

# COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview - Links and FAQ

This document contains key links and answers to the most common questions regarding COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview. If you have additional questions, please speak to your manager or email [covid19@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:covid19@hollandbloorview.ca).

## Key Links

[Coming to work and self isolation flowchart: What should I do if...](#)

[Working remotely during a pandemic](#)

[Working from home: Ergonomics and tips](#)

[Screening form](#)

Latest town halls: [December 17, 2020](#) and [January 7, 2021](#)

[Wellness initiatives and resources](#)

[Return to the workplace space guidelines](#)

[IPAC recommendations for increasing activity](#)

[COVID positive: Questions and answers](#)

[COVID-19 testing service FAQ](#)

[Staff vaccination at Holland Bloorview FAQ](#)

[General COVID-19 vaccine FAQ](#)

[Other staff resources](#)

## Top Questions

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### **What is our contact tracing process?**

At Holland Bloorview, contact tracing is initiated once occupational health and/or infection prevention and control learns of a confirmed COVID-19 positive staff member, patient or family caregiver.

While honouring the affected individuals' confidentiality/privacy, staff who have been in direct contact (not wearing appropriate PPE, were standing closer than two metres of the individual for longer than 15 minutes, had contact with bodily fluid/droplets, etc.) will be notified by occupational health and informed of next steps, including testing.

Part of contact tracing is determining where the affected individual was in the facility **48 hours** prior to the onset of symptoms. In the case of clients that are in isolation, there is a log sheet outside of the client's room to help us identify staff and caregivers who may have had contact with the client.

### **What is the staff masking policy?**

It is a province-wide policy that people must wear masks while indoors. As such, all staff, students and volunteers will be required to wear a mask as soon as they enter the hospital. Staff who have difficulty wearing a mask should contact occupational health for guidance.

When coming on site, follow these steps:

- Continue to wear the mask you had on in the community right up until you reach the screening booth. Note that the mask you wear outside of Holland Bloorview (medical or cloth) should not be worn beyond screening.
- Swap out your community mask for a medical one, provided by screeners, and pick up a paper bag. This paper bag is for the mask you wear outside of Holland Bloorview. Masks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself. Your medical mask should be on before going to your workspace.
- When you leave for the day, wear your mask to the exit door by the pool. Clean your hands thoroughly at the hand sanitizer station by the exit.
- If your mask is clean, place it in a new paper bag, available by the exit door. You can wear it again the next time you are at work.
- If your mask is very moist, soiled or damaged, discard it in the garbage bin near the exit door and get a new one the next time you come on site.

Starting Tuesday, November 24, all screeners will be required to wear a medical mask during their screening shift. Until now, screeners were only required to wear a mask if they left their booth. As our Plexiglas barriers are not enclosed, there is a small risk of transmission from children and visitors who are not able to wear a mask. This will help to ensure everyone's safety. For any questions or concerns, please contact [James Murphy](#).

The same need will also extend to all staff working behind Plexiglas barriers that are not completely enclosed. This new measure will help ensure the safety of the Holland Bloorview community. Additionally, all staff who work in pods or stations where it is not possible to maintain six feet/two metres of physical distancing from colleagues must wear masks at all times. Staff should not eat in their pods or work stations if coworkers are present. Staff may remove their masks to take a sip of a drink, but must put their masks back on as soon as they're done. The team is scouting out additional places for on-site eating where physical distancing can be maintained. New locations will be shared when they are available.

We recognize the challenge of maintaining six feet/two metres of distance in some work areas. We continue to encourage everyone to work with their managers to find alternative spaces and empty workstations to spread out. Where you need to stay in your workstation, or cannot find an alternative space, we can keep safe if we continue to wear appropriate PPE, practise hand hygiene and avoid prolonged contact.

### **What is the masking policy for visitors, family caregivers and clients?**

All visitors, including inpatient and outpatient families and clients, are required to wear medical masks, if they are able to do so safely. Not that some clients cannot wear medical masks, and it is unsafe for children under two years to wear a mask. For those without masks, we will continue to provide them at screening.

Clients over the age of six years who are willing and able can/should wear masks.

Scenarios where removing masks may be possible for family caregivers if physically distanced from others by two metres:

- Inpatient room (i.e. when eating or sleeping)
- Family lounges on the third floor
- Cafeteria
- Reflection Room
- Bathroom
- Outside (i.e. Spiral Garden, outdoor terraces on the third floor)

Physical distancing is not required between family caregivers and their loved one unless if/when they are receiving aerosol generating medical procedures.

