

Instruction Letter for High-Risk/Close Contacts of COVID-19

This letter is to inform you that you have been identified as having a high-risk exposure to someone with COVID-19 while they were infectious.

What is a High-Risk/Close Contact?

You are a High-Risk/Close Contact if you had contact with someone with COVID-19 while they were infectious, and you:

- Lived with them
- Had intimate contact or were sneezed or coughed on by them
- Cared for by them, or provided care to them. For example, helped with bathing, feeding or dressing
- Had face-to-face contact with them:
 - for at least 15 minutes. These 15 minutes can be all at once or in shorter time periods totaling 15 minutes or more;
 - while less than 2 metres (6 feet) apart;
 - regardless of whether you or the other person wore a mask; and
 - regardless of whether you were indoors or outdoors.

The attached Class Order applies to you. It sets out legal requirements by the Medical Officer of Health because of the public health importance in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Halton Region, to protect you and other people in our community.

Take the time to read the Class Order. If you have questions, please call us at 311 in Halton, or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

Variants of concern are increasing in our community and can spread more quickly. Because of this we need your help. We are asking everyone to closely follow public health guidance to keep you, your loved ones and the community safe.

Please follow these four steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Step 1: Self-isolate

You must self-isolate because you were identified as a High-Risk/Close Contact of an individual who is being treated as a Case with COVID-19. **The Class Order explains what is required:**

- **You must self-isolate for at least 14 days from your last exposure to the person with COVID-19.**
- The self-isolation period may be longer for people who develop symptoms. (See paragraph 2(iv) of the Class Order for information).
- Stay home unless you need emergency medical care.
- Do not leave your home for non-emergency reasons, such as work, school, groceries, pharmacies or non-urgent medical care. Ask family and friends to help with these activities while you are self-isolating.
- If you need extra support to self-isolate, please call us at 905- 825-6000, or call 311.
- Keep your phone nearby. You are required to remain reachable by Halton Public Health as per the Class Order.

In addition:

- Stay in a separate room from other people in your home, including when you are preparing or eating food.
- If you are unable to isolate alone then an adult or caregiver will have to isolate with you and away from the rest of the family members in the home.
- Use a separate bathroom if you have one.
- Wash your hands and clean surfaces you touch often (lights, knobs, taps, etc.).
- If you must be in the same room/area with other people:
 - Stay at least 2 meters (6 feet) apart, both indoors and outdoors
 - Everyone should wear a mask.

Step 2: Monitor for symptoms

*** Important ***

If you feel very sick and need emergency medical care (for example, trouble breathing or chest pain), call 911 and let them know that you are a High-Risk/Close Contact for COVID-19.

Symptoms of COVID-19 range from mild to severe. Common symptoms of COVID-19 are listed below. Please visit [PublicHealthOntario.ca](https://www.health.gov.on.ca) for more information.

- fever (temperature of 37.8°C/100°F or higher)
- new or worsening cough (including croup)
- shortness of breath (out of breath, trouble breathing, unable to breathe deeply, wheeze)
- sore throat (pain when swallowing or trouble swallowing)
- runny nose
- nasal congestion (without a known cause, such as seasonal allergies)
- decrease or loss of sense of smell or taste
- nausea/vomiting
- diarrhea
- abdominal pain (that is ongoing)

Uncommon symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- chills
- headache (that is new and lasts long, unusual, or without a known cause)
- pink eye
- fatigue, general feeling of being unwell, no energy, feeling very tired
- muscle aches and pain
- decreased or no appetite (for young children not related to a known cause)

Step 3: When to get tested and requirements for your household members

All High-Risk/Close Contacts should go for testing based on the following chart:

If the High-risk/Close Contact:	Testing for High-Risk/Close Contact	Requirements for Household Members of High-risk/Close Contacts
Has a symptom(s) of COVID-19 or develops new or worsening symptoms during the isolation period	Get tested or retested right away	Household members are required to self-isolate until the High-risk/Close Contact receives a negative test result. This means that they cannot leave home for any reason other than for testing or urgent medical attention.
Has no symptom(s) of COVID-19	Get tested on or after day 7 from the date you were last exposed to someone with COVID-19. <u>Get retested</u> on or after day 10 from the date you were last exposed to someone with COVID-19 if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. You were tested on day 0-6 from the date you were last exposed and b. You tested negative and c. You have no symptom(s) of COVID-19 	Household members are required to stay home expect for essential reasons (work, school/childcare, essential groceries/pharmacy) while the High-risk/Close Contact is self-isolating.

