

# York Region Public Health Recommendation for Staff Working in Group Homes

## Update to York Region Group Home Operators as of April 18, 2020

As of April 17, 2020, there are 15 outbreaks of COVID-19 occurring in York Region group homes. Detailed information on COVID-19 in York Region, including outbreaks, can be found at [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19). As you know, these homes provide care and services for some of our most vulnerable residents.

York Region Public Health has been working closely with group homes in York Region to help ensure they have the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and preparedness should an outbreak of COVID-19 occur in these facilities. We understand the challenges associated with these outbreaks and we are committed to continuing to work with and provide support to our partners in preparedness and in response should COVID-19 occur in a home.

On April 17, 2020, York Region Public Health provided a live webinar for our group home partners in infection prevention and control, including PPE. The [COVID-19 Guidance for Group Homes Webinar](#) was recorded and is available at [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19) under “Guidance Documents” in the section related to group homes. Further, on April 11, a notice was issued to group homes regarding use of PPE, including wearing of masks.

### Reporting Probable and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 to York Region Public Health

If you have a resident or staff member showing symptoms of COVID-19, call York Region Public Health immediately at:

- 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 on Monday to Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. **OR**
- 905-953-6478 after hours

### Important notice regarding staff who work/worked at Participation House

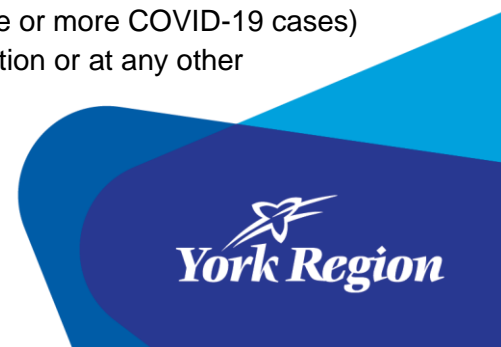
York Region Public Health is actively following up with staff who were working at Participation House to advise on self-isolation requirements and to get tested; however we have not been able to reach all staff. **If you have staff working at your facility who also work/worked at Participation House from April 6, 2020 until now, please advise the individual to:**

- Immediately return home and begin self-isolating (self-isolation should occur for 14 days from last exposure at Participation House)
- Contact York Region Public Health at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 73588
- Seek assessment and testing at one of York Region’s three COVID-19 Assessment Centres located at the three York Region hospitals – Southlake Regional Health Centre, Mackenzie Health and Markham Stouffville Hospital. The individual should notify the COVID-19 Assessment Centre that they worked at an outbreak facility and are recommended to get testing, even if asymptomatic. York Region Public Health can provide individuals with a testing letter to facilitate this.

### Recommendations Regarding Staff Working in Multiple Locations

York Region Public Health understands the challenges with ensuring your group homes are sufficiently staffed with the right individuals. In these challenging times, we are recommending the following:

1. Staff working in group homes that are **in COVID-19 outbreak** (i.e., one or more COVID-19 cases) must **NOT** work in another home within your service provider organization or at any other group home.
2. Staff working in group homes that are **currently not in COVID-19 outbreak** are encouraged to also restrict their working to only one location.



While we understand these recommendations are challenging, these are unusual times and these unusual measures can help keep residents safe. These measures are being recommended out of an abundance of caution to help protect our vulnerable residents. They are measures that will help prevent further spread of COVID-19.

## Questions

Group home operators can call our dedicated health professional COVID-19 line at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 (8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week, after hours call 905-953-6478). Continue to visit [york.ca/healthprofessionals](http://york.ca/healthprofessionals), [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19) and [Ontario.ca/covid19](http://Ontario.ca/covid19) for up to date information on COVID-19.

## Resources

Available at [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19) – Guidance Documents

- [Guidance for Group Homes and Co-Living Settings](#) (Ministry of Health)
- [Recommendations for PPE use for Group Homes and Co-Living Settings](#) (York Region Public Health)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Group Homes Webinar - April 17, 2020](#)

For community care settings ordering personal protective equipment, including masks, please complete an Issue Escalation Form (attached to this message) and send it to Susan Gibbs at [Susan.Gibb@lhins.on.ca](mailto:Susan.Gibb@lhins.on.ca).