

Effective Monday, October 19 at 12:01 a.m., Ontario government is implementing targeted public health measures in York Region to help stop the spread of COVID-19, including prohibiting personal care services where face coverings must be removed for the service (e.g., make up application, beard trimming).

PERSONAL SERVICE SETTINGS: COVID-19 Q & A'S

Personal Service Setting Opening Requirements

As a Personal Service Settings (PSS) operator, do I need to contact Public Health prior to re-opening?

If your Personal Service Setting (PSS) has been **previously** inspected by York Region Public Health, you do not need to notify or be re-inspected prior to re-opening. However, if your PSS has previously never been inspected or if you will be providing new services, you must notify [York Region Public Health](#) with your intention to open/provide new services **14 days prior to** commencing the operation.

Can I open my home-based PSS?

Yes. Home-based premises providing personal care services can re-open with the proper [COVID-19 health and safety protocols in place](#), including all relevant [legislation](#) and [guidance](#). Home-based PSS are inspected by York Region Public Health. If your premises have previously never been inspected, you must set up an appointment with the [Public Health Inspector](#) **14 days prior to** commencing the operation. It is also your responsibility to contact your local by-law/licencing department to ensure compliance with proper guidelines and the PSS regulation.

Are PSS in long-term care homes (LTCH) and/or retirement homes (RH) allowed to reopen?

Yes. PSS in LTCHs/RHs can re-open, with the consent of the LTCH or RH and with the [proper COVID-19 health and safety protocols in place](#), including all relevant [legislation](#) and [guidance](#). PSS in LTCH/RHs cannot offer services if the home is in outbreak status (either suspect or confirmed).

Where can I find information on (PSS) regulations for operating in Ontario?

Personal service settings must comply with the [Personal Service Setting Regulation](#) (O. Reg. 136/18) from the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) and any other directives or [guidance](#) published by the Ministry of Health. In the event of any conflict between the [Personal Service Setting Regulation](#) document and any applicable emergency order or directives issued by the Minister of Health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), the emergency order or directive prevails.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-800-361-5653
york.ca/covid19

The logo for York Region, featuring a stylized white bird or wing icon above the text "York Region" in a white serif font, all set against a purple background with a white swoosh.

York Region

Services

Am I allowed to offer eyebrow waxing, threading, or micro-pigmentation?

Yes. Ensure customers are wearing face coverings when eyebrow waxing, threading and micro-pigmentation are offered. Effective October 19, 2020, personal service settings are not permitted to offer services where face coverings must be removed for the service (e.g., waxing/threading of the lip, make-up application, beard trimming, etc.) are not permitted at this time. **Oxygen facials are also not permitted** until further notice.

I am a regulated health professional; can I provide facial services such as injectables on my clients?

Yes. Regulated health professionals that provide facial services within their scope of practice (such as injectables) to their clients may continue to do so, ensuring proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is worn. Regulated Health Professionals should refer to [COVID-19 Operational Requirements: Health Sector Restart](#), as well as their respective regulating bodies for additional operating guidance.

I am the owner of a sensory deprivation (float) tank premises; can I open for business in modified Stage 2?

No. Unfortunately, sensory deprivation/float tanks, baths and hot tubs must be closed, unless they are used for a therapeutic purpose prescribed by, or administered by, a regulated health professional.

Am I allowed to offer massages?

Yes, massages are permitted. Ensure customers are wearing face coverings when face massages are offered.

Are saunas allowed to open for business?

No; steam rooms, saunas, whirlpools, oxygen bars and bath houses must remain closed until further notice. This is a requirement under modified Stage 2 and Stage 3.

Screening

Do I need to screen clients and staff for COVID-19?

Yes. All clients and staff should be actively [screened](#) for COVID-19 prior to entry into the premises. Clients should be screened when booking their appointment and upon arrival for their appointment to ensure nothing has changed. Staff should also be screened prior to starting each shift. Refer to the [Ministry of Health](#) website for guidance on screening procedures. Temperature taking is not necessary as part of the screening process; however, if a thermometer is used, it should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Do I need to record each client's contact information?

Yes, under [Ontario Regulation 136/18: Personal Service Settings](#), you are required to collect client contact information (e.g., client's full name, contact information, date, service received and name of staff providing the service) for each person receiving a personal service in your setting. This information is critical should a COVID-19 exposure happen at your setting and there is a need for contact tracing. Refer to York Region's Personal Service Settings [Client Record Template](#).

Can a child be accompanied by an adult for services?

Yes, a child may be accompanied by an adult if the appointment is for the child. However, children should not accompany a parent/guardian to the adult's appointment. All individuals, including a parent/guardian accompanying a child, are to be [screened](#) for COVID-19 prior to entry.