Note:

- As a High-Risk/Close Contact you are required to self-isolate for 14 days, even if you test negative for COVID-19.
- If you receive a 'positive' or 'indeterminate' test result, continue to self-isolate. Halton Region Public Health will be in contact with you.

Testing and Assessment Centres

You **must book an appointment**. There are no “walk-in” testing sites in Halton Region.

For residents of Oakville, Milton or Halton Hills:

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

For residents of Burlington:

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

Other options for assessment:

- Ontario Government's COVID-19 online [self-assessment tool](#);

- Ontario Government's COVID-19 [school and childcare screening](#); or
- Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

If you must leave your house for COVID-19 testing or an emergency medical reason:

- Call ahead to tell your health care providers (including ambulance) that you are self-isolating because you are a High-Risk/Close Contact for COVID-19.
- Wear a mask.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Travel alone in your own car where possible. Do not take public transit. If you are not able to safely travel to a testing centre, please call us at 311.

If you develop symptoms and choose not to get tested, you must let Halton Region Health Department know, by calling 905-825-6000, or 311.

Step 4: Come out of self-isolation

- You can stop self-isolating 14 days after your last exposure to the person with COVID-19 if you do not develop symptoms of COVID-19.
- Your self-isolation period may be longer if you develop symptoms. See paragraph 2(iv) of the Class Order for directions.
- When you stop self-isolating, continue to follow physical distancing measures and wear a mask if you cannot keep 2 meters (6 feet) from people outside your household.

Where to go for more information

To learn more about COVID-19, visit halton.ca/covid19.

[Social and Community Supports](#) at halton.ca/covid19 or call Halton Region at **311** for information about food, housing, financial support or if you are having trouble self-isolating.

COVID-19 is affecting our lives in many different ways. It is normal to feel stress and-worried, especially when you are self-isolating. Taking care of both your physical and mental well-being is key to staying healthy. Look for ways to stay connected with others through technology and practice self-care. Reach out to a co-worker, friend, loved one or health care provider if you need support. Visit [Mental Health Supports](#) at halton.ca/covid19 or call Halton Region at **311**. You are not alone, we are here to help.

Yours in health,
Halton Region Public Health

CLASS ORDER

Made pursuant to section 22(5.0.1) of the
Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7, as amended

THIS CLASS ORDER ISSUED AND EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 5, 2020 AT 12:01 a.m. REPLACES AND SUPERCEDES THE ORDER ISSUED AND EFFECTIVE MAY 22, 2020 AT 6:00 p.m.

DATE: October 5, 2020

TO: All persons residing or present in The Regional Municipality of Halton¹ ("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; or
- e. Are a parent, or person with responsibilities of a parent, of a person under 16 years of age identified in a., b., c. or
d. who resides or is present in Halton Region.

NOTE: The symptoms of COVID-19 and definitions for "confirmed case", "probable case" and "close contact" are explained below.

I, Dr. Hamidah Meghani, Medical Officer of Health, The Regional Municipality of Halton, ORDER YOU TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS, effective 12:01 a.m. on October 5, 2020:

1. Isolate yourself immediately and remain in isolation from all other persons ("self-isolation").

While in self-isolation you must conduct yourself so you do not expose any another person to infection or possible infection from COVID-19. The instructions you must follow are set out in paragraph 3 below.

2. Remain in self-isolation:

- i. **If you are a person described in a. above**, you must remain in self-isolation:
 - o For 10 days from symptom onset as long as on the 10th day, you have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours, or 10 days from test date if you have had no symptoms; or

¹ Halton Region Health Unit as designated by s.1 and Schedule 11 of R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 553 under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*

- For 20 days from symptom onset if you have or have had severe illness (i.e., requiring ICU level support) or if you have severe immune compromise as long as on the 20th day, you have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours or 20 days from your test date if you have had no symptoms.

If you have a fever and/or your other symptoms are not improving on the final day of isolation, contact Halton Region Public Health for direction: 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

“No fever” means that your temperature is 37.7 degrees Celsius or lower.

