

July 17, 2020

To Employers in North Bay Parry Sound District:

RE: North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit's Instructions to Persons Responsible for a Business, Organization or Service Permitted to Open (under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990* and related Regulations)

The region served by North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) will be moving into stage 3 on July 17th, 2020. To support a continued successful reopening I am writing to all persons responsible for a business, organization or service that is permitted to open per Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA) [Ontario Regulation 364/20 – Stage 3 Closures](#), to highlight your role as a key partner in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Please be reminded of your responsibilities for **general compliance** per provincial legislation:

4. (1) The owner/operator of a business, organization or service that is open shall ensure that it operates in accordance with all applicable laws, including the [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#) and the regulations made under it, as well as best practices and guidelines.
- (2) The owner/operator of a business, organization or service that is open shall operate it in **compliance** with the advice, recommendations, and **instructions of public health officials**.
- (3) The owner/operator of a business, organization or service that is open to the public, or responsible for a facility that is open to the public, shall ensure that it is operated to enable **persons** in premises to, in the fullest extent possible, maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from other persons, and implement other protective measures if this is not possible. ([Ontario Regulation 364/20](#))

As Medical Officer of Health, the following are my instructions, pursuant to [O. Reg 364/20, Schedule 1, s2\(2\)](#) (or as current), to all **employers/owners/operators responsible for businesses, organizations and services** within North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit service area:

1. To the fullest extent possible, ensure measures are in place to maintain physical distancing amongst all persons who enter the premises.
2. Unless the nature of work requires the use of a medical mask, to the fullest extent possible, ensure all individuals wear a non-medical mask (for example, a homemade cloth face covering) when physical distancing is challenging or not possible.
3. Promote excellent hygiene practices, including hand hygiene, and cough and sneeze etiquette.
4. Consult the Ministry of Labour to explore measures to protect employees (e.g. accommodations under [OHSA](#)).

Further, the following are my additional instructions **to employers/owners/operators of businesses,**

organizations and services with Enclosed Public Spaces^b including transportation in the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit area, effective 12:01 a.m., July 24, 2020:

1. Have a policy in place to prohibit Personsⁱⁱ from entering or remaining in the Enclosed Public Space of the business, organization or service, including transportation premises if the said Person is not wearing a Face Coveringⁱⁱⁱ. **A sample policy** can be found on the Health Unit's website at <http://www.myhealthunit.ca/FaceCoverings>. Best Efforts^{iv} shall be made to only allow entry to Persons wearing a Face Covering.
2. The Face Covering must be worn inside the premises at all times, unless it is reasonably required to temporarily remove the Face Covering for services provided by the business, organization or service (i.e. receiving services on areas covered by a Face Covering; actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity including water-based activities; consuming food or drink; and for any emergency or medical purpose.)
3. A Person shall be exempt from wearing a Face Covering on the premises if:
 - a. The Person is a child under the age of two years; or a child under the age of five years either by birth age or mental development who refuses to wear a Face Covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
 - b. The Person is unable to remove their Face Covering without assistance;
 - c. Wearing a Face Covering would inhibit the Person's ability to breathe in any way;
 - d. For any other medical reason, the Person cannot safely wear a Face Covering such as, but not limited to: respiratory disease, cognitive difficulties, or difficulties in hearing or processing information;
 - e. officiants (e.g. minister, rabbi, priest, imam) of a religious ceremony if standing in an area of the worship space that is separate and at least two metres apart from the public attending the ceremony; and
 - f. staff working within or performing duties behind a physical barrier (e.g. plexiglass barrier) *provided physical distancing of two metres can be maintained among staff*; or staff working in an area of an Enclosed Public Space that is not designated for public access and where physical distancing of two metres **can** be maintained.
4. The policy should be enacted and enforced in "good faith" and should be used as a means to educate people on Face Covering use in premises where physical distancing can be a challenge.
5. The strength of enforcement is up to the local business, organization, or service. Wearing a Face Covering is an easy way to protect others around you. Although a business, organization, or service has the right to deny entry to their premises, the policy should be enacted and enforced in "good

faith” and should be used as a means to educate people on Face Covering use in premises where physical distancing can be a challenge. We encourage our community to be ‘COVID kind’ and understand that not everyone can wear a Face Covering safely and may need accommodation and understanding.