Masking

Do my clients have to wear a face mask or covering?

Yes, [face masks or coverings](#) are required inside all enclosed public spaces in Ontario. That means that clients must wear a [face mask or covering](#) for the duration of their appointment. For clients who cannot tolerate a face mask or covering, the appointment should be made at the end of the day when there are no other clients on-site. Clients should be reminded they must wear a face mask or covering when booking their appointment. Face masks or coverings are not required for children under the age of two. For more information about mandatory use of face masks and coverings, in enclosed public spaces refer to [York Region](#) website.

Do my staff have to wear a mask?

Yes, all staff who are **providing personal services** must wear a **medical mask** and any other appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g., eye protection) while providing services and for the entire duration of their shift. Staff should receive instructions on proper mask use and how to properly [put on and take off a mask](#).

Do staff need to wear a mask while they are on break?

No, staff do not have to wear a mask while they are on break provided they are in an area of the premises that is **not designated for public access** (e.g., private staff room). Staff are reminded to maintain a physical distance of 2-metres in these areas in addition to practicing hand hygiene (washing hands or using hand sanitizer) and respiratory etiquette.

Are staff who do not provide services (e.g., receptionists or cleaners) required to wear a face mask or covering?

Yes, [face masks or coverings](#) are required inside all enclosed public spaces in York Region. That means that staff who are not providing services to clients must also wear a [face mask or covering](#) for the duration of their shift. Note that if the premises is closed to the general public and staff can maintain a physical distance of 2-metres, face masks or coverings may be temporarily removed.

Where can I get information about the mandatory mask policy for businesses?

Effective October 2, 2020, the provincial government implemented new restrictions to help prevent and stop the spread of COVID-19. This includes mandating the use of face coverings in all public indoor settings across the province, including businesses, facilities and workplaces, with limited exemptions including corrections and developmental services. Customers, employees and visitors who enter enclosed public spaces must wear a face mask or covering. Visit york.ca/mandatorymasks for more details.

Am I required to supply face masks or coverings to my clients?

No. It is up to you if you would like to provide clients with face masks / coverings (for free or for purchase) or ask that clients bring their own. If homemade masks are made available for purchase, they are not to be laundered and reused by the personal service setting.

What should I do if a client claims they cannot tolerate wearing a face mask or covering?

If client cannot tolerate wearing a face mask or covering, schedule their appointment at the end of the day when there are no other customers on-site. Staff providing the service must wear eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield) in addition to the medical mask to reduce the likelihood of any COVID-19 transmission.

Physical Distancing

What are the criteria for measuring physical distancing?

It is up to you, the owner/operator of the PSS, to determine the capacity of your premises based on the ability for clients and staff to remain at least 2-metres apart while ensuring ease of traffic movement. Each premises will be unique based many variables such as configuration of space, workstations, equipment etc.

What strategies can I use at my PSS to achieve physical distancing?

- Rearrange your furniture / workstations
- Make some workstations inaccessible or designate they are not to be used
- Use physical barriers
- Provide visual cues (e.g., tape on the floor, [sign](#)) inside or outside for waiting clients
- Limit the number of people who may be in the business at any one time
- Instruct customers to call when they arrive and wait outside until you have cleaned and prepared their workstation
- Ask employees to remind customers to stay 2-metres, when appropriate
- Direct customers to leave the premise immediately after they have received and paid for their services
- Remind customers they should not congregate in the PSS
- Remind staff they should not congregate in private staff areas. Stagger breaks to ensure physical distancing is maintained and to prevent employees from congregating

What can I do if physical distancing is a challenge?

In areas where physical distancing may be a difficult (e.g., between workstations and/or at the checkout) you can install plexiglass or other physical barriers.

Are barriers required to be in place in between stations (e.g., hair dressing chairs)?

No, barriers are not a requirement but can be helpful. Workstations should be arranged to maintain a minimum distance of 2-metres between client service areas; however, where workstations cannot be rearranged or other areas where there is close contact between staff and clients (e.g., checkout), a physical barrier is recommended. Barriers must be cleaned and disinfected between appointments.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Should I ask clients to perform hand hygiene upon entering the PSS?

Yes, it is recommended that everyone perform hand hygiene ([alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#)) when entering or exiting the PSS. Remind clients and staff that hand hygiene is also performed if they touch a mask, after toileting, before/after handling food, eating, etc.

I have purchased bottles of hand sanitizer which have 62% alcohol content; is it sufficient to kill germs?

Yes, it is recommended that you use hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol concentration and is authorized for sale by [Health Canada](#).