- ii. **If you are a person described in b. above**, you must remain in self-isolation until you receive a negative test result, have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours. If you receive a positive result, you are then subject to the Order as a person described in a. above.
- iii. **If you are a person described in c. above:**
 - *If tested*, you must remain in self-isolation until you receive a negative test result, have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours. If you receive a positive result, you are then subject to the Order as a person described in a. above.
 - *If not tested*, you must remain in self-isolation:
 - For 10 days from symptom onset as long as on the 10th day, you have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours, or 10 days from test date if you have had no symptoms; or
 - For 20 days from symptom onset if you have or have had severe illness (i.e., requiring ICU level support) or if you have severe immune compromise as long as on the 20th day, you have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours or 20 days from your test date if you have had no symptoms.
- iv. **If you are a person described in d. above**, you must remain in self-isolation for 14 days after the day on which you last had close contact with a person described in paragraph a. above. However, if you develop symptoms during this period, you must:
 - *If tested*, complete the 14 days of self-isolation if you receive a negative test result, and on 14th day have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours. If you receive a positive result, you are then subject to the Order as a person described in a. above.
 - *If not tested*, remain in self-isolation:
 - For 10 days from symptom onset as long as on the 10th day, you have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours; or
 - For 20 days from symptom onset if you have or have had severe illness (i.e., requiring ICU level support) or if you have severe immune compromise as long as on the 20th day, you have no fever and your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.

- v. **If you have questions about what you must do**, contact Halton Region Public Health for direction: 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

3. **The instructions you must follow** during self-isolation are in the Public Health Ontario fact sheet, *How to Self- Isolate* dated July 31, 2020 (or as current), attached as Schedule 1 to this Order.

All instructions in *How to Self-Isolate* (attached) form part of this Order.

This fact sheet may be updated from time to time. You must follow the instructions in the current version attached to this Order as posted at: halton.ca/COVID19.

4. **During the periods described in 2. above, remain reachable for monitoring by Halton Region Public Health** and/or other public health staff (defined below).

Inform Halton Region Public Health if you need help to properly self-isolate or while you are self-isolating, e.g., food, water, accommodation, clothing, appropriate medical treatment and family, religious or other arrangements. To do so, contact Halton Region Public Health at: 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

5. **Seek immediate medical attention if your illness is worsening** (e.g., you have difficulty breathing) by calling 911. Tell them of your COVID-19 diagnosis or symptom(s) and answer all screening questions accurately (including symptom and travel history) so that you will receive appropriate care and the right infection prevention and control precautions are taken.
6. The requirements of this Order are subject to necessary modifications for the following people, who should contact Halton Region Public Health for direction specific to their circumstances (311 in Halton or toll-free 1-866- 442-5866):
 - i. A person who, in my opinion as Medical Officer of Health, provides an essential service, for the limited purpose of providing that essential service;
 - ii. A person receiving essential medical services or treatments, whether related to COVID-19 or not; or
 - iii. Where a person's self-isolation, in my opinion as Medical Officer of Health, would not be in the public interest.
7. **Follow any further directions provided to you personally by Halton Region Public Health** and/or other public health staff pertaining to COVID-19 and the terms of this Order. This includes sharing the names and contact information for all contacts and such other information as may be requested by Halton Region Public Health and/or other public health staff to permit appropriate case and contact management for COVID-19.
8. As provided by section 23 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, the terms of this Order apply to all persons under 16 years of age as served upon their parent(s), and any other person(s) who have the responsibilities of a parent, in relation to the person under 16 years of age, who shall ensure compliance with the Order by the person under 16 years of age.

The reasons for this Order are that:

1. COVID-19, a disease caused by a novel coronavirus, is designated as a disease of public health significance and a communicable disease pursuant to Ontario Regulation 135/18 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
2. COVID-19 can cause acute and severe respiratory illness in humans.
3. While most people with COVID-19 will recover on their own, complications from COVID-19 can also include serious conditions like pneumonia, cardiovascular disorders or kidney failure and, in some cases, death. People at high risk of such complications include seniors and people with chronic medical conditions, e.g., diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency and cardiovascular disease.
4. There are no specific treatments for COVID-19 and no vaccine to prevent its transmission.
5. The spread of COVID-19 is of immediate and compelling public health importance in Halton Region:
 - a. On January 23, 2020, Halton Region Public Health initiated its Infectious Disease Emergency Response Plan in response to COVID-19;
 - b. On March 11, 2020, the spread of COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization;
 - c. On March 17, 2020 the spread of COVID-19 was declared an emergency in Ontario pursuant to the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.E.9, as amended, on the basis that COVID-19 constitutes a danger of major proportions; while the Ontario government has since revoked this emergency declaration, emergency orders to address the continued danger presented by the spread of COVID-19 in Ontario remain valid and effective under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*;
 - d. On March 23, 2020, Halton Region declared a State of Emergency in support of Ontario's efforts to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic; Halton Region's Emergency declaration remains in place.
6. As of end of day on October 1, 2020, Ontario's Ministry of Health reports:
 - a. 52,980 cases, including 2,927 deaths, for an overall case fatality rate of about 6%;
 - b. About 10% of cases have ever been hospitalized;
 - c. Of those hospitalized, about 21% have received ICU care.
7. As of end of day on October 1, 2020, Halton Region reports:
 - a. 1,299 cases of COVID-19, including 25 deaths, for an overall case fatality rate of about 2%;
 - b. About 8% of cases have ever been hospitalized;
 - c. Of those hospitalized, about 19% have received ICU care.
8. The number of COVID-19 cases and deaths continues to rise in Halton region and Ontario. Having achieved

a relative flattening of the epidemiologic curve of new COVID-19 infections by late July 2020 when Ontario's declaration of emergency was revoked, Halton Region and Ontario are now experiencing a resurgence of infections that constitutes a second wave of the pandemic.

9. COVID-19 is therefore now present in Halton region and therefore poses a risk to the health of the residents of Halton region.
10. The COVID-19 virus is spread from an infected person to a close contact by direct contact or when respiratory secretions from the infected person enter the eyes, nose or mouth of another person. It is now understood to be easily transmitted between people in close and prolonged contact when they are unprotected by appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment).
11. To contain the spread of COVID-19, individuals experiencing one or more symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or who are infected with COVID-19, as well as their close contacts, are required to isolate themselves from other people and remain in isolation until they are no longer infectious or potentially infectious; self-isolation reduces the risk that these people will spread their infection to others.

I am of the opinion, on reasonable and probable grounds that:

- a. A communicable disease, COVID-19, exists or may exist or there is an immediate risk of an outbreak of this communicable disease in the health unit served by me;
- b. This communicable disease presents a risk to the health of persons in the health unit served by me; and
- c. The requirements specified in this Order are necessary in order to decrease or eliminate the risk to health presented by this communicable disease.

I am also of the opinion that the delivery of notice of this Order to each and every member of the class to whom it is directed is likely to cause a delay that could significantly increase the risk to the health of any person residing in Halton region, so notice shall be provided through the public media and the internet via posting at: www.halton.ca/COVID19.

The following definitions apply to this Order:

"Close contact" means a person who, within the past 14 days, has had a high-risk exposure to a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case. For example, a person who:

- Lived with or otherwise had close, unprotected and prolonged contact, e.g., within 2 metres (6 feet) for more than 15 minutes, with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 during their period of communicability;
 - "Unprotected" means without appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment). A non-medical mask or face-covering is not PPE.

- Have been identified by Halton Region Public Health or another public health unit as a close contact of a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.

If you have questions about whether you are a “close contact”, contact Halton Region Public Health for direction: 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866.

“**Confirmed case**” means a person with a positive laboratory test for COVID-19. For more detail, see the Ministry of Health definition at:

http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_case_definition.pdf.

“**Halton Region Public Health**” means the Medical Officer of Health or Halton Region Public Health staff acting under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health.

“**Other public health staff**” means Public Health Ontario staff and/or such other public health staff as Halton Region Public Health may determine.

“**Probable case**” means:

- A person with symptoms compatible with COVID-19 who has not had a laboratory test for COVID-19, AND:
 - Traveled to an affected area (including inside of Canada) in the 14 days prior to symptom onset; OR
 - Close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19; OR
 - Lived in or worked in a facility known to be experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19, e.g., long-term care, prison; OR
- A person with symptoms compatible with COVID-19 AND in whom laboratory diagnosis of COVID-19 is inconclusive.

For more detail, see the Ministry of Health definition at:

http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_case_definition.pdf.

