

Subject: Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Test

Dear Client,

You have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. This letter has information you need to know to take care of yourself and others. You should **self-isolate** from the day your first symptom started until your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours if gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea) AND you do not have a fever. If you have no symptoms, you do not need to self-isolate but you should follow the additional precautions listed below. If you traveled, follow the self-isolation directions from the federal Quarantine Officer. More information on travel and quarantine is available from the Government of Canada travel website: <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/isolation>.

What should you do during your self-isolation?

- Stay at home.
- Have all groceries, medications, and other necessities delivered to your door by a delivery service, friend, or family member. Do not invite them inside your home.
- Postpone all elective medical and dental appointments until your self-isolation period is over.
- Do not take public transportation if you need to go for medical care. If you don't have access to a private vehicle, please use a taxi or rideshare, wear a mask, sit in the rear seat on the opposite side of the driver and open the windows (weather permitting).
- Take the time to do the indoor things you love, such as reading, painting, watching movies or gaming.
- You may leave your home for outdoor exercise by yourself or with a caregiver. You should maintain physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from others at all times and wear a mask in common areas when leaving if you live in an apartment building, condo, or hotel. Do not go to outdoor fitness classes or personal training sessions.

How do you self-isolate in a household of multiple people?

Self-isolation also means having no contact with the people in your household (or as limited as possible) to stop the spread of COVID-19.

- It is important that you have your own bedroom and bathroom to self-isolate.
- If you share a bathroom, disinfect areas you touch (toilet flush handle, countertop, and taps) after each use. Use paper towels or separate hand towels to dry your hands.
- Eat meals in your room away from others. Use your own cutlery, plate, and glass.

- Wear a mask when you leave your room and only enter common spaces when other household members are not around.
- Disinfect the areas you touch and that others may come in contact with.
- If you are the primary care provider to someone in your home and you need to care for them, wear a mask and practice hand hygiene.

When can you end your self-isolation?

Scenario	Isolation Period	Additional Precautions
<p>If you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immunocompromised • Living in a highest risk setting* • Hospitalized for COVID-19 related illness, but not requiring intensive care unit (ICU) level of care. 	<p>10 days from the date your symptoms started or the date of your positive test, if available (whichever is earlier)</p> <p>and until your symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours if gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea) and you don't have a fever.</p>	<p>Employees working in highest-risk settings* should report their exposure and follow their workplace guidance on return to work.</p>
<p>If you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severely ill (requiring ICU level of care) 	<p>20 days from the date your symptoms started or the date of your positive test, if available (whichever is earlier)</p> <p>and until your symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours if gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea) and you don't have a fever.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>If you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not listed above 	<p>If you have symptoms, self-isolate until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours if</p>	<p>For a total of 10 days after the start of symptoms (or date of positive test result, whichever is earlier), you should:</p>

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	<p>gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea) and you do not have a fever.</p> <p>If you have a positive test result and no symptoms, you do not need to self-isolate unless symptoms develop, but you should follow the additional precautions listed. If you develop symptoms, self-isolate immediately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wear a mask as much as possible in public settings (including school and child care, unless under 2 years old (24 months)). Exceptions would include removing the mask temporarily for essential activities like eating (e.g., when eating in shared space at school/work while maintaining as much distance from others as possible). ○ You can participate in activities where a mask is worn but you should avoid non-essential activities where removing the mask would be necessary (e.g., dining out, playing a wind instrument, high contact sports where masks cannot be safely worn). ○ People who are exempt from masking (e.g., children under two years of age (24 months), etc.) may return to public settings without wearing a mask • Not visit anyone who is immunocompromised or at higher risk of illness (i.e., seniors) • Avoid non-essential visits to any highest risk settings*. • Employees working in highest-risk settings* should report their exposure and follow their workplace guidance on return to work.
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***Highest risk settings** include:

- Acute care settings such as hospitals, including complex continuing care facilities.
- Congregate living settings, including, Long-Term Care, retirement homes, First Nation elder care lodges, group homes, shelters, hospices, correctional institutions and hospital schools.
- Employer-provided living settings of international agricultural workers.

If you are working in a highest risk setting:

Speak to your employer and follow your workplace guidance for returning to work. For routine operations, you may return to work 10 days from the date your symptoms started or the date of your positive test, if available (whichever is earlier). If you have symptoms, continue to isolate until your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours if gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea) and you do not have a fever.

Do your close contacts need to self-isolate?

