

## Memorandum

To: CLOC Employees, People Supported, Volunteers & Visitors

From: Terri Gray, Executive Director

Date: April 19, 2023

Re: New IPAC Guidance & Direction

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### PLEASE PRINT AND POST

You have all been instrumental in helping to keep people CLOC serves safe and healthy over this past three years. We thank you for your efforts and ongoing commitment and dedication.

CLOC recently received new guidance and direction from MCCSS and our Public Health partners regarding COVID-19 and congregate living settings. As the pandemic has evolved it is understood COVID-19 will continue to fluctuate. This COVID-19 guidance and direction reassessment has been informed through continued consultation between MCCSS and health partners. CLOC continues to follow the [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Other Congregate Living Settings for Public Health Units](#).

Highlights on status, recent changes and how CLOC will implement them:

- Changes to active screening of employees, students, volunteers, essential visitors, and general visitors as well as people supported returning from absence.
  - CLOC will continue to use Health Q with modifications for active screening for employees and visitors. Supervisors will continue to follow up on any failed Health Q logins. Our active screening and the use of Health Q will be reviewed in June 2023.
  - All employees, visitors and people supported need to continue to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. Passive Screening signage is posted at entrances at each of CLOC's locations that provide steps that need to be taken if COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed. Employees and visitors with new or worsening symptoms are **not to enter** CLOC settings. Please ensure clear signage is posted at your location. If it is not, please contact your supervisor.
- Masking changes for people supported, caregivers and visitors to no longer be required to mask outdoors, but the recommendation remains in place for employees when in close proximity to people receiving supports.
  - All direct support employees and visitors need to adhere to universal masking while indoors during a shift, for the purpose of source control. Employees are required to wear a mask outdoors when in close proximity with people supported.

- Removal of the section on physical distancing.
  - CLOC requires people to continue to follow IPAC protocols when in close proximity.
- Hand hygiene
  - Is a critical component in preventing transition of infection diseases. Requirements remain the same.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - Is intended to protect the wearer to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19 and other potential hazards. Requirements remain the same for PPE within CLOC's Infection Prevention and Control protocol.
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
  - Requirements remain the same to ensure that regular environmental cleaning is maintained; enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection for frequently touched surfaces is preformed, including fogging.

### [MCCSS Interim Direction – Use of Rapid Antigen Testing](#)

With availability of vaccines and antivirals, implementation of Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) practices, and the high levels of immunity in the general community, it has been determined that ongoing COVID-19 testing is **no longer essential** for those that are asymptomatic.

From this point forward MCCSS congregate living settings will no longer be required to use rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to regularly screen employees and visitors. CLOC will continue to require **testing for symptomatic, and close contact cases.**

- CLOC will be updating its Vaccination procedures to align with this direction:
  - CLOC employees are strongly encouraged to be up to date with vaccinations.
  - As part of our vaccine policy and procedures, regular RAT testing is no longer required for employees/volunteers without up to date vaccination status.
  - CLOC recommends that employees and locations keep rapid antigen tests on hand for symptomatic testing. Rapid antigen tests will continue to be made available as long as supplies last.

### [Vaccine Guidance](#)

The Ministry of Health's COVID-19 vaccine guidance has been updated to include Spring 2023 booster recommendations as part of the vaccine campaign focused on high-risk populations **provided at least 6 months have passed** since their last vaccine dose or confirmed COVID-19 infection. Please utilize community-based health services / vaccination clinics / pharmacies / hospitals for access to vaccinations. High-risk populations are listed below:

- Individuals aged 65 and older
- Residents of Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, elder care lodges and other congregate living settings for seniors
- Individuals aged 18 and older living in congregate care setting for people with complex medical care needs

- Pregnant individuals
- Individuals aged 18 years and older who are moderately to severely immunocompromised
- Individuals aged 55 years and older who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis and their non-Indigenous household members aged 55 and older

[Worker Income Protection Benefit](#)

The 3 days of paid (COVID-19) infectious disease emergency leave, made available by the Ontario Government, is no longer available as of March 31, 2023.

CLOC will continue to look to MCCSS and our health ministry partners and monitor for any changes in direction. These changes are reviewed in collaboration with CLOC's Joint Health & Safety Committee. For questions related to any of these updates, please continue to reach out to your IPAC Champion Team (Cheryl Drake, Randy Brown, Janice Dewland, Tammy McMillen).

Stay Safe,



Terri Gray  
Executive Director