



Close Contacts

What is a close contact?

If you interacted with someone who has been identified as a positive COVID-19 case either

- 48 hours before the person began having symptoms
- OR**
- 48 hours before the test day for someone who did not have symptoms, you may be a close contact.

Generally, close contact means being less than 2-metres away in the same room, workspace, or area for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour time period with a confirmed case. Due to the increased risk with Variants of Concern (VOCs), the threshold for identifying close contacts is lower. For example, if you were wearing a mask, but did not maintain 2-metres distance from a positive COVID-19 case, you will be considered a close contact. Reduce your risk by limiting your close contacts to household members only.

How will I know if I am a close contact?

Once Peterborough Public Health (PPH) has been notified of a positive result, a case manager will follow-up with the individual to let them know they have tested positive for COVID-19. The case manager will complete an interview to determine the places they went while infectious, such as work or other public places, and who their close contacts are. A contact manager will follow-up with all the close contacts that have been identified to advise them to immediately self-isolate for 14 days from the last day of exposure to the case, and provide other applicable instructions.

You can also download the COVID Alert app. The app will inform you if a phone near you was from a user who indicated on the app that they tested positive. For more information on the app, please click [here](#).

What will I need to do as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

Close contacts will be asked to:

- Self-isolate immediately for 14 days from the last day of exposure to the case. This window is known as the incubation period for the COVID-19 virus.
- Get tested, the contact manager will advise when this should be done
- Inform their household members that they are required to stay home and only leave for essential purposes, such as school, work, and/or grocery shopping. This is done to help reduce the spread, especially of more highly transmissible VOCs.

Close contacts will be provided with information on how to self-monitor for symptoms and what to do if they develop symptoms over the 14 days of self-isolation.

What happens if the individual was out in the community (e.g., at work, place of worship, or at a grocery store) while infectious?

If a person was in contact with others while infectious, PPH will determine whether there was any increased risk of exposure to others. For example, a brief interaction, such as walking past someone, does not pose an increased risk. If a public health risk is identified, PPH will take any other measures needed to reduce the risk of transmission. This may include conducting an inspection, issuing an order, or notifying the public.

What if I was exposed and have not been contacted by PPH?

If you have not been contacted but you are concerned that you have been exposed to COVID-19, self-isolate immediately and call 705-743-1000 to speak with a public health nurse who can help assess your risk as a potential close contact. If you are experiencing any sign or symptom of COVID-19, regardless of your contact history, you should self-isolate and get tested. You can refer to the [Peterborough Public Health website](#) for local testing options.

I learned about this case from social media – is Peterborough Public Health going to alert the public about this?

If there is an increased health risk to the public, PPH would alert the public of an outbreak in any facility, clinic, business or public setting. The public health measures that have been mandated by the province, if followed correctly, should help keep you safe.

When there is a low risk to the public, PPH encourages the facility to disclose this information to reassure the public they are working with public health and taking the necessary measures to control the spread of infection.