### **What is our screening policy?**

All staff, volunteers, learners, clients and families are asked to use the main hospital entrance for screening. Bloorview School Authority staff and clients are using the BSA entrance for screening.

Masks must be worn prior to entering the hospital. When entering the main lobby between 6 and 10 a.m., staff will be directed toward specific booths in the atrium to minimize contact with clients and family caregivers. After 10 a.m., booths 1 and 2 will be used for clients, and booth 3 will be used for staff.

Staff and students can access our network to self-screen by completing a [screening form](#) via HB Connect every seven days and attesting that if they develop any COVID-like symptoms or their answers to the

screening questions change over the seven days, they'll contact occupational health and their manager immediately.

Starting December 3, clients, caregivers, research participants and visitors can access an online COVID-19 pre-screening form. Those who fall under these categories can complete the form within 24 hours of visiting Holland Bloorview. Additional notes:

- Once a person has passed the screening questions, they will receive an email they can present at our on-site screening stations.
- This tool will help to expedite the on-site entry process, and help to prevent unnecessary travel to the hospital if screening requirements are not met, and will allow for a quicker screening process for those able to come on site for appointments and visits.
- A new button will live on our website that clients, caregivers, research participants and visitors will be able to click on to fill out their form before coming on site. It will be added at 10 a.m. on December 3. It will be located on our homepage, below the main graphic and between the COVID-19 Tip Sheets and Resources button and the Anti-Racism Statement button.

As a general safety measure, all staff MUST wear their Holland Bloorview ID badge at all times.

#### **What is the physical distancing recommendation?**

The general rule is: maintain physical distancing of at least two metres when masks are not worn. If physical distancing is not possible, then wearing masks/PPE allows clients and staff to be in closer contact.

When having meals in the cafeteria or anywhere else in the building, leave an empty chair between yourself and the person sitting next to you.

#### **What is the policy on in-person meetings?**

To reduce opportunities for close-contact gatherings, all in-person meetings and events should be moved to virtual platforms, unless deemed essential by teams and their managers. In instances where meeting in person is the only option, all participants must remain masked, be six feet/two metres apart and should not eat or drink while in the meeting. An appropriate meeting room with ample space should be used. Signage has been posted on meeting room doors indicating the maximum number of occupants. Please follow these guidelines. These limits have also been added to Meditech.

#### **How do I exit the building?**

To exit the building, use the door by the pool window on Level 1. The main doors can be used at any time as an accessible exit or for Wheel-Trans pick up or drop off. Follow the signs from main reception.

#### **What is our visitor policy?**

Effective January 18, 2021, indoor family visits will be paused to encourage families to stay home and to limit the number of people on site; however, weekend passes will continue to support the long-term health of our clients. We will stress the importance with families of limited contact with people outside of their home.

#### **Which programs are running/on pause?**

For details on specific programs, please speak with program leads and managers. Here is a list of [departmental contact numbers](#). Or, use the “find a person” feature on HB Connect.

**Is the pool open for use?**

The pool is not open to staff and the community at this time. It remains open to inpatient clients for therapy.

**Are on-site massages being provided?**

On-site staff massages are on pause until further notice.

**Is staff yoga happening?**

Staff yoga is not being offered at this time.

**Are the gymnasium and fitness centre open for use?**

Because Toronto is now in the grey or “lockdown” category of the province’s COVID-19 framework, the staff fitness centre and gymnasium will be closed, effective November 23, until further notice. We understand how important physical activity is and encourage all staff to keep active however they can. We also remind you of our proximity to trails and tracks, including in Sunnybrook Park and the ravine, so please take advantage of outdoor fitness opportunities!

With the closure of some of activities, some staff have asked if we can repurpose existing spaces, such as treatment rooms, for physical activity. This is not a safe practice and should not be done. We do appreciate the challenge of finding an outlet for physical activity. Please consider outdoor options, including walks in Sunnybrook Park and the ravine.

**I’m returning to work. What’s the policy on the use of space and cleaning?**

Please visit our [return to the workplace space guidelines](#). Speak to your manager if you have additional questions.

**Will our role as a clinical placement site for healthcare students change?**

Although tighter restrictions are now in place across Toronto, our role as a clinical placement site for our healthcare students is not affected. Students continue to receive their clinical education with us. We take great pride in offering students this opportunity, and we know how invaluable their clinical education is—they receive essential hands-on experience at Holland Bloorview, but they also make important contributions to care through their clinical innovations. Students are the future of healthcare, and we are confident the measures we have taken and continue to implement at the direction of public health ensure their safety and that of the entire Holland Bloorview community.

