information Line** at 1-888-444-3659.

### Instructions for workplaces from Halton Region's Medical Officer of Health

Halton Region's Medical Officer of Health (MOH) issued [amended Instructions to businesses and organizations](#) to help keep staff and customers/patrons safe. The instructions take effect at 12:01 a.m. on **Friday, September 10, 2021**. They combine key existing requirements from the Province and Halton Region Public Health, with some new requirements. **Compliance with these instructions is mandatory.**

### Workplace vaccination

#### Workplace vaccination policy

To reduce COVID-19 transmission in the workplace, Halton Region's MOH recommends all local employers have a [workplace COVID-19 vaccination policy](#). For workplaces with more than 100 workers physically present, Halton Region Public Health requires mandatory [COVID-19 safety plans](#) and vaccination policies in place by September 22, 2021.

#### Encourage everyone to get a COVID-19 vaccine

Getting vaccinated is one of the ways to stop the spread of COVID-19. Here are some ways you can support vaccination at your workplace:

- Develop a [workplace COVID-19 vaccination policy](#)
- Ensure employees are aware that everyone in Canada is eligible to receive a vaccine for free. Proof of identity is required but a health card is not required for vaccination.
- Share [COVID-19 vaccine resources](#), with staff, available in multiple languages

### General guidance

- Post [signage](#) informing garden members of required public health measures.
- Allow access to registered members, staff, and volunteers only. Non-members and visitors should not be permitted to enter.
- Permit access to the garden only for the purposes of planting, maintaining, and harvesting food.

## Additional COVID-19 public health measures

The following COVID-19 Public Health Measures are recommended by Halton Region Public Health and should be considered in all steps of Ontario's [Roadmap to Reopen](#).

### Capacity limits

- Limit the total number of members at the garden at any one time to ensure a physical distance of at least two metres (six feet) can be maintained from every other person.

### Maximize physical distance and reduce physical contact

- Encourage people to maintain physical distance by using [signage](#).
- Maintain a garden schedule to control the number of individuals in the garden at any time.
- Consider removing shared tools and encourage garden members to bring their own.
- Children should only be brought into a garden on an as-needed basis and should be instructed to follow hygiene recommendations and physical distancing, except when gathering with members of their household.

### Wear a mask

- [Consolidated By-law 47-20](#) requires individuals to wear a mask in indoor workplaces and public spaces, unless exempt.
- Masks should also be worn in other situations (for example, outdoors) when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Masks do not replace other important public health measures, such as screening, physical distancing, proper hand hygiene, coughing and sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, and staying home when feeling ill.

### Keep hands and surfaces clean

- If possible, provide a place for garden members to wash their hands.
- Post [signage](#) to encourage members to wash hands frequently for at least 15 seconds with soap and water or an alcohol based (60-90% alcohol) hand rub before entering and after leaving the garden. Washing with soap and water is preferred if hands are visibly dirty.
- Ensure frequent [cleaning and disinfection](#) of all high touch surfaces and common areas.

### Additional resources

- Halton Region Public Health:
  - [Cleaning practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19](#)
  - [COVID-19 Guidance for Handling Materials](#)
  - [Mental Health Resources and Supports](#)
  - Poster: [Protect Yourself and Others](#)
- Government of Ontario:
  - [COVID-19-coronavirus and workplace health and safety](#)
  - [Roadmap to Reopening](#)
  - [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#): Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 (Rules for Areas at Step 3).
- Workplace Safety & Prevention Services
  - [Psychological Safety Resources for Leaders During COVID-19](#)