
Media Release



Timiskaming Health Unit moves to yellow level of provincial COVID-19 response framework

December 18, 2020 - For immediate release

Today, the Government of Ontario placed Timiskaming Health Unit in the “Yellow-Protect” category of the provincial COVID-19 response framework.

“We are seeing increased cases of COVID-19 throughout our district,” said Dr. Glenn Corneil, Acting Medical Officer of Health and CEO for the Timiskaming Health Unit. “There is strong evidence that the second wave is hitting Timiskaming. Our district meets multiple indicators for moving to yellow. This decision was made in close consultation with the province.”

Strengthened public health measures will come into effect in our district to help control the spread of COVID-19 on Monday, December 21, 2020, at 12:01 a.m. These measures include limited hours of operations for certain settings, reduced recreational program sizes, additional enforcements and fines, and enhanced education in high-risk settings.

“Based on local case data, we are hearing and seeing evidence of too many social gatherings and Christmas staff parties,” said Dr. Corneil. “We are strongly recommending that everyone limit close contact to their household.”

To become familiar with the new measures, owners and operators of businesses and organizations are required to read the [framework](#) and its accompanying [regulations](#) in order to determine what actions they must take to remain open. Changes include but are not limited to:

Safety Plans

Restaurants, bars, sport and fitness facilities, meeting and event spaces, shopping malls, personal care services (salons, barbers, tattoo parlors, etc.), bingo halls, gaming establishments, cinemas, and performing arts faculties are now required to have a safety plan. A template for this plan, and other resources to protect workplaces, can be found on the [province’s website](#).

Lower Music Volumes

Across multiple sectors, the volume of music must now be low enough that a normal conversation is possible. Yelling and speaking loudly can help transmit COVID-19 over longer distances, so it is necessary to keep conversations to a normal level.

Bars and Restaurants

- There is now a strict limit of 6 patrons per table and contact information must be collected for every seated patron, even if they are from the same household.
- All establishments must be closed between 12 a.m. and 5 a.m.
- Liquor may only be sold between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m.

Sport and Fitness Facilities

- Spacing between patrons/equipment must be increased to 3 meters.
- Fitness classes are now capped at 10 patrons indoors and 25 patrons outdoors.
- Contact information must be collected for everyone who enters the facility.
- Facilities must now be accessible by reservation only.

Nursing and Retirement Homes

Under [Directive #3](#) there are now additional restrictions on the admission of new residents and transferring residents between facilities.

For more information on COVID-19, please go to our website [page](#) or visit the Ontario's [website](#). Details about the provincial framework are available at www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-response-framework-keeping-ontario-safe-and-open.

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