

COVID-19

Guidance for Food Premises: Indoor/Outdoor Dining and Takeout During COVID-19

NOTE: Public Health is responsible for providing guidance to limit transmission and exposure to COVID-19 for Stage 3 implementation.

This guidance is accurate at the time of its release (November 17, 2020) and is subject to change or revision based on provincial guidance

Based on the recent [Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#) effective on November 7, 2020 and updated November 13, 2020, currently Lambton County is in the **GREEN-PREVENT LEVEL**.

Green-Prevent level measures for Restaurants, Bars and Food or Drink Establishments:

- Line-ups / patrons congregating outside venues must be managed by venue; 2m distance and face covering required
- Return to previous alcohol sales and service hours as per the Liquor License and Control Act.
- Eye protection where patrons without face coverings are within 2m of workers (specific information can be found in [Ontario Regulations 364/20](#) : Section 2 of Schedule 1)

For measures that continue to be in effect from Stage 3, refer to the following text from the [Ontario Regulations 364/20](#):

Schedule 1 (section 2) General Compliance:

The person responsible for a business organization that is open shall ensure that they:

- Operate in accordance with all applicable laws, including the Occupational Health & Safety Act and the regulations made under it.
- Follow recommendations or instructions on physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting.
- Ensure that any person in the indoor area of the premises of the business or organization, or in a vehicle that is operating as part of the business or organization, wears a mask or face covering in a manner that covers their mouth, nose and chin during any period when they are in the indoor area. In addition, employers must be aware of the exemptions to mask wearing. Please see Section 4 on exemptions.



Schedule 1 (Section 3): Capacity limits for businesses or facilities open to the public:

- 3 (1) The person responsible for a place of business or facility that is open to the public shall limit the number of persons in the place of business or facility so that every member of the public is able to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person in the business or facility, except where Schedule 2 allows persons to be closer together.
- 3 (2) For greater certainty, subsection (1) does not require persons who are in compliance with public health guidance on households and social circles to maintain a physical distance of at least two meters from each other while in a place of business or facility.

**Meeting or event space - please see the full [regulations](#) for Meetings or events*

Schedule 2: Section 1:

1 (1) Restaurants, bars, food trucks, concession stands and other food or drink establishments may open if they comply with the following conditions:

1. No buffet-style service may be provided.
2. Patrons must be seated when eating or drinking at the establishment.
3. The establishment must be configured so that patrons seated at different tables are separated by, a distance of at least two meters, or Plexiglas or other impermeable barrier.
 - a. If an outdoor dining area at the establishment is covered by a roof, canopy, tent, awning or other element, at least two full sides of the entire outdoor dining area must be open to the outdoors and must not be substantially blocked by any walls or other impermeable physical barriers.
 - b. If the outdoor dining area at the establishment is equipped with a retractable roof and the roof is retracted, at least one full side of the outdoor dining area must be open to the outdoors and must not be substantially blocked by any walls or other impermeable physical barriers.
4. No person shall dance, sing or perform music at the establishment except in accordance with subsection (2) or (3).
 - a. A person or group under contract with the establishment may dance, sing or perform music in compliance with the requirements set out in section 11.
 - b. Members of the public may sing or perform music at the establishment if:
 - (2) they maintain a physical distance of at least two meters from every other person while singing or performing music; and
 - (3) any equipment used by members of the public while singing or performing music is cleaned and disinfected between each use.
5. The person responsible for the establishment must:
 - a. Record the name and contact information of at least one member of every party of patrons that enters an indoor or outdoor dining area in the establishment, other than patrons who temporarily enter the area to place, pick up or pay for a takeout order

- b. Maintain the records for a period of at least one month
- c. Only disclose the records to a medical officer of health or an inspector under the Health Protection and Promotion Act on request for a purpose specified in section 2 of that Act or as otherwise required by law

COVID-19 is spread mainly from person-to-person through close contact from respiratory droplets of someone with COVID-19. The respiratory droplets can travel up to two meters/six feet when we cough, sneeze or talk. It is possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. This new coronavirus can survive on plastic and stainless steel surfaces for up to [72 hours](#), but it is not known if the virus remains infectious for this time.

