



March 11, 2022

Dear York Region School Administrators and Child Care Operators,

On March 9, 2022, the provincial government announced updates to the [COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge](#) and Health and Safety Guidance for schools and child care settings.

Please refer to the ***Ministry of Education Update: Lifting of Health and Safety Measures in Schools and Child Care*** (attached) when implementing health and safety measures in schools and child care settings.

KEY UPDATES

Effective March 21, 2022:

1. Although on-site confirmation of screening will no longer be required, students/attendees, staff and visitors must complete the [provincial COVID-19 School and Child Care screening tool](#) at home prior to arrival. **Individuals who do not pass screening must not enter school or child care and follow the guidance provided in the screening tool.**
2. The provincial government will no longer mandate masks for students/attendees, staff and visitors in school and child care and on school transportation. **Individuals can choose to continue wearing masks based on their own risk level and individual risk assessment.** We request everyone's kindness and consideration as we navigate this new phase of the pandemic.
3. Cohorting and physical distancing will no longer be required in school and child care settings. Child care licensees must continue to meet the requirements under the [Child Care and Early Years Act \(CCEYA\)](#).
4. Schools and child care centres should continue to optimize ventilation, perform hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and cleaning and disinfection according to guidance.
5. School administrators and child care operators are expected to continue to report absenteeism rates to York Region Public Health if absenteeism surpasses 30% (above baseline) through the [Rapid Antigen Test \(RAT\) survey](#) (please see [reporting form instructions](#)).

York Region Public Health is strongly encouraging students/attendees, staff and visitors to continue masking for at least two weeks after March break in crowded settings, places where there is close contact and when spaces may be confined. Especially as many will be travelling and/or attending social gatherings during this period.

COVID-19 ISOLATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CASES AND CONTACTS

As per provincial guidance [COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge](#):

Table 1: Isolation Requirements for Individuals with COVID-19 Symptoms

Population	Isolation Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fully vaccinated individuals, or• Child under 12 years of age	5 days after test date or symptom onset (whichever is earlier)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individuals 12 years of age and older and who are not fully vaccinated, or• Immunocompromised individuals	10 days after test date or symptom onset (whichever is earlier)

Isolation Requirements for Asymptomatic Close Contacts

If you are **NOT symptomatic** and **DO NOT live** with a symptomatic individual or COVID-19 case, you are **not required** to isolate.

If you are **NOT symptomatic** and live with a symptomatic individual or COVID-19 case, you are **not** required to isolate if:

1. Household members are 18 years of age and older and have received a booster dose, OR
2. Household members are under 18 years of age and are [fully vaccinated](#), OR
3. Household members have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days (RAT or PCR test)

Even if not required to isolate based on the above criteria, household and non-household close contacts of a COVID-19 case or symptomatic individual, must self-monitor for 10 days (from last exposure) and wear a well-fitted mask in school and child care settings.

This includes avoiding activities such as high-contact sports and playing wind instruments where masking and/or physical distancing cannot be maintained.

TRAVEL

Under [current federal travel requirements](#), individuals returning from international travel must **wear a mask at all times when in public spaces (including schools and child care)**, maintain a list of all close contacts for 14 days upon return to Canada and monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Please refer to the [Government of Canada website](#) for requirements and exemptions regarding COVID-19 and travel.

VACCINATION

COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and the best way to protect you and those around you from serious illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19. York Region Public Health

encourages all individuals five years of age and older to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine to learn more and find a vaccine clinic.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact our School, Child Care and Day Program Intake Line at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76681 or email our general inbox at SchoolServices@york.ca. This intake line and inbox are monitored from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Thank you for doing your part to keep our school and child care communities safe. We appreciate your ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,

York Region Public Health