

COVID-19 Public Health Guidance: Retail Businesses

Updated September 17, 2021

This document outlines guidance for retail businesses 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.

Provincial Roadmap to Reopen at a glance

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.

Below are some of the activities that may apply to retail businesses. For specific questions about COVID-19 provincial regulations, please contact the **Stop the Spread Business Information Line** at 1-888-444-3659.

Step 3

- Essential and non-essential retail open with capacity limited to permit physical distancing of 2 metres
- Shopping malls open, with restrictions
- Patrons in line ups outside of businesses required to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres, but are not required to wear a mask or face covering if the line is outdoors (Halton's mask by-law will continue to apply to enclosed public places)

Instructions for shopping malls and retail business from Halton Region's Medical Officer of Health

On September 7th, Halton's Medical Officer of Health released amended instructions for all businesses and organizations. The previously issued [Instructions specific to owners/operators of shopping malls and retail stores](#) were rescinded effective September 10, 2021.

Ontario's enhanced COVID-19 vaccine certificate

Starting September 22, 2021, the provincial government will require certain businesses and settings to obtain proof of vaccination from customers/patrons. For more information refer to the [Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations](#).

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

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](#).

Maximize physical distancing

- Encourage people to maintain physical distance by using [signage](#), tape or floor markings.
- Limit the number of people inside the premises at one time to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.

Wear a mask and use personal protective equipment (PPE)

- [Consolidated By-law 47-20](#) requires individuals to wear a mask in indoor workplaces and public spaces, unless exempt.
- Workers are recommended to wear a mask when they cannot maintain physical distance of 2 metres (six feet) and cannot be separated by Plexiglass or a barrier.
- PPE (surgical/procedure mask and eye protection i.e. goggles or face shield) is required to be worn by workers when a distance of 2 metres (six feet) cannot be maintained from another person not wearing a mask indoors and cannot be separated by Plexiglass or a barrier.
- Masks can be removed when eating or drinking, but individuals must maintain physical distancing of two metres (six feet) between them.
- 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

- Post [signage](#) to encourage people to wash hands frequently for at least 15 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based (60-90% alcohol) hand rub. Washing with soap and water is preferred, if hands are visibly dirty.
- Ensure frequent [cleaning and disinfecting](#) of high-touch surfaces and common areas.

Additional Resources

- Halton Region Public Health:
 - [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance: Restaurants, Bars, Food Trucks and other Food and Drink Establishments](#)
 - Poster: [Protect Yourself and Others](#)
 - [Mental Health Resources and Supports](#)
- Government of Ontario
 - [COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan Guidance](#)
- Workplace Safety & Prevention Services
 - [Psychological Safety Resources for Leaders During COVID-19](#)