Pre-Opening Checklist

There is no requirement for restaurants to be inspected by Lambton Public Health (LPH) before reopening. However, if you have a new food premise, you must contact us to arrange for an inspection.

In addition to the information below, operators should also refer to guidance from the [Ministry of Labour](#) and [Government of Ontario](#) related to restaurant and food service operation. This guidance does not replace food safety guidance from LPH and requirements within the [Ontario Food Premises Regulation](#).

Note: Due to our agency's response and commitment to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Lambton County, response times and ability for staff to arrange an immediate inspection may be limited. Please be patient.

Recommended actions to be taken prior to re-opening your establishment include:

- Assess all food products and discard expired or otherwise unfit products.
- Wash, rinse and sanitize all food contact surfaces.
- Ensure hand washing stations are adequate and functional.
- Clean and disinfect all non-food contact surfaces, including high touch areas such as door handles and equipment knobs. Give attention to key touch points and objects (e.g. food contact surfaces, hand contact areas, door handles, switches, table tops, chairs, restrooms, taps, utensils and dispensers).
- Check thoroughly for signs of pest activity. Consider contracting a licensed pest management company prior to opening to ensure no infestations are present.
- Clean, sanitize and ensure all hot and cold holding facilities/equipment are functional.
- Where applicable, ensure dishwashing machines are functioning adequately.
- Ensure adequate amounts of sanitizers and detergents are available for manual dishwashing.
- Ensure garbage storage areas are clean and of adequate size for your needs.

- Clean and disinfect washrooms, ensure adequate supplies are available.
- Ensure faucets are working properly and flush cold and hot water lines. Refer to the [Canadian Water and Wastewater fact sheet](#) for more information on reopening buildings.
- Rearrange equipment and/or processes in the kitchen and other areas used by staff so that a two metre/six foot distance is achievable at all times.
- Develop new procedures/requirements for operating during the COVID-19 pandemic including:
 - Updating protocols for regular and frequent cleaning/disinfecting surfaces and equipment.
 - Shared equipment such as credit card machines and cash registers.
 - Consider installing devices such as automatic doors, lights and electronic taps etc.
 - Increase frequency of washroom cleaning. It is suggested to clean every hour in busy establishments.
 - Use cleaning and disinfecting guidelines from [Public Health Ontario](#)
- Ensure staff are properly trained on:
 - [Proper hand washing, use of gloves and masks](#) and avoiding touching face. [Training resources/videos](#) are available to support this.
 - How to serve food to maintain safe physical distancing and avoid unnecessary handling (e.g. serve to front of the table and let customers distribute, avoid handling coffee cups when refilling, let customers fill/pack leftovers in containers).

Checklist for Indoor/Outdoor Dining Areas:

- Rearrange and/or remove seating and tables, or mark tables as “unavailable,” to ensure the following conditions are met:
 - Minimum of two metres/six feet between patrons seated at different tables OR must be separated by plexiglass or impermeable barrier.
- Remove seating in your waiting area.
- Do not pre-set tables; utensils should be rolled or packaged.
- Clean and sanitize all dining tables and all seating between customers
- All table surfaces must be of material that is tight, smooth and non-absorbent and can be easily cleaned and sanitized.
 - For the use of **Picnic tables** - Raw wood cannot be easily sanitized. Ensure wood is sealed to allow for proper cleaning and sanitizing. Alternatively, tables may be covered with a table cloth that can be easily cleaned and sanitized.
- Post [signage](#) on mask use, hand washing, physical distancing and symptom screening. Make signage clearly visible to staff and customers.

- Consider floor markers for any area where lineups or crowding may occur.
- Provide hand sanitizer at entrances and exits.
- Line-ups/patrons congregating outside venues must be managed by venue; 2m distance and face covering required
- Create one-way movement of customers throughout restaurant with floor markings.
- Liquor sales licensees who wish to temporarily extend the physical size of their existing licensed patio, or temporarily add a new licensed patio within the approved period should consult with the [local municipality](#) and [AGCO](#).
- Outdoor dining areas can open but must adhere to the following:
 - If covered by a roof, canopy, tent, awning or other element, at least two full sides of the entire outdoor dining area must be open to the outdoors and must not be substantially blocked by any walls or other impermeable physical barriers.
 - If the outdoor dining area at the establishment is equipped with a retractable roof and the roof is retracted, at least one full side of the outdoor dining area must be open to the outdoors and must not be substantially blocked by any walls or other impermeable physical barriers.
- Umbrellas may also be used for sun shade in outdoor dining areas.

