

Purpose

This protocol outlines how staff in homelessness service settings should support families with children navigating COVID-19 testing, isolation and recovery.

Referral for COVID-19 Testing

All clients in homelessness service settings should be screened daily for symptoms of COVID-19 using the [COVID-19 Client Screening Tool](#).

- If a family member screens "yes" on the screening tool (i.e. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or has had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19), all members of the family unit should be referred for testing.
- Symptomatic minor dependent child(ren) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the Toronto Region COVID-19 Assessment Centre for testing, whether or not the parent/guardian requires testing.
- Babysitting and childminding policies are not to be used in cases where parent/guardian is being referred to Toronto Region COVID-19 Assessment Centre for testing.

Self-Isolation while Awaiting Test Results

- Medical staff at the COVID-19 Assessment Centre will help to identify the safest location for isolation, and will make a [referral to the Recovery Program](#), referring shelter or another isolation program.
- Families who are isolating on site at a shelter site (i.e. in a self-contained room) should follow the [How to isolate in congregate living settings fact sheet](#).

Test Results

Toronto Public Health will contact individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and provide direction on next steps. Toronto Public Health will also contact individuals who have been identified as a close contacts to provide direction on next steps which can include testing and/or self-isolation.

- Child(ren) should stay with their parent/guardian.
- If the parent/guardian is too ill to care for their child(ren) while in recovery, the parent/guardian should arrange for a family member(s) or other adult aged 18+ who is able to care for the child(ren). Toronto Public Health should be consulted for guidance on isolation requirements if the child(ren) are identified as close contacts.
- If there are no family member(s) and/or friends(s) who may be able to care for the child(ren), staff can connect with the appropriate Children's Aid Society to identify supports and resources to support the family while the parent recovers.

Medical Emergency

In the case of a medical emergency where 911 has been called and the parent/guardian is too ill to make arrangements for their child(ren), the sites current medical emergency processes should be followed.

Issues/Support

Shift Leads should contact the SSHA Duty Office at SSHADutyOffice@toronto.ca if there are any concerns or questions.