

# COVID-19: GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC GATHERINGS

This document provides guidance on the prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 at public gatherings.

The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving rapidly. This guidance is subject to change. Please visit [york.ca/covid19](http://york.ca/covid19) regularly for updates and additional guidance.

## GATHERING LIMITS

All public gatherings, ceremonies and related celebrations/events must comply with the following gathering restrictions, as outlined in the [Reopening Ontario Act – Stage 3 Orders](#). These gathering limits are the maximum allowed if guests (and staff, if required) maintain 2-metres [physical distancing](#).

	Religious service, rite or ceremony	Staffed event or social gathering <sup>a</sup> at a licensed facility <sup>b</sup>	Private event or social gathering at a private home setting <sup>c</sup>
Indoor	30% capacity or less of any given room in the building	50 people or less	10 people or less
Outdoor	100 people or less <i>Note a religious service performed in a backyard (e.g., wedding) must adhere to the private event / social gathering limits</i>	100 people or less	25 people or less

<sup>a</sup> Includes social activities before and/or after service, receptions with food after service etc., and may be planned or spontaneous

<sup>b</sup> Includes businesses and facilities operating in accordance with [O. Reg. 364/20](#) (e.g. places of worship, restaurants, bars, cinemas, gyms, and recreational sporting or performing art events)

<sup>c</sup> Includes unstaffed businesses or facilities (e.g. private residences, backyards, parks, and other recreation areas). See [COVID-19: Guidance for Public Gatherings](#) for more information

Note that you cannot combine events (e.g., an indoor plus an outdoor event; a religious ceremony plus an outdoor event; hire staff plus an indoor private event) to achieve permission for a larger gathering size.

### Advice for Essential Public Gatherings

- In advance of the public gathering, develop and implement a COVID-19 plan that considers the following:
  - Measures to enhance [physical distancing](#) (maintaining 2-meters space between individuals)
  - Measures to minimize the likelihood of transmission during meals (e.g., offering individually packaged meals rather than a buffet)



- Enhanced infection prevention and control measures, such as the availability of hand sanitizer and hand washing facilities
- Enhanced environmental cleaning measures, such as regularly cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces
- A mechanism to alert potential attendees who have [symptoms](#), [close contact](#) with a positive COVID-19 case, or recent travel outside Canada in the past 14 days to avoid the event
- [Screening](#) guests upon arrival
- In addition to standard cleaning protocols, clean and disinfect high touch surfaces throughout the day, and as needed

### **Infection Prevention and Control Strategies**

- Encourage attendees to practice good respiratory etiquette (e.g., sneezing/coughing into tissue or elbow) and hand hygiene (e.g., frequent hand washing with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- Avoid preparing and distributing food and beverages. If food or beverages will be offered, implement measures to minimize the number of people who have contact with food, beverages, and serving utensils
- Avoid drinking from water fountains
- In addition to standard cleaning protocols, clean and disinfect high touch surfaces throughout the day, and as needed
- Post signage to remind guests how to [lower the risk](#) of transmission of COVID-19

### **Communication**

- Encourage attendees to maintain a distance of at least 2-metres from each other
- Post simple [signage](#) to clearly communicate to attendees the safety precautions and physical distancing measures that are being taken

### **Management of Individuals who Develop Symptoms**

- If you, one of your employees or an attendee develop [symptoms](#) while at a gathering:
  - Separate yourself / them from others and don a mask (if available)
  - Go home / send them home immediately
  - Seek assessment at one of the three York Region [COVID-19 Assessment Centres](#)
  - All close contacts of the symptomatic individual should self-monitor for the next 14 days
  - If test results are positive for COVID-19, all [close contacts](#) from 48 hours before symptoms started and while symptomatic should be asked to immediately self-isolate for 14 days
- If someone is seriously ill and in need of immediate medical attention, call 911
- Anyone required to provide care to a symptomatic individual should maintain a distance of 2-meters from the individual, if possible. If this is not possible, contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or York Region Public Health at 1-800-361-5653 for further assessment and guidance
- Once the individual has left, clean and disinfect the space in which the person was separated
  - [Cleaning and disinfection guidance](#) available at [York.ca/covid19](http://York.ca/covid19) under the **Resources** heading

## **Maintain cleaning and disinfecting policies**

- Facilities should follow their standard protocols for routine cleaning and disinfection, especially for high-touch surfaces such as door handles, hand rails, light switches, toilet handles, and faucet handles
- Commonly used [cleaners and disinfectants](#) are effective against COVID-19
- Water fountain mouthpieces should be regularly cleaned and disinfected according to the manufacturer's recommendations