

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.

Key Links

[Flowchart: COVID-19 exposure and return to onsite work](#)

[Working remotely during a pandemic](#)

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

[Screening form](#)

[Wellness initiatives and resources](#)

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[International and interprovincial travel guidance](#)

[Paid COVID-19 leave](#)

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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?

We have a universal 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 area. 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, at the staff sanitizing station. 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 paper bag.. You can wear it again the next time you are at work. Masks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself.
- 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.

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 soon as they're done.

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 current N95 guidance?

As of December 17, Holland Bloorview implemented a new interim modification in alignment with Ontario Health guidance. Under this guidance, N95 masks are being used by client-facing staff performing functions that make them susceptible to client respiratory secretions or when they are caring for suspected or COVID-positive clients. Please see [this infographic](#) that shows what personal protective

equipment (PPE) is used in what circumstances. We will continue to follow provincial guidance and update staff via practice alerts and the all-staff bulletin if that guidance changes.

Staff are expected to have their own N95 mask information and are being asked to contact Occupational Safety if N95 masks have misplaced it. If staff are on the inpatient units, contact your manager or the hospital charge nurse.

All clinical students are expected to have been mask fit tested through their school prior to their clinical placement and must bring their mask fit specifics with them when they come onsite and inform their preceptor. This information is collected by Teaching and Learning.

Please direct questions specifically about N95 masks and fit test needs to Chimine Li, Safety Specialist at chimine.li@hollandbloorview.ca.

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

We have a universal masking policy. All visitors, including inpatient and outpatient families and clients, are required to wear medical masks, if they are able to do so safely. Note 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?

Masks must be worn prior to entering the hospital. When entering the main lobby, staff are being asked to use a specific booth in the atrium to minimize contact with clients and family caregivers. Staff and students no longer need to complete screening at the booth and are instead required to complete a self-assessment using an online [screening form](#) via HBCConnect 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 should contact occupational health and their manager immediately.

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 helps to expedite the on-site entry process, and helps 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.

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 ensure there is at least 6 feet or 2 metres between you and your colleague.

What is the policy on in-person meetings?

Due to rising COVID-19 cases and staffing challenges impacting the healthcare sector province-wide that are resulting in increased workloads for our entire team, we strongly encourage cancelling any meetings that are not urgent or time sensitive.

For meetings that are required, virtual meetings, where possible, are the preferred option in order to reduce contacts where staff may not be able to distance. For any meetings in person, ensure two meters of physical distance and consistent use of masking (i.e. no eating/drinking in meetings) are maintained.

Overall, please ensure a 10-person limit maximum that includes 2 meters of physical distancing between participants.

What are room limits for programs and services?

For programs and services, please ensure a 10-person limit maximum that includes 2 meters of physical distancing between participants.

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?

Inpatient, outpatient (ambulatory), research and accommodations clients can identify up to two family caregivers (aged 16 or older) to take part in their onsite care.

For inpatients, two family caregivers may be onsite during the day and one family caregiver can stay overnight. Additionally, caregivers may bring a child under 30 months. However, we strongly encourage families to have only one essential caregiver onsite where possible as part of our efforts to reduce possible spread of COVID-19.

Are indoor visits available for extended family of inpatient clients?

We have temporarily paused indoor family visits for inpatient clients until further notice due to rising community cases of COVID-19.. Staff and families will be updated when indoor family visits can resume.

Is the pool open for use?

The pool is open for inpatient swimming. As of January 31, 2022, the pool will be open for community programming at 50% capacity.

Have on-site activities resumed?

On-site activities, such as staff massages, have resumed. Onsite activity requests can be made using the [request template](#). The pandemic steering committee is actively monitoring and reviewing requests.

Are the gymnasium and fitness centre open for use? What about staff yoga and chair massages?

As of February 7, 2022, the staff fitness centre, school gymnasium and staff yoga have resumed.

Up to two staff, maintaining a distance of at least two meters apart and masked when changing equipment, permitted at once in the The staff fitness center. The school gymnasium also reopened to staff for individual activities only (group activities are still paused at this time), with a sign-in/out sheet. Priority use of the gym continues to be for client groups and 1:1 afterschool sessions. Staff yoga has resumed with up to five staff permitted each session.

As of February 22, 2022, chair massages resume in the staff fitness centre with only one person permitted at a time. Masking is required.

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.

Can staff eat or drink in shared office spaces?

To ensure Holland Bloorview remains a safe environment, staff are encouraged to eat or drink in the cafeteria or 4W staff kitchen. When eating or drinking, staff are expected to maintain two meters distance wherever possible between themselves and other staff, and put their mask back on as soon as eating or drinking is finished.

Food can also be consumed in shared office spaces as long as two meters (six feet) distance is maintained in all directions between yourself and others. Additional spaces have also been set up in the following BRI space for staff to use:

- 4W meeting spaces
- 4 focus rooms (when not being used for research purposes)

Can ambulatory staff ask clients and families not to eat or drink during their clinical visits?

Yes, staff can ask clients and families not to eat or drink during clinical visits to ensure the health and safety of themselves, clients and others in the hospital. Ask Chimine Li, Safety Specialist at chimine.li@hollandbloorview.ca for a no eating/drinking sign.

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

Although tighter restrictions have been 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.

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

Experts have learned much more about the COVID-19 virus and have made changes based on data collected. Public health guidelines for clients in hospital require at minimum a 10-day isolation period from the onset of symptoms or longer if symptoms persist. The client must be symptom-free for 24 hours to come out of isolation. If asymptomatic, the client would require 10 days from the date of their positive test or 10 days from the date of exposure.

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

All in-patient clients are tested for COVID-19 prior to arrival at Holland Bloorview, and we are closely monitoring for the onset of symptoms that could impact our clients' health.

Generally speaking, clients will be placed in isolation if they have symptoms of conditions like COVID-19 or the flu. After being placed in isolation, the client is tested for a variety of viruses including COVID-19, flu and rhinovirus.

If clients have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status or wearing PPE, Toronto Public Health deems these contacts as high risk exposures. As a result, clients will be placed in isolation for 10 days. Depending on when the notification to Holland Bloorview's infection prevention and control (IPAC) team occurs, clients may be tested on day 1 and day 7 of the exposure, or just on day 7. They will be removed from isolation if they remain asymptomatic and test negative.

Clients returning from weekend pass are isolated on return from pass and given a rapid molecular test. If the test result is negative, the client is removed from isolation. If the test result is positive, a PCR test will be administered and the client will remain in isolation until the test results are returned. The client can come out of isolation if the test result is negative. If the test result is positive, the client will remain in isolation and IPAC will follow up on any client contacts and inform Occupational Health for staff contact tracing.

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 90 days.