The teaching and learning team is dedicated to supporting all staff in their roles as supervisors, so please [feel free to reach out](#) at any time with questions or concerns. Please also feel free to refer to the Toronto Academic Health Science Network’s [COVID-19 resources](#) for more information.

**With COVID-19 cases growing in the community, should we be doing more to restrict movement of staff and clients to and from the community?**

Although the number of COVID-19 cases in the community is growing, we are confident that Holland Bloorview remains a very safe place for our staff, clients and families, researchers, students and volunteers. With the number of measures in place, such as daily screening, masking, promotion of

physical distancing between people and workspaces, Plexiglas barriers, reduced staff on-site and enhanced cleaning measures, we are working to minimize potential exposure to the virus.

In addition, our outpatient clients are pre-screened before their appointments and screened again when they come onsite. Our inpatient clients that go on weekend passes are pre-screened before returning to the hospital as are their caregivers. They are screened again when they come back on site and monitored for symptoms every day during their admission. We ask clients and their caregivers to report any symptoms immediately so we can take appropriate action.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have evolved our approach to health and safety based on the latest guidelines from public health authorities and evaluating risk from a pediatric rehabilitation perspective. The process to evaluate guidelines is ongoing as new and evolving guidance comes from public health on a regular basis. We examine new information and guidance daily with an eye toward anything that we can proactively take action on. For example, we continue to have ample supplies of all categories of PPE.

It is important to remember that we provide essential care services to kids and youth, and any disruption of our services has significant impact on the health and well-being of children. The kids we serve are among the most vulnerable in the province – they and their families need us.

**Why do clients that test positive require a 10-day isolation period? I thought it was 14 days.**

Public health guidelines require a 10-day isolation period from the onset of symptoms. Following this, an additional 24 hours of being symptom-free is required before being removed from isolation.

A 14-day isolation is required for those that might have been exposed (but not diagnosed) to COVID-19 and accounts for the virus's incubation period. Anyone that has been asked to self-isolate by occupational health or local health authorities should do so until cleared.

**What factors do you consider for testing clients and having them be in isolation?**

All in-patient clients are tested prior to arrival at Holland Bloorview for a variety of viruses including COVID-19, flu and rhinovirus.

We are closely monitoring for the onset of symptoms that will impact our clients' health. Generally speaking, a client will be placed in isolation if they have symptoms of conditions like COVID-19 or the flu.

If we decide to re-test a client (or "re-swab"), the sample is tested for the same viruses we looked for during admission. This includes COVID-19, flu and rhinovirus.

It is important to note that we generally do not re-test for COVID-19 after a positive diagnosis because a person might still be shedding dead virus cells that will be picked up on the test for up to six months. Instead, we have a 10-day isolation period from symptom onset followed by 24 hours of being symptom free before being removed from isolation.

Every case is looked at individually. We look at baseline measures, the onset of new symptoms, prior testing results and if the client has previously been in isolation.

**Are there respite areas for staff or alternative spaces for eating instead of the cafeteria?**

Effective at noon on Wednesday, December 23, the conference centre (1E201) will be open to staff only as an alternative to the cafeteria for meals and relaxation. This space will be available 24/7, with a few exceptions that will be posted in the conference centre. The exceptions are also available on HB Connect. This extra room allows for proper distancing and offers another place for staff to sit, relax, decompress and maybe have a snack and a coffee.

A reminder to please not eat in pods if coworkers are present. Even in the cafeteria, we need to stay two metres/six feet apart, so it is important to not move tables and chairs that have been set up with distancing in mind. Decals have been added to tables in the cafeteria so you know exactly where to sit to be safe. There have been outbreaks in other hospitals that were connected to unsafe distancing while eating. Please keep yourself, your family and your coworkers safe!

### **How will the vaccine be delivered to Holland Bloorview staff?**

Michael Garron Hospital has been designated (by Ontario Health) as the COVID-19 vaccination provider for Holland Bloorview staff. Over the January 2-3, 2021 weekend, we were able access 60 vaccination spots for our staff. The availability of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for our team is a very exciting development in our pandemic journey.

Even before we heard this excellent news, our team (including director of pharmacy Nathan Ho and clinical bioethicist Dolly Menna-Dack) had been working on a prioritized selection process, consistent with the Province of Ontario's ethical framework, to support our vaccine rollout strategy. This work continues both internally and at a system level to ensure equitable access to the vaccine.

The process to vaccinate our team is rapidly unfolding and we are informed of changes on a daily basis, if not more frequently. A dedicated team of staff is overseeing our vaccination road map.

