

COVID-19 Public Health Guidelines: Indoor Entertainment

November 24, 2020

This document provides guidelines for owners and operators of indoor entertainment facilities, including concerts, artistic events, theatrical productions, performances, movie theatres, casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments.

This document does not replace guidance from the Province, including [Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#), [O. Reg. 364/20](#) (regulations for the Prevent, Protect and Restrict levels), [O. Reg. 263/20](#) (regulations for the Control level) and [O. Reg. 82/20](#) (regulations for the Lockdown level).

To support a safe reopening, operators must also abide by:

- Provincial [sector-specific guidelines](#) and [guidance documents](#).
- Relevant legislation, including [Consolidated By-law 47-20](#) that requires the wearing of non-medical masks in enclosed public places, unless exempt.
- Additional guidelines provided by coordinating bodies specific to the organization or business.

COVID-19 transmission

COVID-19 is spread mainly from person-to-person through the respiratory droplets of someone with COVID-19. The respiratory droplets can travel up to two metres (six feet) through coughing, sneezing or talking. COVID-19 can also be transmitted when a person touches a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touches their mouth, nose, or eyes.

COVID-19 Response Framework Requirements

Ontario's [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#) outlines a graduated approach that allows for public health measures to be introduced and removed incrementally. Each region is placed in one of five levels: Prevent (green), Protect (yellow), Restrict (orange), Control (red) and Lockdown (grey) by the provincial government, based on defined criteria. Residents, businesses and organizations must follow the public health measures for their region's level. See [O. Reg. 364/20](#) (regulations for the Prevent, Protect and Restrict levels), [O. Reg. 263/20](#) (regulations for the Control level) and [O. Reg. 82/20](#) (regulations for the Lockdown level) for details about the public health measures. Visit halton.ca/COVID19 for updates on Halton Region's level.

Please note: The measures are cumulative. For example, if a public health unit region is placed in the Restrict level, in addition to the Restrict measures, the measures for lower levels (Protect and Prevent) must also be followed.

First Level: PREVENT

- Non-medical masks or face coverings are required by all staff and patrons except when eating or drinking only.
- Limit the number of patrons inside the facility to a number that can maintain a physical distance of two metres (six feet) from others within the space.
- The total number cannot exceed the indoor gathering limit of 50 people or outdoor limit of 100 people, excluding staff.

- Most professional meeting and event facilities, including convention centres, hotels, motels, resorts, banquet halls and conference centres, can have up to 50 guests for each indoor meeting room or event space within the facility.
- All staff must be screened before coming to work using the Provincial [screening tool for workplaces](#)
- Cinemas:
 - Cinemas are permitted to host up to 50 people per screening, with multiple screenings permitted in the same building where physical distancing can be maintained with an approved plan from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
 - Drive-in cinemas are permitted.
- Casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments:
 - Table games in casinos are not permitted.
- Performance Arts Facilities:
 - While singing or performing music (brass or wind instruments), performers and members of the public must:
 - be separated from others by plexiglas or some other impermeable barrier;
 - maintain a physical distance of at least two metres (six feet) from every other person, and;
 - clean and disinfect any equipment used for singing or performing music between each use.
 - Rehearsing or performing a recorded or broadcasted event is permitted.
 - Every performer must maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person, except if it is necessary for the performers to be closer to each other for the purposes of the performance or rehearsal.
 - Drive-in performances are permitted.

Second Level: PROTECT

Measures from the previous level and:

- Require contact information for all patrons.
- Liquor sold or served only between 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- No consumption of liquor permitted between 12 a.m. to 9 a.m.
- Casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments:
 - Must close at midnight.
- A [safety plan](#) must be available upon request.

Third Level: RESTRICT

Measures from the previous level and:

- Cinema capacity limited to 50 people per facility (CMOH plans revoked).
- All patrons must be screened before entering by asking if they have COVID-19 [symptoms](#).
- Casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments:
 - Must close at 10 p.m.
- Liquor sold or served only between 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- No consumption of liquor permitted between 10 p.m. to 9 a.m.

Fourth Level: CONTROL

Measures from the previous level and:

- Casino, bingo hall and gaming establishment capacity limited to 10 people per facility indoors and 25 people outdoors.
- Cinemas:
 - Indoor cinemas are closed.
 - Drive-in cinemas are permitted to be open.

- Rehearsing or performing a recorded or broadcasted event remains permitted.
- Singers and payers of brass or wind instruments must be separated from any other performers by plexiglass or other impermeable barrier.
- Performing Arts Facilities:
 - Closed to spectators.
 - Drive-in performances are permitted.
 - Rehearsing or performing a recorded or broadcasted event remains permitted.
 - Singers and payers of brass or wind instruments must be separated from any other performers by plexiglass or other impermeable barrier.

Fifth Level: LOCKDOWN

Measures from previous level and:

- Casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments are closed.

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 levels of Ontario's [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#).