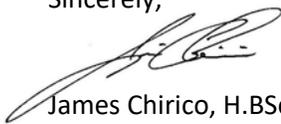
6. Ensure the availability of alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with minimum alcohol concentration of 60%) at all entrances and exits for everyone’s use when entering or exiting the premises.
7. Post clearly visible signage at every public entrance to the premises, indicating that all Persons entering or remaining in these premises must wear a Face Covering that securely covers the nose, mouth and chin. Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and are trained on expectations and implementation. **Sample signage** can be found on the Health Unit’s website at <http://www.myhealthunit.ca/FaceCoverings>.
8. Provide a verbal reminder to any Person entering the premises without a Face Covering that they should be wearing a Face Covering, if able.
9. Require, for Persons in an Enclosed Public Space removing their Face Covering for extended periods of time, a verbal reminder of the requirement to wear a Face Covering under these instructions.

Accumulating scientific evidence indicates that the widespread use of Face Coverings by all Persons decreases spread of respiratory spit and spray, and expert opinion supports the widespread use of Face Coverings to decrease transmission of COVID-19.

With the right to reopen businesses and public settings in our communities, comes the critical responsibility to do so in a *COVID-safe* way. All of us, businesses and the public alike, share in the responsibility and opportunity to make this initiative successful throughout our district and help reduce the spread of COVID-19 as we move into stage three.

A number of workplace resources are available on [Health Unit’s website](#) including a number of sector specific [guidelines](#). Should you require additional information, please visit myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19 or call the Health Unit’s call centre at 1-800-563-2808 option 5.

Sincerely,



James Chirico, H.BSc., M.D., F.R.C.P. (C), MPH
Medical Officer of Health/Executive Officer
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Copy: Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health

i Under this mandate, Enclosed Public Spaces include, but are not limited to:

- common areas of banks/financial institutions;
- common areas of hospitals and independent health facilities such as lobbies, food courts, and retail establishments;
- common areas of hotels, motels, or short-term rental premises such as lobbies, elevators, meeting rooms, rest rooms, laundry rooms, gyms, and kitchens;
- common areas of mechanics' shops, garages, and repair shops;
- common areas of premises under the control of a regulated health professional under the [Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 18](#), as amended, such as waiting rooms;
- convenience stores;
- farmer's markets;
- grocery stores and bakeries;
- libraries, museums, art galleries, recreational facilities, bingo halls, community centres and halls, cinemas, theatres, concert venues, special event venues, convention centers, or other similar entertainment, cultural, or leisure facilities;
- organization, government, and business offices (publicly accessible areas) including spaces where training is being provided to the public;
- personal service settings (e.g. spas, hair salons, barbers, nail salons) that are subject to health and safety protocols provided by the Province of Ontario during the provincial emergency;
- places of worship (e.g. churches, mosques, synagogues, temples);
- private business transportation (e.g. company vehicle)
- private transportation (e.g. taxis, rideshare services);
- public transportation (e.g., bus or train);
- restaurants, cafés, cafeterias, food premises, banquet halls, nightclubs, bars;
- retail establishments and shopping malls; and
- sports facilities, sports clubs, gyms, yoga studios, dance studios, and stadiums.

The Enclosed Public Spaces NOT included:

- Spaces subject to provincial and/or local public health guidance:
 - child care centres and providers governed by the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, S.O. 2014, c. 11](#), as amended (**except when medical masks are required, as directed**);
 - day camps, and
 - schools under the [Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2](#), as amended;
**Parents / guardians are required to wear a Face Covering when entering a common area of these premises.*
- Indoor areas of a business, organizations, or services that are not designated for public access – if staff members can maintain physical distance of two metres from one another; and
- offices not open to the public including professional offices where clients receive services by appointment only (e.g. lawyer, accountant) – except waiting room, as applicable, or if physical distancing of two metres is unable to be maintained

ii A Person means any customer, client, patron, staff member or visitor, who enters the premises.

iii A Face Covering is a cloth face covering, or other face covering with *preferably* two layers of material that securely

covers the nose, mouth, and chin and is in contact with the surrounding face without gapping in order to contain coughs, sneezes and respiratory spit and spray of the person wearing the face covering. Face coverings such as a bandana, scarf, cloth, niqab or burka are not designed to filter air and do not have a number of layers; however they are a better alternative if a face covering is not available. (Where possible, a cloth mask should be worn underneath a head covering to ensure best fit against the face.) Face shields can also be used in situations when an individual is unable to use any other type of Face Covering. Face shields are not acceptable forms of a Face Covering for the purpose of these instructions.

iv

Best Efforts when restricting entry to Persons wearing Face Coverings are defined as follows:

- Where an establishment has a staff member restricting occupancy into the premises, a verbal reminder that they should be wearing a Face Covering as a result of these instructions shall be given to any Person entering the premises without one. For greater clarity, there is not a need for a business to turn away the individual to achieve the Best Effort standard.
- For Persons in a premises seen removing their Face Covering for extended periods of time, a verbal reminder to that Person of the requirement to wear Face Coverings under these instructions.