COVID-19 Guidance for Outdoor Playgrounds and Fitness Equipment

Owners and operators of outdoor playground and fitness equipment need to implement infection prevention and control measures to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission for users. See Provincial Orders O. Reg. 82/20 for more information.

Measures for all Workplaces, Businesses and Organizations

Review the Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace to plan and implement protocols to keep staff and clients safe, including:

- Staff attendance and operations
- Health screening
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Managing COVID-19 in the workplace

Masks/Face Coverings for Staff and Participants

The use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all indoor public spaces under a City of Toronto bylaw and O. Reg. 82/20.

- Organizations with indoor spaces that are open to the public must develop a policy on the wearing of masks. Refer to the guidance on mask and face covering bylaw for a sample policy.
- Operators must ensure that any person in the indoor area of the facility (e.g., washroom), or in a vehicle that is operating as part of the business or organization, wears a mask in a manner that covers their nose, mouth and chin.
- Masks are strongly recommended outdoors when physical distancing is difficult.
- Not all clients or customers are able to tolerate a mask and may be exempted. For example, masks should not be used by children under age two, and anyone who has trouble breathing.
- Train staff on these new requirements, including who is exempt and the proper use of a cloth mask or face covering.

Outdoor Playground and Fitness Equipment

- Prior to opening, inspect all equipment to verify its safety.
- Outdoor equipment does not need to be sanitized.
- Adopt strategies to encourage participants to maintain at least two metre/six foot physical distancing as much as possible. Discourage group gatherings.
- Participants may bring and take home their own toys or sports equipment. These personal items should be washed with hot soapy water when you return home.
Signage
Post signs in visible locations to remind everyone to practice public health measures. Signs can include:

- Posters to [self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms](https://example.com), and to go home if they have symptoms.
- Notice that the playground and fitness equipment are not sanitized.
- Current gathering restrictions and reminder to avoid close contact with people you don’t live with.
- [Physical distancing posters](https://example.com), ground markers, or other cues to stay two metres/six feet apart at all times, including while waiting to use equipment.
- [Hand hygiene posters](https://example.com) to encourage participants to practice good hand hygiene.
- Signs are available in [multiple languages](https://example.com).

Modify Layouts

- Move benches, toys, and equipment to ensure they are at least two metres/six feet apart, where possible.
- Remove picnic tables from playground areas to avoid people congregating.

Drinking Fountains

- Water fountains may remain open. Clean and disinfect at least twice daily.
- Ensure all water systems are safe to use, if there was prolonged shutdown.
- Where possible, switch drinking water fountains to touchless or foot pedal operated.

Garbage Bins

- Install hands-free garbage bins near the playground.
- Garbage bins have removable linings, and are changed frequently to prevent overflow.

Washrooms

- Clean and disinfect washrooms at least twice daily.
- High-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars, railings, door handles, bathroom surfaces should be cleaned more often.
- Ensure supplies of liquid soap and paper towels are routinely stocked.
- Where possible, open windows to allow for air flow and ventilation.
Playgrounds used by Child Care Centres

- General routine cleaning is acceptable.
- Most outdoor playgrounds do not need to be sanitized. However, child care centres that have private playgrounds may consider routine cleaning of outdoor play structures and equipment. Follow the specific guidance for child care centres.

Protective Measures for Participants Using Playgrounds

- Teach children how to properly wash their hands, avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, and to cover their cough.
- Stay home if you or your child is sick.
- Bring your own hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration), disinfecting wipes, bottled water, sun screen and personal items.
- Keep at least two metres/six feet from people you don’t live with, when possible.
- Wear a mask or face covering in indoor public spaces, and when it is difficult to maintain physical distancing outdoors. Do not apply a mask on children under the age of two.
- Wash hands before and after using the playground.
- If the playground is busy, find another park or go back later.
- Download the COVID Alert app so you can be notified directly if you or your family have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.

More Information

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