

Letter of Instruction

March 1, 2021

To: All owners, operators and persons responsible for food premises¹ (e.g., restaurants, bars, cafes, banquet halls, etc.) with indoor and/or outdoor dining areas within the City and County of Peterborough

RE: Peterborough Public Health Letter of Instruction for food premises regarding the mandatory physical distancing of separate households and collecting patron information

On February 16th, 2021 the geographic region served by Peterborough Public Health (PPH) transitioned back into the Yellow (Protect) Zone of the *COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open*.² I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you for your efforts to reopen safely, comply with the legislation, and protect your staff, customers and our community at large.

COVID-19 continues to be present in the City and County of Peterborough; variants of concern (VOCs) have been identified in neighbouring communities and on February 23rd, the first presumed COVID-19 VOC was reported in Peterborough. VOCs are associated with a higher risk of transmission. On February 27th, PPH has declared our first VOC outbreak. Therefore, there is a heightened risk of increased cases associated with serious outcomes from COVID-19 for the residents of the City and County of Peterborough through community transmission.

The key risk factors associated with the potential transmission of COVID-19 include:³

- close contact
- closed spaces
- crowded places
- forceful exhalation

To minimize VOC spread in Ontario communities, the lockdown evidence and experiences from other jurisdictions demonstrate that any currently implemented public health measures should be intensified.⁴ Physical distancing plays a key role in reducing the risks associated with crowded places and has been proven to limit COVID-19 transmission. O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas in Stage 3, Schedule one, Section 3.1 (4) states:

Every member of the public in a place of business or facility that is open to the public shall maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person, except from their caregiver or from members of the person's household.

To assist with the implementation of this requirement, I am issuing this Letter of Instruction to all food premises with indoor and/or outdoor eating and drinking areas that are open to the public within the City and County of Peterborough. These instructions are being provided pursuant to Schedule 1, Section 2 (2) of O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas in Stage 3 made under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act*, 2020, S.O. 20202, c. 17.

These instructions are being issued to provide clarity and help ensure that the provincial legislation is being followed locally. A single table does not typically allow for those seated at the table to maintain two metre from others. In order to comply with provincial legislation, these instructions will cause restrictions for those who can be seated at the same table.

Effective March 5, 2021, I am instructing all persons responsible for a food premises with indoor and/or outdoor dining areas open to the public located within the City of Peterborough or County of Peterborough to implement the following measures:

1. Obtain and record the following information for **every patron** that enters an indoor or outdoor eating or drinking area in/at the premises, other than patrons who briefly enter the area to place, pick up, or pay for a takeout order:
 - i. first and last name
 - ii. telephone number or alternate contact information if a telephone number is not available (physical address or electronic mail address)
 - iii. date of attendance; time of arrival and time of departure
 - iv. table number or specific location of table at the establishment
 - v. attestation that the patron is not experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, excluding those related to a chronic or other condition
 - vi. verbal attestation that the patron is:
 - a) joining a table only with their own household members; or
 - b) joining a table only with one other household, if they live alone; or
 - c) joining a table with another household, if they are a caregiver (essential for maintaining mental or physical health) for someone in that household.
2. Do not serve, seat or permit patrons to enter dining areas who do not provide the information required above.
3. Retain the records and information required above for a period of at least one month and ensure the records are stored and destroyed in a secure manner to preserve privacy of patrons.
4. Disclose the records and information required above to a medical officer of health or inspector under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act](#) upon request, or as otherwise required by law.
5. Seat a maximum of six (6) people at one table. If Peterborough Public Health enters the orange or red zones of the framework, this will be reduced to a maximum of four (4) people at one table.
6. Configure tables to ensure that patrons seated at different tables maintain a distance of two (2) metres or are separated by an impermeable barrier.
7. Provide alcohol-based hand rub that is approved by [Health Canada](#) at every entrance and exit to/from the establishment and eating areas (e.g. patios) and post signage asking patrons to sanitize their hands upon entry and exit.

The actions we are asking food premises to take as outlined in this Letter of Instruction will help protect our community by reducing close contact of non-household members and ensuring that sufficient information for the purpose of contact tracing can be provided to Peterborough Public Health for efficient and effective contact tracing, when required. These Letter of Instruction will be enforced by Public Health Inspectors and other Provincial Offences Officers responsible for the enforcement of the **Reopening Ontario Act**. Failure to comply is an offence under the Reopening Ontario Act for which you may be charged. In order to help with compliance, we have developed sample templates for recording the required patron information.

Thank you in advance for your compliance and cooperation. PPH Public Health Inspectors are available to support food premises with implementation of these instructions. If you have questions or concerns related to implementation, please contact our office at (705) 743-1000. In addition to this Letter of Instruction to food premises, Peterborough Public Health will be initiating a communications campaign to ensure that this information is circulated to the broader community and ensure they are aware of their obligation to remain with household members only.

Please note that the Letter of Instruction will be posted on PPH's website at:
www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/public-health-orders

Subject to extension or amendment, this Letter of Instruction will expire on April 9, 2021.

Sincerely,



Rosana Salvaterra, MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

¹ *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7. Accessed February 25, 2021 at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h07>.

² Province of Ontario. *COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open*. February 19, 2020. Accessed February 25, 2021 at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-response-framework-keeping-ontario-safe-and-open#prevent>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Public Health Ontario. *Evidence on Public Health Measures Required for Rapid Control of Variants of Concern*. February 16, 2021. Accessed February 25, 2021 at <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/phm/2021/02/eb-public-health-measures-for-voc.pdf>.