

COVID-19

Physical Distancing

What is physical distancing?

Physical Distancing is a new term for most of us. As the name suggests, it means keeping a distance of at least 2 arms-length (about 2 metres) from others.

It also means making changes in your everyday routines to minimize close contact with others to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Lambton Public Health encourages everyone to practise physical distancing. Here's how:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Limit the number of people you come in close physical contact. It reduces the risk and prevents the spread.
- Avoid crowded places and non-essential gatherings.
- Avoid common greetings, such as handshakes.
- Limit contact with people at higher risk, like older adults and those with health issues.
- Politely remind others to keep a distance of 2 metres.

You can still:

- Run essential errands.
- Exercise while keeping your distance from others.
- Conduct essential work in the community while maintaining physical distance.

Self-isolate if:

- You have returned from travel outside Canada.
- You have symptoms.
- You had close contact with someone who has or is suspected to have COVID-19.

Why should I practise physical distancing?

Physical distancing saves lives. By reducing the amount of people that you contact you reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Exercising physical distancing can reduce the strain on the health-care system. If people are not sick at the same time, there's greater capacity for hospitals to care for you if you get sick.

Therefore you should be practising physical distancing at all times, before a potential infection with COVID-19 and before any symptoms.

Washing your hands often, avoiding touching your face, and proper cough/sneeze etiquette are some of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

What's been done to limit physical distancing?

With the exception of essential services, Lambton Public Health and Ontario have ordered restaurants, bars, stores, theatres, etc. where large groups of individuals would normally gather to close.

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What can I do?

Work

- Work from home if you can
- If you must continue to work on-site, make sure your office space is set up with workers 2 metres apart
- Use teleconferences.

Cancel group gatherings

- Cancel all group gatherings.
- Do not host parties or play dates with other children.
- Hang out with the people in your household, if they are not sick.
- Stay in touch with friends but do not meet in person.
- Connect over texts, phone calls, video calls, or social media instead.

Essential trips

Places that provide food have taken measures to reduce exposure by limiting the number of customers in their business and posting reminders to keep their physical distance.

- Don't take the whole family shopping.
- Plan errands to buy what you need (do not panic buy)
- Go during non-peak times.
- Avoid long lineups and do not crowd entrances or checkouts.
- If running errands for a neighbor in self-isolation, leave at their doorstep

Greetings

- Wave or say 'hi' instead of handshakes, kisses or hugs

Do not visit any place where there are [people who are at high risk](#), unless absolutely necessary.

- hospitals
- long-term care homes
- retirement homes
- supportive housing
- hospices

Meals/ delivery:

- Cook at home when possible.
- If ordering food, try to use delivery instead of takeout.
- If getting takeout, do not congregate inside the restaurant. Order ahead of time via telephone or online.
- Give as much space as possible when picking up your food.
- Use tap to pay rather than handling money or pay electronically beforehand.

Stay active:

- Exercise in your home or yard. There are online classes for workout inspiration.
- Choose outdoor activities where you can keep 2m distance (e.g. walking trails).
- If you exercise in public places, limit this to people in your household.

Other:

- Limit the number of people in elevators. Wait for the next elevator so people have enough space.
- Avoid public transit if possible and travel during non-peak hours.

Resources:

[How to Practice Physical Distancing](#)
[COVID-19: Physical Distancing Video](#)