



# Reducing the Risk of COVID-19 Transmission: Special Event Planning and Recommendations

Protections for social gatherings and special events have been lifted, however, COVID-19 is still very much present in our community. Peterborough Public Health (PPH) has created this checklist to help you plan your next event with the safety of your guests, staff, and volunteers in mind.

The best practices denoted below by a “☐”, are public health measures you can implement to help you reduce the risk of transmission at your event.

- Please ensure that staff, volunteers, and patrons do not attend your event if they are feeling ill or unwell. Consider using a [Rapid Antigen Test at home](#) prior to attending or hosting an event.
  - [Record your Rapid Antigen Test results](#)
    - Peterborough Public Health is asking all residents to record their rapid antigen test results in this voluntary and confidential survey.
- As the coordinator of a special event (fair, festival, charity BBQ, or other event) in Peterborough City or County if the event is going to have food vendors, it is your responsibility to ensure the following are completed: [special event coordinator application](#) and/or the [special event food application](#). Please [contact PPH](#) if you have any questions about this.
- Please review the Health Canada “[Reducing COVID-19 risk in community settings: A tool for operators](#)” resource before planning your event; describing the measures you will take in a [safety plan](#) for your event is strongly encouraged.

## Community Risk Index

This Index shows the risk level of COVID-19 transmission in the Peterborough Public Health Region. It brings together all available indicators on COVID-19 transmission into one easy-to-understand five-point scale. Each indicator is based on local scientific data. You can see the indicators on our website that Peterborough Public Health monitors. This Index guidance also suggests ways you can protect yourself for each risk level. If you have a greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19, the Index offers additional guidance for your protection.

Please [consult the Community Risk Index](#) prior to planning or attending any event (the same way you would consult a weather forecast before going on a long drive, or a UV index before going to the beach). We recommend that you follow the advice in each risk category to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in our community.

## Vaccines

The vaccine to protect against COVID-19 is safe and effective<sup>1</sup>, and in combination with other public health measures, it remains our best chance to end this pandemic. [Staying up to date](#) with your COVID-19 vaccines “help to increase protection against symptomatic infection and severe outcomes at the individual level and helps to reduce transmission at the population level.”<sup>2</sup>

### Vaccination Status of Patrons

- Will you be implementing a ‘proof of vaccine’ system for your patrons or guests?
- The [Verify Ontario](#) app and QR code system can still be used for businesses and organizations that wish to check the vaccination status of their patrons

### Vaccination Status of Staff and Volunteers

- Peterborough Public Health is urging you to ensure that your staff and volunteers are [up to date](#) on their COVID-19 vaccination series; this is one way to prevent the severity of the illness should they acquire COVID-19; this will also reduce staff absenteeism due to extended illness.
- PPH has developed a ‘workplace vaccination policy tool kit’, available [here](#).

## Masks

Masks continue to be an important layer of prevention against COVID-19.

The purpose of a mask is to act as a barrier. It reduces the chance of spreading respiratory droplets to others and prevents droplets from landing on surfaces. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, [mask use has been thoroughly researched](#). This research has consistently shown that a well-constructed, well-fitting mask, along with other public health measures, like physical distancing and staying home when ill, can reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

- Will you require patrons attending your indoor event to wear a mask?
- Will you require staff and volunteers to wear a mask while working at your indoor event?
- [Review PPH website](#) for more information about masks

## Ventilation and Physical Distance

The virus causing COVID-19 spreads from person to person through droplets and airborne transmission. Good ventilation and filtration can help to reduce the risk of illness by improving indoor air quality, and reducing the droplets and aerosols containing viruses that can make us sick. Environmental conditions, such as temperature, humidity, and airflow, can also impact the spread of the virus. Aerosols and droplets are produced when we breathe, talk, sign, shout, cough, and sneeze.

- Can your event be held outdoors?
- If your event is indoors, can windows and doors be opened to increase ventilation?
- Is your space set up to maximize the distance between patrons, staff, and performers?
- Is your HVAC system in good working order, and operating per manufacturer’s instructions?
  - Can the ‘turn over rate’ be increased to supply fresher air into your venue?
- Can you turn the volume of background music down so that patrons don’t need to shout?
- [Review PPH’s information](#) about indoor air quality and COVID-19 prevention

## Hand Hygiene

Having clean hands is important whether or not there is a pandemic; “handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick.”<sup>3</sup>

- Are there handwashing facilities available for your staff, volunteers, and patrons?
- Is hand sanitizer available throughout your venue?

## Case and Contact Management

Do you know what to do if you've been exposed to COVID-19, and do you have a plan in place to support staff, guests, and volunteers in case they become sick at your event, or after attending your event?

If you think you may have COVID-19 or were exposed to the virus, follow these steps to take care of yourself and protect others.

- [What to do if you've been exposed to COVID-19](#)
- Use [this resource](#) to calculate days needed for self-isolation/self-monitoring

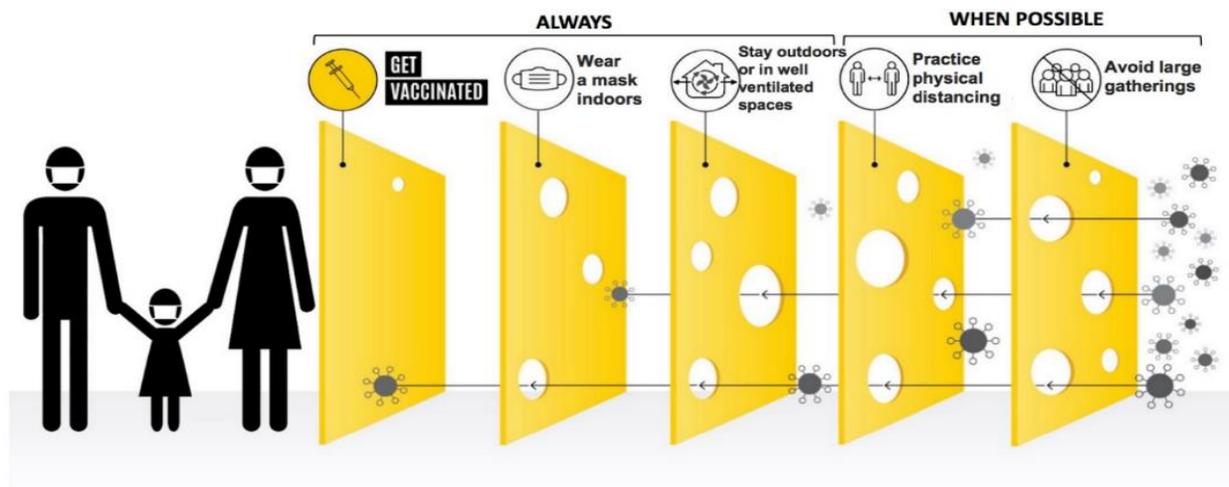
## Other Resources

- [Living with and Managing COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19: Stop the spread](#)
- [COVID-19 public health measures and advice](#)

## Multiple Public Health Measures Needed

It is very clear that no one prevention measure alone will reduce the spread of COVID-19. A combination of measures (or layers) are needed. This is often viewed as the "Swiss Cheese Model".

## Current public health measures are effective against Omicron



From: [https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Update-on-COVID-19-Projections\\_English\\_2021.12.16.pdf](https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Update-on-COVID-19-Projections_English_2021.12.16.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/publichealth/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/vaccines/safety-side-effects.html>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID\\_19\\_vaccine\\_up\\_to\\_date.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID_19_vaccine_up_to_date.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>