

General Community Information for CLOSE CONTACTS of People who have Symptoms of COVID-19 or Tested Positive for COVID-19 (PCR or Rapid Antigen Test (RAT))

This guidance does not apply to those who live, work, or volunteer in a high-risk setting. For general information for those who live or work in high-risk settings, please view the [Algoma Case and Contact Guide](#).

If you think you have been exposed to someone who has symptoms compatible with COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 (because the individual has advised you or you received a notification from the [COVID Alert app](#)), it is important you follow these steps to protect yourself and others:

Determine if You Need to Self-Isolate

[Self-isolation](#) means not leaving your home or the place you are isolating in for a period of time. Your self-isolation period starts the day you were **last exposed or came in to contact with** the person who is symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19.

When you are self-isolating, you must isolate away from others in the home, if possible, and **not** have visitors come into the home (unless for essential reasons, e.g. health care). During your self-isolation, you cannot attend work, school, extracurricular activities, or go shopping, and can only leave the home to access emergency care.

Household contacts of a person who has COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19

- Household members should generally **self-isolate** for the same amount of time as the positive/symptomatic person, **with the following exceptions**:
 - Household members who are aged **18+ and have already received their [booster dose](#)** are not required to isolate.
 - Household members who are **under 18 years of age and are considered [fully vaccinated](#)** are not required to isolate.
 - Household members who have previously **tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days** (based on a positive PCR/ID Now/RAT result) are not required to isolate **and** can attend high-risk settings, as long as they are asymptomatic.

If you meet one or more of the three criteria above, you do not need to self-isolate. If you **do not meet one or more of the three criteria above, you are required to self-isolate** for the same amount of time as the positive or symptomatic person in your household.

- Whether you are required to self-isolate or not, **for a total of 10 days after your last exposure** to the COVID-19 positive or symptomatic person, you must:
 - Self-monitor for [symptoms](#) and [self-isolate](#) if any symptoms of COVID-19 develop;
 - Continue to wear a well-fitted mask and physical distance in all public settings;
 - Avoid activities where mask removal would be necessary (i.e. dining out, contact sports);
 - Not visit anyone who is immunocompromised or at higher risk of illness (i.e. seniors);
 - Not visit or attend work in a highest-risk setting (unless you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days).
- If [COVID-19 symptoms](#) develop, or you test positive on a Rapid Antigen Test, immediately self-isolate and follow the [Letter for Persons who have Symptoms of COVID-19 or Test Positive for COVID-19](#). Do not attend an assessment centre for PCR testing, unless you are [eligible for testing](#).

- **For self-isolating household members** that have not developed symptoms, if any other household members develop COVID-19 symptoms, they should **extend their self-isolation** until the last symptomatic (or COVID-19 positive) person has finished their self-isolation. The initial COVID-19 positive/symptomatic person **does not have to extend** their isolation period based on other household members becoming ill.
- If you are a caregiver to someone with COVID-19, please see [this handout](#) for tips to keep yourself safe.
- If you cannot self-isolate in your home, please call APH at 705-942-4646 ext. 5404.

Non-household close contacts of person who has COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19

For a **total of 10 days after your last exposure** to the COVID-19 case, you must:

- Self-monitor for [symptoms](#) and [self-isolate](#) if any symptoms of COVID-19 develop;
- Continue to wear a well-fitted mask and physical distance in all public settings;
- Avoid activities where mask removal would be necessary (i.e. dining out, contact sports);
- Not visit anyone who is immunocompromised or at higher risk of illness (i.e. seniors);
- Not visit or attend work in a highest-risk setting (unless you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days on a PCR/ID Now/RAT test).

If [COVID-19 symptoms](#) develop, or you test positive on a Rapid Antigen Test, immediately self-isolate and follow the [Letter for Persons who have Symptoms of COVID-19 or Test Positive for COVID-19](#). Do not attend an assessment center for PCR testing, unless you are [eligible for testing](#).

Self-Monitor for Symptoms

All close contacts must [self-monitor](#) for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) daily for 10 days after the date you were exposed. Self-monitoring means checking for symptoms including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing for at least 10 days following your exposure.

Individuals notified as a close contact and advised to self-monitor or self-isolate are also encouraged to report their COVID-19 exposure to their workplace, and follow any additional recommendations or restrictions from their employer or occupational health and safety department.

Failure to follow the guidance within this letter may result in enforcement under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7](#).

Other COVID-19 Measures and Precautions

After your self-isolation or self-monitoring period ends, you are encouraged to continue following public health measures when outside your home and take precautions to protect yourself and your loved ones. This includes getting vaccinated against COVID-19, practicing proper hand hygiene, practicing proper respiratory etiquette, and staying home if you become sick.

More Information

For more information, visit the [Algoma COVID-19: Case and Contact Guide](#) or call the COVID-19 Support Line at 705-942-4646 ext. 5404. The phone line is open weekdays (Monday to Friday) from 9:00am – 4:00pm.