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July 7, 2021

Dear business owner/operator,

**Re: Updates to PPE recommendations for vaccinated individuals**

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Many workplaces have reached out to the Timiskaming Health Unit regarding PPE recommendations and whether these recommendations change for fully vaccinated workers. We are currently awaiting updated provincial guidance on PPE recommendations for most workplaces but can share some of the guidance that we have received thus far.

We strongly encourage everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated if they have not already done so.

**Contact management of fully vaccinated individuals**

The data gathered by Public Health Ontario indicates that all the vaccines approved by Health Canada are highly effective at preventing COVID-19. As a result, the Timiskaming Health Unit considers the vaccination status of individuals when we conduct contact tracing. In most circumstances, fully vaccinated individuals are not required to isolate after being exposed to a person with COVID-19. An individual is considered fully vaccinated 14 days after their final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

**Eye protection**

The recommendations across various guidance documents differ slightly regarding eye protection. Eye protection is required by the Reopening Ontario Act for some workers. Many healthcare guidance documents indicate that health care workers should strongly consider eye protection for all interactions when there is COVID-19 infection occurring in the community. At the time of writing we have no known active cases in our district and do not suspect that major community transmission is currently taking place.

**Continued compliance with legislation**

In Step 2 of the [Roadmap to Reopen](#), the [Reopening Ontario Act](#) requires personal protective equipment that provides protection of the person's eyes, nose and mouth when providing services to unmasked individuals. Examples of these workers include restaurant servers. Individuals who provide personal care services are also required to wear personal protective equipment.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, employers still must take every reasonable precaution for the protection of workers. Personal protective equipment should be part of your safety plan. For more information, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/using-masks-workplace>.

The use of face coverings is still required in all indoor workplaces. Exemptions to this requirement still exist for certain individuals who are unable to wear a face covering and for individuals who are working alone.

## **Healthcare settings**

The [Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee has advised](#) that healthcare “facilities should maintain their approach to universal masking and physical distancing despite increased vaccination” among staff. They also advise that healthcare workers who are caring for patients with suspect or confirmed COVID-19 and patients exposed to COVID-19 should continue to use droplet and contact precautions.

## **Updates moving forward**

The Public Health Agency of Canada has released its guidance for fully vaccinated individuals. It can be found on [their website](#). We expect Ontario’s guidance to be similar to this. When we receive Ontario-specific guidance we will share it with our local businesses. We do not yet know if this guidance will include changes to personal protective equipment.

If you have any questions, please refer to the links above or contact the Timiskaming Health Unit at 1-866-747-4305.

Sincerely,



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Acting Medical Officer of Health/CEO