The active ingredient listed my hand sanitizer is “benzalkonium chloride”; is this product effective to kill COVID-19?

Yes. While the majority of hand sanitizers are alcohol-based (i.e., formulations of isopropyl alcohol, ethyl alcohol or n-propanol), some other active ingredients approved by Health Canada to kill COVID-19 include, benzalkonium chloride, benzethonium chloride, chlorhexidine gluconate, chloroxylenol, and iodine. Check [Health Canada's](#) website to verify if the hand sanitizer you have is approved for use.

I have placed a bottle of hand sanitizer at the reception desk and also in the washroom. Where else should I have a supply of hand sanitizer?

It is important to place a supply of hand sanitizer near and around high touch surfaces and communal areas such as entrances, exits, transaction counters, workstations, restrooms, service rooms and staff break room.

Implementing all these COVID-19 precautions is costing me a lot of money; can I make my own hand sanitizer?

[Health Canada](#) is warning Canadians not to use homemade hand sanitizers to limit the spread of COVID-19 as there are many health risks (e.g., skin irritation, increased skin sensitivity) associated with

such products. Furthermore, the concentration of alcohol in these on-line recipes may not be high enough to kill the COVID-19 virus.

What's the big deal about respiratory etiquette?

When you cough or sneeze, you spread droplets in the air that can carry COVID-19. When you practice respiratory etiquette, e.g., coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue (followed by washing your hands) this limits the spread droplets to others nearby. Refer to York Region's poster for more information about [respiratory etiquette](#). As an operator of a business, ensure you have hot and cold running water, liquid soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer throughout the premises and facial tissue for use by clients and staff; clean and disinfect high touch surfaces frequently.

Personal Protective Equipment

What is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is special equipment worn by staff to prevent the transmission of diseases and to protect staff and customers while attending appointments at your premises. PPE can include gloves, gowns, masks and eye protection. Single-use PPE (e.g., masks, gloves, gowns) is used once and must be immediately discarded into a lined garbage bin.

Do I need to supply PPE to my staff?

Yes, you must ensure appropriate PPE is supplied to your staff and ensure your staff is trained in the proper use of PPE required during their shift and while providing personal services.

When should I use PPE in my PSS?

Conduct a point-of-care risk assessment before any client interaction to determine necessary PPE. Some risk considerations include:

- Whether you can maintain a physical distance (2-metres) from your client
- Whether your client can wear a face mask or covering for the duration of the appointment
- The possibility of contact with blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, non-intact skin and/or contaminated items or equipment
- Whether the service you are performing may present a potential to aerosolize particles

Refer to York Region's [PSS Reopening Guidance](#) document under **Quick Reference Guide for Personal Service** (chart) for examples of PPE use.

What does donning and doffing of PPE mean?

Donning and doffing is the practice of putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) PPE. It is important to follow the correct sequence for donning and doffing PPE, as it will protect you and your staff from being exposed to infectious agents such as COVID-19. Refer to York Region's PPE Donning and Doffing [poster](#).

What should I know about medical masks?

Medical masks are used to prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses that can come from your mouth (in the form of tiny droplets) when you talk, cough or sneeze. Wearing a medical mask protects the people around you from your germs. Wearing a medical mask also protects your nose and mouth from splashes or sprays of body fluids. Refer to [Health Canada's](#) website to make sure your medical mask is approved for use.

When using medical masks, always:

- Clean your hands before putting it on and taking it off the medical mask
- Change your mask when it becomes damp or soiled
- Make sure masks fits securely over the nose and mouth. Do not allow the mask to hang or dangle around the neck
- Throw away single-use medical masks after use, they are not for reuse

What should I know about gloves?

Gloves are worn to protect hands from becoming heavily soiled. Single-use disposable gloves are task-specific and are not meant to be washed or reused. Gloves must be changed between tasks or when they are ripped, or visibly soiled. Perform hand hygiene before putting on and after removing gloves. Latex-free gloves (e.g., vinyl, nitrile) should be worn by workers with a latex allergy or if providing service to clients with latex allergy.

What should I know about eye protection (e.g., goggles/face shield)?

Eye protection must be worn to protect the mucous membranes of the eyes when there is a chance of generating splashes or sprays of body fluids. For appointments where the customer cannot tolerate wearing a mask the personal service operator must wear eye protection and these appointments must be scheduled at the end of the day and when there are no other customers present on-site. Eye protection that is disposable is to be discarded after each use. Reusable eye protection must be cleaned and disinfected after each customer and stored in a manner that prevents cross contamination. Reusable eye protection should be labelled and dedicated to one staff member.

