COVID-19: How to self-isolate in congregate living settings

You must isolate yourself from others if:

- You have COVID-19, OR
- You have COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat, difficulty breathing, muscle aches, tiredness), OR
- You may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Follow these instructions when isolating:

Stay inside

- Do not go outside.
- If you need to smoke outside, keep at least two metres/six feet between yourself and others, and do not share your cigarette or drug-use equipment with others.
- Do not use public transportation, taxis or ride-shares.

Avoid contact with others

- Do not hang out with others in-person (e.g. connect with others by phone).
- Stay away from seniors and people with chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency).
- Stay separate from others and use a separate bathroom if you are able to.
- If you have to be in contact with others, practise physical distancing and keep at least two metres/six feet between yourself and the other person.
- Open windows if you are sharing a room to allow for good airflow.

Avoid sharing items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with others.
- After use, these items should be washed with soap or detergent in warm water. No special soap is needed.
- Dishwasher and washing machines can be used.
- Do not share your cigarettes or drug-use equipment with others.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in a wastebasket lined with a plastic bag, and clean your hands.
- Clean your hands after emptying the wastebasket.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand.

Clean your hands

- Clean your hands often with soap and water and lather for at least 15 seconds.
- Dry your hands with a paper towel, or with your own cloth towel that no one else shares.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if your hands are not visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unclean hands.

Wear a mask over your nose and mouth

- Wear a mask if you must leave your residence to see a health care provider.
- Wear a mask if you are within two metres/six feet of other people, or stay in a separate room.
Ensure your mask completely covers your nose and mouth, and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
If a medical mask is not available, a non-medical mask or facial covering (e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana, scarf) can be worn.
If you do not have a mask, maintain at least two metres/six feet from people, and cover your cough/sneeze.
If you cannot wear a mask, people should wear a mask when they are in the same room as you.

Monitor your symptoms
- If you develop symptoms or your symptoms are worsening, and you are concerned, let your shelter provider or your health care provider know.
- If you need urgent medical attention, let your shelter provider know or contact 911.

Travel to/from the hospital or health care provider’s office
- Do not use public transportation.
- Let your shelter provider know to help arrange transportation for you.

Testing
- The health care system is prioritizing testing for those most in need.
- If you were tested for COVID-19, please visit covid-19.ontario.ca and click on "check your lab results."
  - Results can take up to four days.
  - Toronto residents who have issues getting their test results, or who do not have internet access, may contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.

Inform your contacts if you have symptoms of COVID-19
- Please inform anyone you had close contact with to isolate for 14 days from the last day they had contact with you.
- This applies to anyone you had close contact with up to 48 hours before you were sick and while you were sick.

When to end self-isolation
- If you had symptoms:
  - Isolate for 14 days beginning when your symptoms started.
  - After 14 days, you can stop isolating if you no longer have a fever and your symptoms have improved, but you should continue with physical distancing measures. If you are still unwell at 14 days, contact the shelter provider or your health care provider.
- If you did not have COVID-19 symptoms but were tested:
  - Follow the advice of public health.
- If you had contact with someone with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms:
  - Isolate for 14 days after your last contact with that person.

More information
- For more information, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.