“**Severe immune compromise**” includes, for example, cancer chemotherapy, untreated HIV infection with CD4 T lymphocyte count <200, combined primary immunodeficiency disorder, taking prednisone >20 mg/day for more than 14 days and taking other immune suppressive medications.

“**Symptoms**” of COVID-19 as listed on the Halton Region website, halton.ca/COVID19.

TAKE NOTICE THAT each member of the class to whom this Order is directed is entitled to a hearing by the Health Services Appeal and Review Board if the member has delivered notice in writing to me (at the address below) and to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board (at 151 Bloor Street West, 9th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1S4) requesting a hearing within 15 days after publication of this Order or otherwise in accordance with applicable law. *In the context of the COVID-19 outbreak:*

- All requests for review, submissions, materials, and inquiries should be sent to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board by e-mail to hsarb@ontario.ca or faxed to the Board at 416-327-8524.
- Instead of mail or courier, you may email your request for review to me at: accesshalton@halton.ca. Should you wish to do so, however, please carefully consider the use of electronic communication for sensitive information. Halton Region will use reasonable means to protect your information but, due to the inherent risks of electronic communication, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT although a hearing may be requested this Order takes effect when it is delivered to a member of the class or brought to the attention of a member of the class.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER may result in further legal action being taken against you under sections 36(2), 35, 102 and other relevant provisions of the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER is an offence under sections 100 and 101 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act for which you may be liable, on conviction, to a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 (for a person) or \$25,000 (for a corporation) for every day or part of each day on which the offence occurs or continues.

If you have any questions about this Order, please contact Halton Region Public Health by telephone at 311 (in Halton) or toll-free 1-866-442-5866, or by e-mail to accesshalton@halton.ca.



Hamidah Meghani, MD, MPH, MM, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health
Halton Region Public Health
The Regional Municipality of Halton
1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, Ontario
L6M 3L1

This Order shall be posted at: www.halton.ca/COVID19

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

How to Self-Isolate

You must isolate yourself from others if you have COVID-19 symptoms or may have been exposed to COVID-19. If you start to feel worse, contact your health care provider or Telehealth (1-866-797-0000).

Stay home

- Do not go to work, school or other public places.
- Stay home unless you need to get tested or require emergency medical care.
- Do not use public transportation, taxis or rideshares.



Avoid contact with others

- No visitors unless essential (e.g. care providers)
- Stay away from seniors and people with chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency).
- As much as possible, stay in a separate room away from other people in your home and use a separate bathroom if you have one.
- Make sure that shared rooms have good airflow (e.g. open windows).
- If these steps are not possible, keep a distance of at least 2 metres from others at all times.



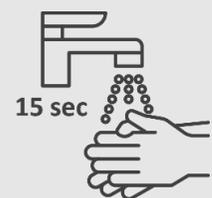
Keep your distance

- If you are in a room with other people, keep a distance of at least 2 metres and wear a mask or face covering that covers your nose and mouth.
- People should wear a mask when they are in the same room as you.



Wash your hands

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Dry your hands with a paper towel or with cloth towel that no one else will share.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.



Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand.
- Throw used tissues in a lined wastebasket, and wash your hands.
- Lining the wastebasket with a plastic bag makes waste disposal safer.
- Clean your hands after emptying the wastebasket.



Wear a mask over your nose and mouth

- Wear a mask if you must leave your house to see a health care provider or to get tested for COVID-19.
- Wear a mask when you are within 2 metres of other people, or stay in a separate room.
- If you do not have a mask, maintain 2 metres distance from people and cover your cough and sneezes. See [physical distancing](#).



What should I do if I develop symptoms?

- Complete the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#).
- Contact Telehealth (1-866-797-0000) or your health care provider if you have questions.
- Anyone with whom you had close physical contact (e.g., in your household) in the two days before your symptoms started or after symptoms started should also self-isolate. If you have questions about this, follow the advice of your [local public health unit](#).
- Your local public health unit or testing provider will tell you how long you need to self-isolate based on your test results and situation.
- When you stop isolating, you should continue with physical distancing measures and wear a mask when unable to maintain 2 metres distance from people outside your household.
- If you are still unwell at the end of your self-isolation period, contact Telehealth or your health care provider.

Learn about the virus

To learn more and access up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the Ontario Ministry of Health's website at ontario.ca/coronavirus.

For more information please contact: _____

The information in this document is current as of October 28, 2020