What should I know about gowns?

Long sleeve gowns must be worn by employees to protect uncovered skin and prevent the soiling of clothing during activities likely to generate splashes or sprays of body fluids. If gowns are single-use they must be discarded after each use. Wash hands after removing a gown. If gowns are reusable they can be laundered after each use to ensure they are maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.

Change Rooms

Can clients use the change rooms?

No; all locker rooms, change rooms, and showers must be closed, except to the extent they provide access to equipment storage, a washroom or a portion of the business that is used to provide first aid.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Is low-level disinfectant (LLD) sufficient to clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces?

Yes, LLD is sufficient. Disinfectants should have a [Drug Identification Number \(DIN\)](#) or [Natural Product Number \(NPN\)](#). High-touch surfaces should be disinfected twice daily and when visibly soiled. PSS must follow cleaning and disinfection requirements as set out in the [PSS Regulation \(O. Reg. 136/18\)](#).

How often should I be cleaning and disinfecting?

Work surfaces (e.g., chairs, tables, counters) and multi-use tools (e.g., scissors, clippers, re-usable nail files, etc.), must be cleaned and disinfected before store opening and after each use. Ensure increased cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, light switches, debit machines, counters) before store opening and as required.

Laundry

Is it safe to use absorbent towels for personal services and for drying hands?

Yes, a clean towel can be used for services and hand drying. Ensure towels are laundered after each use using the warmest possible washer setting and dried thoroughly. Store clean towels in a manner that prevents contamination (e.g., separate from dirty linens).

I have an outside company launder my towels and coverings. Is there anything the delivery person should do when they arrive for the pick up?

If a laundry service is used, ensure they are familiar with and follow the COVID-19 policies and procedures that are in place at your premises; e.g., do not enter if unwell, call upon arrival, do a COVID-19 screening and clean hands upon entry, wear a mask, maintain physical distancing between staff and clients, etc.

Food and Beverage

Can I provide food or beverages to my clients?

No, food and/or beverages should not be supplied to clients at this time, unless in extraordinary circumstances (e.g., tattooing on a client who feels faint). Clients should not bring outside food or beverages into the PSS unless required for a medical condition.

Walk-in Appointments

Are walk-in appointment permitted?

Try to only take customers by appointment and have clients book online or by phone, restricting walk-ins. Walk-in clients should be asked to call from outside the premises to make an appointment and should be screened as per screening guidance. This may be accomplished by signage on the door and/or online on the business webpage.

Hairdressing and Barbering

Do clients have to wear a face mask or covering while having their hair cut? This is especially difficult for short haircuts.

Yes, face masks or coverings are required inside all enclosed public spaces in York Region. That means that clients must wear a face mask or covering for the duration of their appointment. It is recommended that hairdressers or barbers work carefully around the face mask or covering. If the hairdresser/barber needs to manipulate the mask/face covering (i.e., lift or move the straps), the operator/service provider must perform hand hygiene before and immediately afterwards; care is taken not to manipulate the front of the mask. For clients who cannot tolerate a face mask or covering, the appointment should be made at the end of the day when there are no other clients on-site. Clients should be reminded they must wear a face mask or covering when booking their appointment. Face masks or coverings are not required for children under the age of two. For more information about mandatory use of face masks and coverings, in enclosed public spaces refer to [York Region](#) website.

Could I offer shaving or beard trimming service at my barber shop?

Any personal care services where the client's face coverings must be removed for the service are not permitted at this time. Shaving and beard trimming must not be offered at this time.

Am I allowed to shampoo hair?

Yes, shampooing is allowed. Ensure staff is wearing a medical mask and the client is wearing a face mask or covering.

Am I allowed to use hair dryers?

Yes. While blow dryers do have the potential to spread contaminated air and droplets around a room, blow drying can be done if all staff and clients are masked and if cleaning and disinfection of instruments, equipment and workstation surfaces occur between each client. For clients who cannot tolerate a face mask or covering, the appointment is to be made at the end of the day when there are no other clients on-site and the stylist is to wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

Do I need to clean, disinfect or sterilize scissors, brushes, hair clippers, nail files and other equipment between each client?

Yes, all equipment should be properly cleaned and disinfected after each use. This is a requirement under s.10 (4) and s.10 (5) of the [PSS Regulation](#). Disinfecting instruments and equipment as per the **Guide to IPAC** in PSS document is sufficient to inactivate COVID-19.

Do I need to wash capes for hair cutting between customers?

Yes, a clean, washed cape should be used for each client. Where possible a single-use barrier (e.g., towel, paper neck strip) can be used to avoid direct contact between the client's neck and the cape.

