

July 10, 2020

To all employers, business owners and operators,

Re: Algoma Public Health (APH) instructions to persons responsible for a business or organization permitted to open under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990* and associated regulations

I am writing to all persons responsible for a business or organization that is permitted to open under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA), R.S.O. 1990* and associated Regulations.

Thank you for your tremendous efforts so far in reopening safely. The preventive measures that you put in place every day protect workers and customers alike. You and your team are a vital part of Algoma's first line of defense during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The novel coronavirus continues to circulate widely and the risk of outbreaks is still with us. As we continue to maintain corridors of essential travel between Algoma and other regions including southern Ontario and the United States, keeping vigilant and strengthening preventive actions are key to safe and sustained reopening.

Under Ontario Regulation 263/20, Section 4(2) (or as current) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA)*, as Medical Officer of Health, **I am issuing the following instructions to all persons responsible for a business or organization that is open** within the District of Algoma Health Unit, effective July 17, 2020 at 12:01 AM:

- 1. Adopt a policy that requires all members of the public and employees who enter or remain in an enclosed public space of the business or organization to wear a mask or face covering that covers their mouth, nose and chin without gaping.** Enclosed public space means indoor spaces of businesses and organizations which are accessed by the public.
 - a. Exempt the following people from the policy:**
 - i. Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a mask or face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
 - ii. Persons with medical conditions who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering (e.g. due to breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties);
 - iii. Persons who cannot wear or remove a mask or face covering without assistance, including people who are accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) or are protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H. 19 as amended;

Blind River
P.O. Box 194
9B Lawton Street
Blind River, ON P0R 1B0
Tel: 705-356-2551
TF: 1 (888) 356-2551
Fax: 705-356-2494

Elliot Lake
ELNOS Building
302-31 Nova Scotia Walk
Elliot Lake, ON P5A 1Y9
Tel: 705-848-2314
TF: 1 (877) 748-2314
Fax: 705-848-1911

Sault Ste. Marie
294 Willow Avenue
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 0A9
Tel: 705-942-4646
TF: 1 (866) 892-0172
Fax: 705-759-1534

Wawa
18 Ganley Street
Wawa, ON P0S 1K0
Tel: 705-856-7208
TF: 1 (888) 211-8074
Fax: 705-856-1752

iv. Employees who are in an area of the premise that is not designated for public access, or who are within or behind a physical barrier (e.g. Plexiglass).

b. Permit the temporary removal of a mask or face covering where necessary for the following purposes:

- i. Actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity including water-based activities;
- ii. Consuming food or drink;
- iii. For any emergency or medical purpose.

2. Implement and enforce the policy in “good faith” and use it to educate people on masks and face coverings and promote their use in enclosed public spaces.

- a. Do not require employees or members of the public to provide proof of any of the exemptions listed in 1(a).
- b. Post, at every public entrance to enclosed public spaces, prominent and clearly visible signage indicating that masks or face coverings are required inside the premises. Sample signage is available at APH’s website [here](#).
- c. Give verbal reminders of the policy’s masking requirement to persons who enter the premise without a mask or face covering, and to persons who remove their mask or face covering for an extended period of time.
- d. Train employees on the requirements of the policy and its implementation.
- e. Upon request, provide a copy of the policy to a public health inspector or other person authorized to enforce the provisions of the EMCPA.

Algoma Public Health is committed to supporting local businesses and organizations to reopen safely. Please use the resources below and attached to help put these protective measures in place.

- A sample workplace policy requiring masks in enclosed public spaces is appended to this letter and available on APH’s website [here](#)
- Signs for posting are available to download and print from APH’s website [here](#)
- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions are available on APH’s website [here](#). Resources include:
 - A video on [how to wear face covering properly](#)
 - [List of local suppliers](#) of non-medical masks in Algoma

Employers or community organizations with further questions may contact APH’s Healthy Workplace team.
Phone: 705-942-4646, ext. 3276
Email: healthyworkplaces@algomapublichealth.com

Lastly, please be reminded of your responsibilities for general compliance as per provincial legislation (EMCPA O. Reg. 263/20):

4 (1) The person responsible for a business or organization that is open shall ensure that the business or organization operates in accordance with all applicable laws, including the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and the regulations made under it.

(2) The person responsible for a business or organization that is open shall operate the business or organization **in compliance with the advice, recommendations and instructions of public health officials, including any advice, recommendations or instructions on physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting.**

(3) The person responsible for a business that is open to the public, or an organization responsible for a facility that is open to the public, shall ensure that the place of business or facility is operated to enable members of the public in the place of business or facility to, to the fullest extent possible, **maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from other persons.**

Once again, thank you for your work and commitment to the health and safety of Algoma communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marlene Spruyt', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Marlene Spruyt, BSc, MD, CCFP, FCFP, MSc-PH
Medical Officer of Health

Sample Policy

Mandatory Use of Mask or Face Covering within [*Name of Business or Organization*]

1. Beginning July 17, 2020, all employees, visitors and customers are required to wear a mask or face covering upon entering and remaining within [*Name of Business or Organization*]. The mask or face covering must cover the nose, mouth and chin.
 - a. The following persons are exempted from the requirement to wear a mask or face covering and will not be required to provide proof of such exemption:
 - i. Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a mask or face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
 - ii. Persons with medical conditions who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering (e.g. due to breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties);
 - iii. Persons who cannot wear or remove a mask or face covering without assistance, including people who are accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) or are protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H. 19 as amended;
 - iv. Employees who are in an area of the premise that is not designated for public access, or who are within or behind a physical barrier (e.g. Plexiglass).
 - b. Temporary removal of the mask or face covering is permitted where necessary for the following purposes:
 - i. Actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity including water-based activities;
 - ii. Consuming food or drink;
 - iii. For any emergency or medical purpose.
2. This policy will be implemented and enforced in “good faith” to primarily educate people on masks and face coverings and promote their use in enclosed public spaces.
 - a. Persons with exemptions listed under 1a) are not required to show proof of exemption.
 - b. Signs about the requirement to wear masks or face coverings shall be posted at all public entrances.
 - c. Persons entering or remaining without a mask or face covering will be given a verbal reminder of the policy’s masking requirement.
 - d. Employees will be trained on the policy, including where and how to properly wear a mask or face covering, and how to help and respond to customers who do not have a mask or face covering.
 - e. A copy of this policy will be made available on request to a public health inspector or other person authorized to enforce the EMCPA.