Screen for COVID-19 symptoms

- Place [signage](#) at entrances informing patrons that they should only enter the public space if they do not have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Recommend that patrons complete Ontario's [COVID-19 self-assessment](#) prior to arriving.
- If feasible or when required:
 - actively screen patrons prior to entry by asking if they have COVID-19, COVID [symptoms](#), have travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days and are not [exempt](#) from travel restrictions, or have had close contact with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.
 - maintain a log of the patrons who enter the premises for a minimum of 30 days to support contact tracing by public health. Include name, contact number or email and date.

Maximize physical distancing

- Ensure a minimum physical distance of two metres (six feet) is maintained at all times by all people who are not from the same household, including at entrances/exits and in washrooms. This may require blocking off seating or using a barrier/plexiglas between seats.
- Post [signage](#) for patrons as a reminder to physically distance from others.
- Organize the facility to allow for a one-way flow of patrons from the entrance to exit by using ground markings and barriers. If possible, designate a separate entrance and exit.
- Assign seating or spaces where possible to ensure physical distancing.
- If food or beverages are sold, ensure that patrons stand at least two metres (six feet) apart while waiting to be served.

Reduce physical contact

- Consider installing plexiglas or other transparent barriers where there will be close contact between people (e.g., at ticket booths, concession stands).
- Encourage the use of contactless payments whenever possible. If handling cash, use alcohol-based hand rub after each transaction and avoid touching your face.

- Create a booking system that allows people to reserve a specified time slot to attend the facility. Ensure there is sufficient time between time slots to allow for cleaning and disinfection of the facility and to reduce crowding when entering or checking in. Request that participants arrive no more than five minutes before their time slot begins.
- Reconfigure waiting areas by removing tables and chairs to allow more space to physically distance.
- If food, snacks and/or beverages are offered at your facility, provide single-use individually wrapped utensils, condiments and items such as straws and napkins from behind the counter.
- Remove unnecessary communal items such as candy, magazines and complimentary phone chargers.

Keep hands and surfaces clean

- Post [signage](#) to encourage patrons to wash hands frequently for at least 15 seconds with soap and water or alcohol-based (60-90% alcohol) hand rub. Washing with soap and water is preferred if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide adequate hand hygiene supplies including alcohol-based (60-90% alcohol) hand rub stations throughout the facility, including entrances and exits.
- Use paper towel dispensers instead of hand dryers in washrooms where hands-free taps are not available in order to prevent recontamination of hands when turning off taps.
- Conduct frequent [cleaning and disinfection](#) of all high touch surfaces and common areas including:
 - door handles, light switches, table tops, chairs, sneeze guards, faucets, restrooms, touch screens and dispensers
 - shared equipment such as credit/debit card machines and cash registers
- Consider installing devices such as automatic doors and electronic taps to prevent the need for frequent touching.
- Refer to COVID-19 [Public Health Guidelines: Public Washrooms](#) for further guidance on safely maintaining washrooms used by the public.
- Use products that are [approved by Health Canada](#), with a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe use.

Wear a non-medical masks or face covering

- [Consolidated By-law 47-20](#) and [Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#) requires individuals to wear a non-medical mask or face covering in indoor public spaces.
- Non-medical masks or face coverings should also be worn in other situations (for example, outdoors) Masks can be removed when eating or drinking.
- Train staff on the [proper use](#), removal and disposal of non-medical masks.
- Non-medical masks do not replace the need for physical distancing, proper hand hygiene, coughing and sneezing into a tissue or sleeve and staying home when feeling ill.

Keep staff and volunteers safe

- Use the provincial [screening tool for workplaces](#) to actively screen staff before each shift. If a staff member screens positive and/or if they develop [symptoms](#), direct them to:
 - return or stay home;
 - contact their health care provider or book an appointment at a local [Assessment Centre](#) for testing; and
 - [self-isolate](#) at home.
- Ensure [appropriate personal protective equipment](#) is available on-site for staff at all times and all staff are trained on [proper use](#).
- Ensure protocols are in place if staff or patrons experience symptoms of [COVID-19](#), including:
 - immediately isolating the individual from others and asking them to wear a mask.
 - limiting contact with the person and maintaining a physical distance of two metres (six feet) as much as possible.

- cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces that may have come into contact with the symptomatic individual.
- Maintain flexible policies to allow staff to stay home to care for a sick family member or self-isolate if required.
- Educate staff on public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including physical distancing, proper frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and cleaning and disinfection.

Additional resources

- Halton Region Public Health:
 - [Cleaning practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19](#)
 - [COVID-19 Public Health Guidelines: Public Washrooms](#)
 - [COVID-19 Public Health Guidelines: Restaurants, Bars, Food Trucks and other Food and Drink Establishments](#) (if food, snacks and/or beverages are offered at your facility)
 - [COVID-19 Public Health Guidelines: Events and Gatherings](#)
- Government of Ontario:
 - [Guidance for professional meeting and event facilities](#)
 - [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#): Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 (Rules for Areas in Stage 3).
 - [Ontario Regulation 263/20](#): Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 (Rules for Areas in Stage 2).
 - [Ontario Regulation 82/20](#): Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 (Rules for Areas in Stage 1).
- Public Services Health & Safety Association:
 - [Health and safety guidance for entertainment museum and gallery employers](#)

More information

For more information and updates, visit: halton.ca/COVID19 or call 311.