Can I work on multiple clients at the same time (e.g., one client waiting for colour to be processed, while another is getting a cut)?

Yes, provided the number of staff and clients is restricted at one time, staff and clients are screened upon entry, staff and clients are wearing a face mask or covering, hand hygiene is performed between clients, and there is enough time in between clients to ensure workstations and equipment are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Manicure/Pedicure and Nail Services

Am I allowed to use nail dryers?

Yes, you may use nail dryers provided your PSS is adhering to proper health and safety requirement such as screening clients and staff, all clients and staff are wearing face masks or coverings, dryer units are cleaned and disinfected between each use and clients are performing hand hygiene prior to having any services.

Can I let clients touch nail polish bottles?

No, ask clients not to touch the nail polish bottles. As an option, you may want to remove all polish from direct access and display behind a counter. Clients should perform hand hygiene prior to receiving a manicure.

Are single-use nail polish bottles recommended?

It is unlikely that the COVID-19 virus (or other bacteria or viruses) would survive if introduced into nail polish; therefore single-use nail polish is not necessary. It is important to ensure clients are screened for COVID-19, wear a face mask or covering and perform hand hygiene (upon entry and prior to any services) in order to reduce the potential for bacteria and/or viruses to be introduced into the polish.

What kind of PPE should nail technicians wear?

A disposable medical mask and eye protection are recommended to be worn during nail filing due to the generation of nail dust. A fit-tested, seal-checked respirator (e.g., N95) is recommended to be worn when a rotary tool is used that does not include dust extraction or water spray. If you need further guidance regarding the use of respirators (N95), and its use as it pertains to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, contact the [Ministry of Labour](#).

Tattooing and Piercing Services

Can I conduct an in-person consultation with my client?

Customer consultations should take place over the phone or on-line as much as possible before the scheduled appointment.

What kind of PPE should I wear while providing service?

You and your staff must wear a medical mask, eye protection (e.g., eye goggles or face shield) and disposable gloves when performing sterile or invasive procedures. The gloves must be changed and

discarded immediately, hands are washed when gloves are changed or as often as needed. Remember to don and doff the PPE properly to avoid self-contamination.

Are ear and nose piercings allowed?

Ear piercings can be offered, but customers are required to wear face covering during the service. As face coverings cannot be worn during nose/tongue/lip piercings, these services are to be discontinued at this time.

Is face tattooing allowed?

Face tattooing is not allowed in areas where a customer has to remove their face covering.

Retail Areas within PSS

How do I manage the retail section of my PSS?

Do not allow customers to sample or touch any products or items in the retail area. As an option, you may want to remove all products from direct access and display behind a counter. Post signs directing the customer to ask for assistance. Only personal service staff should handle samples. When staff is dispensing a product, it is done in a manner that prevents contamination of the batch.

Ventilation

I heard ventilation can help prevent the spread of viruses and other germs. What ventilation strategies can I use to help increase the air flow in my premises?

You can open your windows to increase the circulation of fresh air and/or use a high efficiency particulate air filter (HEPA) in the ventilation system. By the nature of how portable fans and air conditioning units function, they generate air flow that could disperse dust particles and circulate COVID-19 droplets and other microorganisms. Consider alternate ways to cool your PSS (e.g., open the windows, block direct sunlight using window coverings). If it is necessary to use a fan, keep it to a low setting and position the fan so airflow is directed upwards toward the ceiling. If you use an air conditioner, keep the fan setting on low. Ensure fans and air conditioning units are regularly maintained (e.g., cleaned and disinfected, replace filter) as recommended by the manufacturer. Always wash your hands after handling fan/air conditioner. For more information refer to Public Health Ontario [COVID-19: Fans and Air Conditioning Units](#).

Public Health Support for COVID-19 Concerns

Where can I access additional resources for general COVID-19 information?

York Region:

- york.ca/covid19
- [COVID-19 Resources, Fact Sheets and Videos](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Personal Service Settings](#)

Government of Ontario

- covid-19.ontario.ca
- [Guidance for Essential Workplaces](#)
- [Guidance on Health and Safety for Personal Services Settings During COVID-19](#)

Public Health Ontario

- [Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings](#), 3rd edition

Government of Canada

- Canada.ca/covid19/coronavirus

I have questions about symptomatic staff/clients, testing and exclusion regarding COVID-19, who should I contact at Public Health?

If you have any COVID-19-related questions concerning symptomatic or COVID positive cases, testing and exclusion, contact York Region Public Health at:

- 1-800-361-5653 ext. 73588 (office hours)
- 905-953-6478 (after hours)

Last update: October 16, 2020