A **close contact** is someone who was in close contact with a person who had symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 during the time they could transmit the virus to others (period of communicability). A person’s period of communicability is **48 hours before their first symptom started, or 48 hours before their test date (if they have no symptoms) until their self-isolation period has ended.**

Close contact is being within two meters (six feet) of a person who had symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 for more than a brief encounter or having multiple close encounters, without adequate protection. Other examples of close contact include:

- Physical contact such as shaking someone’s hand, hugging, kissing, being sneezed or coughed on
- Living in the same household (this excludes individuals who live in a completely separate unit such as a self-contained basement apartment)
- Providing care to someone (e.g., taking care of an elderly parent).

Scenario	Isolation Period	Additional Precautions
Close contacts who DO NOT live in a highest risk setting*	Not required to self-isolate if they do not have symptoms. If they develop symptoms of COVID-19, they should follow the self-isolation guidelines for individuals who have symptoms.	For a total of 10 days after the last contact with the person who has symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 (on a PCR or RAT), close contacts should: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-monitor for symptoms and self-isolate immediately if you develop any symptom of COVID-19. Follow the instructions above if you have tested positive on a PCR or rapid antigen test or have symptoms of COVID-19.

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<p>Close contacts who live in a highest risk setting*</p>	<p>Follow the self-isolation guidelines of the highest risk setting.</p> <p>If they develop symptoms of COVID-19, they should follow the self-isolation guidelines for individuals who have symptoms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wear a mask as much as possible in public settings (including school and child care, unless under 2 years old). Exceptions would include removing the mask temporarily for essential activities like eating (e.g., when eating in shared space at school/work while maintaining as much distance from others as possible). ○ They can participate in activities where a mask is worn, but they should avoid non-essential activities where removing the mask would be necessary (e.g., dining out, playing a wind instrument, high contact sports where masks cannot be safely worn). ○ People who are exempt from masking (e.g., children under two years of age, etc.) may return to public settings without wearing a mask • Not visit anyone who is immunocompromised or at higher risk of illness (i.e., seniors). • Avoid non-essential visits to any highest risk settings. • Employees working in highest risk settings should report their exposure and follow their workplace guidance.
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What to Tell your Close Contacts:

- ✓ Please share the *Close Contact Letter* (attached) with your close contacts.
- ✓ Let your close contacts know that they may need to self-isolate from their last contact with you.
- ✓ Direct them to OttawaPublicHealth.ca/COVID19Instructions for more information about self-isolating.
- ✓ Tell your employer or any place you volunteer so they can let your close contacts know they may need to self-isolate. Remind them it is your right to remain anonymous.
- ✓ If your child is positive for COVID-19, notify their close contacts by sending them the *Close Contact Letter* (attached).

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You are not alone. If you need help, reach out

If your symptoms are not manageable at home, seek medical care. You can be seen by a doctor at a COVID-19 Care Clinic where they can do chest X-Rays, blood work, and prescribe medications. Book an appointment online or by calling them.

Clinic information and hours can be found on our COVID-19 Testing Information page: OttawaPublicHealth.ca/COVIDtesting.

If you are in distress, go to the nearest Emergency Department or call 9-1-1 (experiencing significant trouble breathing, chest pain, fainting, or have significant worsening of any chronic disease symptoms). It is okay to break isolation in order to seek urgent medical care.

Note that urgent medical care includes babies under 3 months of age with a fever who should be seen by CHEO or the nearest emergency department. Be sure to tell the hospital you are COVID-19 positive or isolating due to symptoms or recent close contact. For non-emergency situations where you need medical help, visit a COVID-19 Care Clinic.

Isolation may also be broken to attend essential medical appointments with a healthcare professional that cannot be delayed, such as attending appointments for newborns 24-72 hours after discharge from hospital. Please discuss this with your healthcare provider.

It's okay to not be okay. People have loved ones in hospital, many businesses are fighting to keep their doors open, children and adolescents are struggling with online learning and social isolation, and essential workers are exhausted. If you or your loved one are struggling with overwhelming sadness, anxiety, loneliness, or anger, reach out for help by calling your family doctor or a mental health professional.

If you need immediate help, call:

- The Ottawa Distress Line/ Help Line at 613-238-3311 or
- The Mental Health Crisis Line at 613-722-6914

For further information on community resources available to you, please see the attached list. We are happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have, please don't hesitate to call us. Our operating hours are Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. If you are in need of immediate medical assistance, call 9-1-1.

This letter is issued by Ottawa Public Health to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 based on molecular test results. In general, Ottawa Public Health does not dismiss cohorts in group settings, and as such, this letter is not used for this purpose.

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Ottawa Public Health thanks you for following the COVID-19 instructions to keep your community safe.

Sincerely,

Ottawa Public Health

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