



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

COVID-19 Update #4 for the School Community

March 3, 2020

As the COVID-19 situation is quickly changing, current information on local COVID-19 cases and the role of the Health Department are located at durham.ca/novelcoronavirus

Durham Region Health Department (DRHD) is currently monitoring **two positive cases of COVID-19 in Ajax**. The Health Department is actively following up on all close contacts of these cases. Individuals who were not in direct or close contact with the cases are not considered at risk of being infected.

At this time the virus is **not circulating locally**, however given global circumstances, DRHD is actively working with health partners to plan for the potential of local spread.

Returning travelers from certain impacted areas where the virus has community spread (**currently Hubei Province and Iran**) are advised to self-isolate and stay home, and limit contact with others until 14 days from the last exposure.

Returning travelers from **China, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Singapore, or South Korea are advised to monitor their health** for fever, cough or difficulty breathing and avoid places where they cannot easily separate themselves from others if they become ill. If they develop a fever, cough or difficulty breathing within 14 days they should isolate themselves from others as quickly as possible and immediately call their health care provider, Durham Region Health Department, or Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 for further instructions.

The Health Department will continue to **work collaboratively with the school board and school administrator if any follow up is required** within the school community. As per standard practice, individuals who have had a potential exposure to an infectious disease including COVID-19, will be contacted by the Health Department with public health advice specific to their level of exposure.

As per standard practice, it is **recommended to have students with symptoms of any illness to wait in a separate area** while waiting for pick-up by their parent/caregiver.

For questions about travel, the Government of Canada has issued **travel advisories** for a number of areas. This is a changing situation. For current information, please refer to the Government of Canada website (or go to travel.gc.ca and see the section on COVID-19).



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Standard Precautions to prevent exposure and transmission of illnesses should be followed and include:

Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water or use of hand sanitizer when hands are not visibly dirty. **Ensure all staff and students have access to soap and water.** Ensure **handwashing** strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.

Coughing or sneezing into your sleeve or elbow and encouraging others to do the same.

Washing your hands after handling nose and throat secretions (e.g., after throwing out used facial tissues).

Avoid touching your face and clean hands before touching eyes, nose or mouth.

Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, especially those that are high touch areas.

Do not share water bottles, straws, eating utensils, cigarettes, toothbrushes, toys or anything else that has been in contact with saliva, nose or throat secretions.

If you are ill, stay at home and isolate yourself from others.

Refer to the DRHD online webpages which are updated regularly at this link for Durham.ca. A Facts About resource is available at this link for Durham.ca. You may also wish to subscribe to receive email updates.

Questions can also be directed to the **Durham Health Connection Line** at 905-668-2020 or toll free at 1-800-841-2729. Please note **extended hours** include Monday to Friday 830am-8pm and Saturday/Sunday 10am-6pm