

COVID-19 CLASS ORDER FOR SELF-ISOLATION

What is the COVID-19 Class Order for Self-Isolation?

The "class order" directs people covered under the order to stay home and self-isolate until they are not contagious. The purpose is to reduce the spread of COVID-19, and protect the health of everyone in Toronto.

Can Toronto Public Health issue a class order, and how long will it be in effect?

The provincial *Health Protection and Promotion Act* allows the Medical Officer of Health to issue a "class order." The [order](#) was first issued on April 1, 2020, and most recently amended on September 30. The order is in effect until the Medical Officer of Health declares it is no longer needed.

Who does the class order apply to?

The class order is directed to:

- People with [symptoms of COVID-19](#).
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19.
- People in recent close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19. This includes caregivers and household members, and other people who may be identified by Toronto Public Health.
- People who are otherwise instructed by Toronto Public Health to self-isolate.

Parents/guardians of persons under 16 years of age who are in any of these categories are responsible for ensuring that the person under 16 years of age follows the requirements of the class order.

How long must people self-isolate for?

Self-isolation requirements were updated on September 30 to include new Toronto Public Health guidelines.

- People who have mild or moderate illness must isolate for 10 days beginning on the day after their symptoms start, or 10 days beginning on the day after they receive a positive test if they do not have symptoms.
- People who have severe illness (requiring ICU-level support) or who are severely immunocompromised must isolate for 20 days beginning on the day after their symptoms start.
- People who are close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 must isolate for a minimum of 10 days after their last contact with that individual beginning on the day after their last contact.

Can some people be exempted from the class order?

Some essential service workers, who are close contacts with no symptoms may be permitted to work. However, they must self-isolate at home when they are not working or travelling to/from work. Exceptions may also be made in other situations, for example for people leaving domestic violence. Toronto Public Health will review exceptions for each situation and determine whether or not to make an exception.

Do people have to self-isolate if they are fully vaccinated?

People are fully vaccinated if at least 14 days have passed since they have received:

- A full series of doses of COVID-19 vaccines authorized by Health Canada in any combination,
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada with one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, as is satisfactory to Toronto Public Health, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, as is satisfactory to Toronto Public Health.

Fully vaccinated people with symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested and self-isolate while awaiting test results. If they test negative, they are able to come out of self-isolation once their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours and they have no fever without taking fever-reducing medication; if they have had any gastro-intestinal symptoms (for example, nausea, upset stomach, diarrhea), these symptoms must be improving for 48 hours before coming out of self-isolation.

Fully vaccinated people who test positive should self-isolate for 10 days beginning on the day after symptom onset, or 10 days beginning on the day after receiving a positive test if they do not have symptoms, unless directed otherwise by Toronto Public Health.

Fully vaccinated people who were close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 may be exempted from isolation if, in addition to being fully vaccinated, they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are asymptomatic (do not have any symptoms)
- Do not have a weak immune system (for example, have not received an organ or stem cell transplant, or are not undergoing chemotherapy or immunosuppressive therapies)
- Are not a resident of a long-term care or retirement home or a patient admitted to a health care setting

Even if they are exempted from self-isolation, fully vaccinated close contacts:

- Should get tested as soon as possible and on or after 7 days from last exposure
- Must follow public health measures, such as masking and physical distancing where required
- Must avoid non-essential visits to settings with vulnerable populations or where there is a large number of unvaccinated people (for example, volunteering or visiting a long-term care home, shelter, school or child care setting) for 10 days after last exposure
- Are encouraged to report their exposure to their employer and follow any restrictions required by their manager and/or Occupational Health Department, in accordance with the [Ministry of Health interim guidance of September 14, 2021](#)

Do people have to isolate if they have had a recent COVID-19 infection?

People with a recent COVID-19 infection are those who had a positive test for COVID-19 in the previous 90 days and have been cleared from their previous infection.

People with a recent COVID-19 infection and who now have new symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested and must self-isolate while awaiting test results. If they test negative, they are able to come out of self-isolation once their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours and they have no fever without taking fever-reducing medication; if they have had any gastro-intestinal symptoms (for example, nausea, upset stomach, diarrhea), these symptoms must be improving for 48 hours before coming out of self-isolation.

People with a recent COVID-19 infection who test positive should self-isolate for 10 days beginning on the day after symptom onset, or 10 days beginning on the day after receiving a positive test if they do not have symptoms, unless directed otherwise by Toronto Public Health.

People with a recent COVID-19 infection and who were close contacts of an individual with COVID-19 may be exempted from isolation if, in addition, they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are asymptomatic (do not have any symptoms)
- Do not have a weak immune system (for example, have not received an organ or stem cell transplant, or are not undergoing chemotherapy or immunosuppressive therapies)
- Are not a resident of a long-term care or retirement home or a patient admitted to a health care setting

Even if they are exempted from self-isolation, recently positive close contacts:

- Must follow public health measures, such as masking and physical distancing where required

- Must avoid non-essential visits to settings with vulnerable populations or where there is a large number of unvaccinated people (for example, volunteering or visiting a long-term care home, shelter, school or child care setting) for 10 days after last exposure.
- Are encouraged to report their exposure to their employer and follow any restrictions required by their manager and/or Occupational Health Department, in accordance with the [Ministry of Health interim guidance of September 14, 2021](#)

How does self-isolation work?

Self-isolation means staying at home or in an isolation facility. Do not go outside or have visitors. Avoid close contact with others. It also means keeping as much distance as possible from other people living at home. Use a separate bathroom and bedroom, if possible. When sharing rooms, open windows for good airflow. Shop online or have someone pick up supplies. Please call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 for advice if groceries, prescriptions or other services are needed. See [how to self-isolate](#).

People who do not have housing which permits them to isolate away from others, who are experiencing homelessness, or who feel unsafe at home can be provided temporary shelter. Please call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 to discuss eligibility.

Can people attend medical appointments while they self-isolate?

People can still go for essential medical appointments when they are in self-isolation. Contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 for instructions before going to a medical clinic or hospital.

Vaccination appointments should be postponed until after self-isolation is completed.

What happens if people do not self-isolate?

People who do not comply with the class order can be charged and fined up to \$5,000 per day if convicted. Police may be called to assist.

Why do people have to provide contact names and other information to Toronto Public Health? How is their privacy protected?

On request, people who are covered by the class order must provide Toronto Public Health with the names and contact information (telephone numbers, addresses, email addresses) for anyone they were in close contact with during dates and times specified by Toronto Public Health. This information will only be used for contact tracing.

Providing this information is crucial. It enables Toronto Public Health to act to prevent disease transmission to others. Our shared ability to keep schools, businesses and other important community activities open in Toronto and across Ontario depends on Toronto Public Health's ability to do this important work.

Toronto Public Health understands that people will have concerns about their privacy. All information collected by Toronto Public Health is protected by Ontario's privacy legislation for health information, the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*.

Can people legally challenge the class order?

The people the class order applies to can challenge it by appealing to the [Health Services Appeal and Review Board](#).

What do people need to know about the federal order under the *Quarantine Act*?

The federal quarantine order applies to all travellers entering Canada, effective March 25, 2020. It requires all travellers to self-quarantine for 14 days, with some exceptions for fully vaccinated travellers. See the [Government of Canada's information for travellers](#).

In some cases, people who must quarantine under the federal order may also be subject to the class order (for example, people who are diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also recently returned from travel).

More Information

For a health assessment, call a doctor's office or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000. For more information about the class order, call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.