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 during food service operation:

For Staff:

- **REQUIRED: Active Screening of all Employees**
 - Effective: September 26, 2020, employers **must actively screen every worker before they enter the workplace at the start of their shift** as described in the [instructions issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health](#).
 - Active screening may be done in person at the workplace or remotely using telephone, internet (online), email submission or an app prior to entry.
 - Actively screen each person entering the workplace for work purposes, including workers, volunteers, suppliers and contractors.
 - Screening should occur before or when the person arrives at the workplace at the beginning of their shift or visit.
 - Use the [COVID-19 screening tool for workplaces](#) or ensure that your screening process includes all the questions from the screening tool.
 - A screener should advise anyone who does not pass the screening:
 - that they may not enter the workplace, including any outdoor, or partially outdoor, workplaces
 - to go home to self-isolate immediately
 - to contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) to find out if they need a COVID-19 test and for further instructions

- Make sure screeners receive information and instruction on how to perform this work safely and what to do if a person must be excluded from the workplace.
- REQUIRED: Maintain logs for staff contact information
 - For staff: Keep a log of when and where staff worked, with contact information.
 - Operators will be required to keep logs of the name and contact information staff, with a check in time for at least 30 days.
 - If there is a case of COVID-19 who was contagious while at the restaurant, public health will use that list to notify the staff and customers. See updated regulations above for requirements on disclosure of records.
 - Public health will advise of any additional cleaning and disinfecting measures needed to reduce the risk of spread in the setting.
 - Additional resources: [Workplace Outbreak Management](#) and [Outbreak Management Flowchart](#).
- REQUIRED: Staff are **required to wear face coverings/masks indoors** and when physical distancing of 2 metres is not possible, including employee only areas.
 - **NEW:** In addition, eye protection must be worn by employees where patrons without face coverings are within 2m of them (specific information can be found in [Ontario Regulations 364/20](#): Section 2 of Schedule 1)
 - Stagger or adjust working hours and shifts to reduce the number of staff in your business.
 - Have a flexible sick policy so staff does not come to work sick.
 - Remind employees about the importance of reporting illness to their supervisor/manager.
 - If an employee becomes ill with any NEW symptom for them, while at work, they should go home right away and [self-isolate](#). Refer to the list of common COVID-19 symptoms.
 - More information: [Decision Guide for Symptomatic Employees](#)
 - [Wash hands](#). Ensure employees wash hands before and after handling food, using the bathroom, handling cash etc. Gloves are to be replaced/changed at this time as well.

For Customers:

- REQUIRED: Maintain logs for staff contact information
 - Record the name and contact information of **at least one member of every party of patrons** who enters an indoor or outdoor dining area in the establishment, other than patrons who temporarily enter the area to place, pick up or pay for a takeout

- order.
- Operators will be required to keep logs of the name and contact information for customers and staff, with a check in time for at least 30 days.
 - For customers: Obtain a first name and telephone number (or email address) from one person in each party and keep this together with a record of the table number and the date and time.
- Maintain physical distancing - ensure two meters/six feet between all persons (if a group is sharing a table, they are presumed to be members of the same household and may sit closer together).
 - Customers are required to wear face coverings/masks unless seated to allow for eating and drinking.
 - Encourage hand washing/hand sanitizing prior to entering establishment and before food consumption.
 - Practice proper respiratory etiquette. Cough and sneeze into your elbow.
 - Customers waiting indoors or outdoors must be physically distanced and in both situations wearing a mask. This must be monitored by the establishment.
 - Ensure customers are aware that they cannot enter the establishment if they are ill or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Patrons must be seated at all times in any area of the establishment in which food or drink is permitted. Further details and exceptions are outlined in the regulations above.

RESOURCES:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#)
- [Safe Food Delivery Practices](#)- Lambton Public Health
- [COVID-19 Tip Sheet for Restaurants and Food Services](#)- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
- Guidance on [Health and Safety For Restaurant Servers, Cooks and Dishwashers during COVID-19](#) - Workplace Safety & Prevention Services