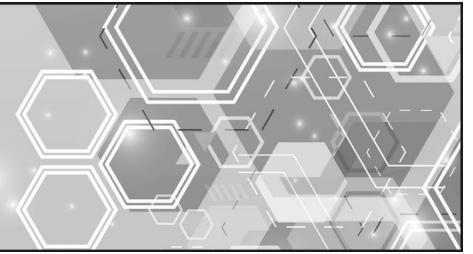




## Durham Region Health Department **Facts about...**



# **Infection prevention and control in group home settings**

These recommendations are intended to help group home settings reduce the risk of exposure to illnesses with general infection prevention and control recommendations for staff, visitors, and residents of these settings.

## **Precautions in response to COVID-19:**

- ✓ Post a [screening sign](#) at all entrances and conduct active screening of all visitors, staff and new residents.
- ✓ Active screening involves staff asking the person entering the home about their exposure to COVID-19. This will reduce the exposure of COVID-19 to those that are in the home. If a staff, essential visitor, or a client has been exposed to COVID-19 and is symptomatic (e.g. cough, fever, difficulty breathing) they should self-isolate immediately.
- ✓ If you think you have COVID-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has it, use this [self-assessment](#) tool to help determine how to seek further care.
- ✓ Ensure you have a supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) – disposable gloves, gowns, eye/facial protection and masks, ready to use should a resident become symptomatic with respiratory symptoms. Staff that become symptomatic while at work should go home as soon as possible, if not immediately.
- ✓ Provide client(s) with a mask if they have respiratory symptoms and keep them [isolated](#) (e.g. single room, away from others at least 2 m distance, avoid common areas, designate a separate washroom, etc.).
- ✓ Practice good physical distancing among staff/residents whenever possible (keep 2 m distance from others).

## **General steps to reduce the transmission of illness:**

- ✓ Monitor residents for symptoms of illness and support them in accessing appropriate healthcare as needed.
- ✓ Ill staff should notify their supervisors when ill.
- ✓ If staff or visitors become ill onsite, they should isolate immediately and go home.

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | [durham.ca/health](https://durham.ca/health)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



- ✓ Ill staff should stay home until they are symptom-free, plus an additional 24 hours being symptom-free prior to returning to work. If staff test positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate for 14 days from the onset of symptoms, and remain home until the 15<sup>th</sup> day or until they are 24-hours symptom free (whichever is longer).
- ✓ Practice proper hand hygiene by following proper [handwashing](#) and [hand sanitizing](#) methods.
- ✓ Post hand hygiene signs in visible locations (i.e. washrooms, above sinks, dispenser holders).
- ✓ Alcohol-based hand rubs (ABHR) onsite should have an alcohol concentration between 70%- 90%.
- ✓ Offer supervised hand hygiene for clients prior to meals and encourage frequent hand hygiene.
- ✓ Check liquid hand soap, paper towels and ABHR dispensers regularly to ensure continuous provision. Single-use, disposable products are preferred. If using refillable dispensers, ensure they are cleaned first followed by disinfection between refills.
- ✓ Post [Stop the spread of germs](#) and [Cover your Cough](#) posters in visible locations onsite.
- ✓ Practice proper respiratory etiquette (e.g. cough or sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue and not your hands followed by appropriate hand hygiene).
- ✓ [Clean and disinfect](#) environmental and commonly touched surfaces routinely and more often when someone is ill. Commonly touched surfaces include door knobs, light switches, handrails, faucets, keyboards, phones, etc.
- ✓ Do not share items that come into contact with the mouth or nose such as toothbrushes, eating/drinking utensils, cigarettes/smoking devices.
- ✓ Personal grooming items should not be shared such as combs, brushes, shaving equipment, nail cutters, etc.
- ✓ Contact the Health Department for assistance and guidance if you suspect that there may be an outbreak of illness occurring where you detect sudden elevated levels of illness among staff and/or residents.

## Exposure to a COVID-19 confirmed case or close contact:

- ✓ If a staff, visitor or resident was confirmed to have COVID-19 and spent time in the group home or was a close contact of a positive case, additional precautions are recommended which can be requested by contacting the Health Department at 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 to speak to a Public Health Inspector.
- ✓ If staff test positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate for 14 days from the onset of symptoms and remain home until the 15<sup>th</sup> day or until they are 24-hours symptom free (whichever is longer).
- ✓ The Health Department should be contacted for further advice at 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 for a Public Health Nurse.

## Additional Resources:

- ✓ Durham Region Health Department is routinely updating [COVID-19 online resources](#). Please check for up-to-date resources and information
- ✓ [Facts About Novel Coronavirus COVID-19](#)
- ✓ [Facts About Novel Coronavirus Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Home](#)
- ✓ [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#)
- ✓ [Cleaning and disinfection schedule](#) (use as applicable)
- ✓ [Durham Region's Housing and Homelessness](#).
- ✓ Contact the Health Department to obtain group home settings information package

March 31, 2020

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