
Media Release



Timiskaming Health Unit Recommends Caution during the Holidays as COVID-19 Case Numbers Remain High December 16, 2021 - For immediate release

High COVID-19 case numbers and the arrival of the Omicron variant in Ontario have prompted Acting Medical Officer of Health Dr. Glenn Corneil to issue a [letter outlining recommendations](#) for how residents can protect themselves and their loved ones from COVID-19 during the holidays.

The letter strongly recommends the following:

- Everyone should limit social gatherings at private dwellings to no more than 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors. All attendees 12 years of age and older should be vaccinated.
- All unvaccinated individuals 12 years of age and older should avoid any non-essential indoor contact with individuals who are not part of their household.
- Where possible, individuals should work remotely.

The recommendations come into effect immediately and will be reassessed in four weeks.

The letter does not add restrictions or gathering limits for businesses, restaurants, or other establishments to those already put in place by the Government of Ontario. However, it does advise individuals of the steps they can take to limit the potential spread of COVID-19 at a critical time, when the number of cases in our district remains high and holiday gathering and travel plans are being made.

In addition to limiting close contact with others, the best way to prevent COVID-19 spread and severe illness from the virus is to get fully vaccinated. Anyone who is eligible for their third dose should get their shot urgently. People aged 50+ are potentially vulnerable to serious illness and have until Monday to book their appointments before all adults are eligible.

“It’s understandable that people are tired after almost two years of the pandemic, but we hope that people will understand why we’re asking them to take these extra steps,” said Dr. Corneil. “Our cases remain high and have plateaued at a relatively high level. In light of our present Delta situation and the imminent risk of the Omicron variant, we are putting these new recommendations in place as we await provincial decisions.”

In recent weeks, the district has seen COVID-19 exposures and outbreaks in multiple settings, including schools, workplaces, and public locations. The recommendations are intended to lower the number of close contacts between individuals, which previous experience and Science Table modelling have shown can lead to a decrease in case counts.

The full letter of recommendation is available [here](#). For more information on COVID-19, please go to our [COVID-19 webpage](#). For information about COVID-19 and the holidays, visit the [Ontario website](#).

Media Contact:

Ryan Peters

Communications Manager

705-647-4305, Ext. 2250

petersr@timiskaminghu.com