### Early to mid-January:

- We are working on an urgent basis to fill slots made available to us by Michael Garron. Time slots tend to be between 8:15 am and 2:15 pm and we understand that more options, including weekend bookings may become available.
- We are prioritizing direct care providers for these timeslots. Due to the urgency of filling these slots, we are identifying those that are off-shift or can be away from the hospital (including travel to and from Michael Garron) without compromising care quality or safety. We are asking managers to facilitate this process while ensuring appropriate coverage.
- **We are in the process of calling staff members to fill available slots. As more slots become available we will be able to extend outreach to more staff. If you have not yet received notice of this opportunity and are a direct care provider, please speak to your manager. If managers have questions, please reach out to Lindsey Crawford, x3873 or [lcrawford@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:lcrawford@hollandbloorview.ca).**
  - **IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that People and Culture (HR) has your complete and up-to-date contact information on file. This includes any changes to your personal cell phone, home number and your personal email address. Send any updates to the [humanresources@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:humanresources@hollandbloorview.ca).

### We anticipate additional slots being available to our team shortly.

- Per Ministry of Health guidelines, we will continue to prioritize direct care providers and will expand vaccine availability to client-facing staff who do not provide direct care (e.g. registration staff) in this first phase of vaccination.

- Direct care providers are defined as being within six feet/two meters of clients for a duration of 15 minutes or more without a physical barrier. This includes students, researchers and environmental services staff as applicable.

Leadership structure:

We are grateful to the following individuals for providing leadership to our vaccine rollout:

- Executive sponsors: Irene Andress, Diane Savage, Tracey Millar
- Operational leadership: Lindsey Crawford, Heidi Schwellnus, Claire Whyte, Rohan Mahabir, Michelle Gouveia, Angie Sweeney in partnership with the occupational health and wellness team.

If you have immediate questions, please direct them to [covid19@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:covid19@hollandbloorview.ca).

Additional notes:

- Accurate data collection is essential to ensure priority groups receive the vaccine and to allow us to respond quickly when more vaccines become available. We are working with occupational health to track calls to staff, the number of staff already vaccinated and the number of staff who still need to be vaccinated.
- All staff who have been vaccinated should forward the email they receive after their vaccination that shows the date and time they were vaccinated to [occupationalhealth@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:occupationalhealth@hollandbloorview.ca).
- Be aware that follow-up doses are required 21 days from the date of the first injection.
- Serious side effects to the vaccine are extremely rare. Still, teams should be mindful of possible mild or moderate side effects (body chills, feeling tired or feverish) that require staff to stay home and thus impact team coverage.
- For information about the COVID-19 vaccines, [click here](#).

Thank you for your patience as we work on the rollout on an extremely short turn around time. Once again, we are thrilled to be able to facilitate Holland Bloorview staff access to the vaccine. There remains much we don't yet know or are still working on. We have created two FAQ documents (included as key links at the top of this FAQ) that we will continue to update as information becomes available. Please send any questions or comments to [covid19@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:covid19@hollandbloorview.ca).

**Is Holland Bloorview preparing for the possibility that SickKids may send their clients to us if they are at capacity? Will we be needing to reduce outpatient services to service these new clients (both in terms of staffing and space)?**

You may have seen media accounts about adult hospitals being asked to maintain sufficient capacity to meet the demands of COVID-19. This has resulted in some hospitals beginning to cancel scheduled surgeries, and many transfers of patients from over-burdened hospitals to others within and outside the region (including COVID-19 positive patients and patients in the ICU). In addition, some community hospitals are having to reduce their paed's beds in order to make space for adult patients. Holland Bloorview is always committed to being an excellent system partner and ensuring patient flow between acute care-referring hospitals and our inpatient units. At this time we do not anticipate having to ramp down ambulatory services or have major redeployments of ambulatory staff to inpatients in the way we were required to during the first wave of the pandemic.

**Can I get proof of my status as an essential worker?**

A [letter](#) for staff to use as proof of employment status as essential workers has been prepared. This can be presented if they are stopped and questioned while coming to or heading home from work. Please



feel free to pre-print this and keep it with you when commuting. We are asking team leads and managers to make printed copies available to employees who do not have ready access to printers.

In keeping with our IDEA commitments and action plan, it is important to note that BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) are more subject to excessive policing and more likely to be subject to enforcement activities in regard to the provincial emergency order. This letter will be of particular importance to those members of our team.

**What is our COVID-19 case count?**

	STAFF	CLIENT
ACTIVE	1	0
RECOVERED	14	1
TOTAL	15	1

Visit [Bloorview School Authority's website](#) for their case count.