

November 27, 2020

Dear Residents of Windsor and Essex County, Employers, Business Owners and Operators:

As we continue to progress through the COVID-19 pandemic, we have and will continue to experience fluctuations in the number of cases in our community. We are extremely grateful for all your efforts to implement public health recommendations to protect the health and safety of our community.

As described previously, our local data suggests that we are in our second wave with COVID-19 cases increasing in our Long Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes, Agricultural Farms, Schools and community in general. Our hospital systems are also nearing capacity putting the entire community at a significant risk for not only COVID-19 related concerns but also for other medical emergencies such as heart attacks, influenza, etc.

Today, the Province has announced the move for Windsor and Essex County into the **Red-Control** stage of the provincial *Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework* in response to the increasing trends of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, effective 12:01 a.m. on Monday, November 30th. Our local data and evidence from our community and internationally demonstrate that the absence of strict adherence to COVID-19 prevention measures and consistent and collaborative enforcement will lead to more person-to-person interactions, and the ongoing spread of COVID-19.

At this time, I would like to remind our residents that COVID-19 is spreading rapidly in our community and all residents of Windsor and Essex County need to do their part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by following these public health measures:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Maintain a physical distance of 2 metres from others
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Use a non-medical face mask when physical distancing is not possible
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze

In addition, I am issuing additional instructions to control the spread of COVID-19 in our community. As Medical Officer of Health for the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, **I am issuing these instructions pursuant to Ontario Regulations 364/20, Rules for Areas in Stage 3, Schedule 1, section 2(2) and section 2(3)** which require businesses or organizations to operate in compliance with advice, recommendations and instructions of public health officials. In doing so, I am instructing all Windsor-Essex residents or persons responsible for a business or organization that is permitted to remain open under the *Reopening Ontario A Flexible Response to COVID-19, Act 2020 Regulation 364/20* to maintain their adherence to the following additional requirements above and beyond the provincial regulations until further notice.

1. General instructions for residents:

- a. Zero tolerance on all COVID-19 prevention measures.
- b. Minimize your close contacts to your household members only.
- c. Minimize visiting to a private home or residential premise, including social gatherings (both indoor and outdoor) except for essential reasons.
- d. Cancel or postpone any other discretionary in-person activities which cannot be held virtually, or participate only with your household and essential supports.

2. Workplaces instructions:

- a. Enable, as possible, work from home options for employees.
- b. Prohibit non-essential visitors (persons whose presence is not essential to the functioning of the workplace as a workplace) from attending their facilities.

3. Malls instructions:

- a. Prohibit consumption of food or drink while walking through malls.

4. Retail and Grocery Stores instructions:

- a. Designate specific store hours to serve seniors who do not have any other support systems for essential grocery needs.
- b. Restrict the number of people in the store to allow for physical distancing.
- c. Ensure signage for unidirectional flow of customers and staff to minimize any close physical contact.

5. Gyms and Fitness Centers instructions:

- a. Strictly follow the number of people allowed in the establishment under the regulations.
- b. Direct participants to pre-register for a specific group class that might be offered (i.e., no walk-in participants permitted), in addition to the provincially mandated registration to enter the facility.
- c. Maintain class lists with names and contact information of participants to assist with cohorting and contact tracing in the event of an exposure.
- d. Retain class contact lists for a period of at least one month; and only disclose the records to a MOH or an inspector under the HPPA on request for a purpose specified in Section 2 of that Act or as otherwise required by law.

These measures intend to reduce the impact of COVID-19 in Windsor and Essex County.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wajid Ahmed, MBBS, MAS, MSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health