

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: April 6, 2020

STAY HOME EXCEPT FOR ESSENTIAL REASONS

NORTH BAY, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) wishes to emphasize the important legal directives by the Canadian government and recommendations by Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams. Please keep the following in mind. These directives and recommendations are intended to keep you, your loved ones and others healthy.

Federal Mandatory Isolation: Emergency Order under the Quarantine Act (March 25, 2020)

- All persons entering Canada **MUST isolate for 14 days** whether or not you have symptoms and **MUST STAY INSIDE** your home and do not leave your place of isolation unless it is to seek medical attention

Provincial Recommendations (for those NOT under Quarantine Orders): Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health strongly recommends you:

- **STAY HOME** except for essential reasons, such as to:
 - Access health care services;
 - Shop for groceries;
 - Pick-up medication at the pharmacy;
 - Walk pets when required; and
 - Support vulnerable community members with meeting the above needs.
- **LIMIT** the number of essential trips
- **PHYSICALLY DISTANCE** yourself when in public by two meters
- **SELF-ISOLATE** if you are elderly or have underlying health conditions

It is important to note that the Canadian government, under the Quarantine Act, mandates that all individuals who are returning from travel outside of Canada must self-isolate for 14 days when they return. You must not go to work, grocery stores or on walks. You should also monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after returning and contact your primary care provider, Health Unit or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) if you experience symptoms of COVID-19.

For the rest of Ontarians, to the fullest extent possible, you should limit the number of essential trips. However, when you are out in public you must adhere to physical distancing by reducing your exposure to other people outside of your household by keeping two meters from other people.

For those who are at most risk of severe outcomes, such as the elderly over 70 years of age, or those with weakened immune systems or underlying health conditions, Dr. Williams strongly recommends to self-isolate. This means only leaving home or seeing other people for essential reasons. Where possible, you should seek services over the phone or internet or ask for help from friends, family or neighbours with essential errands.

The Health Unit understands how difficult these COVID-19 recommendations can be on an individual's mental health. People want to know if they are allowed to go outside for a walk, get some fresh air or exercise.

If you are a returning traveller from outside of Canada and fall under the Quarantine Act or if you have tested positive for COVID-19 you are not allowed to go out except to seek medical attention.

All others should use their best judgement. It is strongly recommended you stay home. However, if you need to be out, only do so when you can safely stay two meters from people. Please remember, it is against the law in Ontario to gather in groups of more than five people and you need to maintain physical distancing of two meters.

The public is the first line of defense, by continuing to stay home, regularly washing your hands or using alcohol-based sanitizers, not touching your face and covering your cough or sneeze we can continue to flatten the curve. Everyone has a social responsibility to follow the recommendations and to be kind to each other.

Currently, there is no specific treatment for COVID-19. It is important to remember that four out of five individuals with COVID-19 have no symptoms or mild symptoms. Individuals who are mildly ill should isolate and care for themselves at home. Most will recover in one to two weeks by simply treating the symptoms.

If you think you may have COVID-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has it, first self-isolate and then use [Ontario's Self-Assessment Tool](#) to see if you need to seek further care. If you need further assistance call your health care provider or the Health Unit at [1-800-563-2808](tel:1-800-563-2808). This will help keep the emergency room resources available for trauma and emergent care patients. If you have severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, you should call 911 and tell them your travel history and your symptoms.

Visit [Ontario's website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.

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