

Coronavirus - Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ is created to answer frequently asked questions about COVID-19. We will update this document regularly based on new questions that will arise. **Newly added questions will be highlighted.**

Please feel free to also reference our [Inpatient Staff Support FAQ](#) and our [Recovery planning decisions document](#).

Recovery planning

- [Where can I find recovery decisions and support documents?](#)

Holland Bloorview procedures

- [What proactive measures is Holland Bloorview taking to prevent the spread of viruses?](#)
- [What will happen if a client shows symptoms of COVID-19 or we get a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What is the likelihood of our hospital accepting patients with COVID-19 from other hospitals to treat them?](#)
- [What guidance are you providing on meetings at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [Are there any guidelines/policies regarding wearing gloves during covid-19?](#)
- [Can I request for a hand sanitizer bottle for my work station?](#)
- [I usually park at Bellwoods. Can I come to the main lot?](#)
- [Will you offer free parking for staff working on site or a discount to anyone with an existing parking pass that is no longer coming in/working from home?](#)
- [If we work offsite and can't cancel parking passes can we give our pass to someone who is now working onsite and typically does not?](#)
- [Because of COVID-19, we had to change a lot of what we do rapidly. Is the senior management team thinking about how that will affect our workforce going forward? Will there be changes to our work-from-home policy?](#)
- [Will there ever be a stage in this crisis where layoffs may occur at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [Is there a possibility that Holland Bloorview staff be redeployed to long-term care homes?](#)
- [What is "contact tracing" and when would it be initiated?](#)

- [How many positive COVID-19 cases should we have before we are declared to be in an outbreak?](#)
- [What does direct care mean?](#)
- [What should I do if I see concerning community activity in our parking lot?](#)
- [How will the directive for testing in Ontario impact Holland Bloorview? Does that mean that all Holland Bloorview staff should be tested?](#)
- [As many asymptomatic staff members choose to undergo COVID testing, will they be allowed to work until they receive the results?](#)
- [What should we keep in mind when eating outside or going out for a stretch before returning to the building?](#)
- [Can staff or members of the community use the picnic tables at the front of the building to eat lunch or rest?](#)
- [Should the picnic benches be sanitized with CaviWipes after every use? Will environmental staff disinfect these surfaces?](#)
- [Is there an elevator capacity as we welcome more people in to our building?](#)

Tech information

- [What is Holland Bloorview doing to increase security of Zoom meetings?](#)
- [How can I get access to Holland Bloorview COVID-19 resources from home if I don't have access to Citrix and VPN?](#)
- [Do we have official Holland Bloorview backgrounds to use during zoom calls?](#)
- [Can I host a webinar on zoom?](#)
- [Is there a general Zoom tipsheet that we can access?](#)
- [What is COVID Alert?](#)

Information on policies affecting clients and families

- [Are we still providing weekend passes for families?](#)
- [Why are staff working in Complex Continuing Care wearing full PPE?](#)
- [Is it possible to increase frequency of cleaning of common surfaces on the inpatient units? Specifically the keyboards, computers, phones, key codes on doors \(equipment room, med room\), as well as the shared kitchen area for families \(fridge, sink etc.\)](#)
- [What is happening with Ambulatory Care programs and services?](#)
- [What is the mask policy for family caregivers and clients?](#)
- [What platforms/apps is the organization exploring to provide asynchronous virtual care?](#)
- [What's the plan for staff working in the community \(i.e. providing services in-home/schools\)?](#)
- [Are inpatient families allowed to have visitors inside or outside of the hospital?](#)
- [What's the recommendation for masking of inpatient and outpatient clients?](#)
- [What are the masking requirements for singing during clinical appointments?](#)
- [What is our outpatient Family Caregiver Presence Policy?](#)
- [How is Holland Bloorview helping families that face financial stress and barriers in physically accessing the hospital?](#)

Summer programming at Holland Bloorview

- [What's happening with summer programming at Holland Bloorview?](#)

Physical distancing practices

- [How is Holland Bloorview enforcing physical distancing and what can I do to help?](#)
- [What are ways we can practice physical distancing in smaller, communal spaces \(i.e. atrium stairs, elevators\)?](#)
- [How can we maintain physical distance during therapy sessions?](#)
- [Can we use the outdoor picnic tables?](#)
- [How many people can sit at the same picnic table at once?](#)

Students and volunteers

- [What guidance do you have for volunteers?](#)
- [What guidance do you have for students?](#)

Bloorview Research Institute

- [What is happening with the Bloorview Research Institute?](#)
- [I'm running a clinical trial involving kids coming to the hospital receiving therapies that need to be monitored. Are there any considerations?](#)

Bloorview School Authority and Kindercircle

- [What is happening with the Bloorview School Authority and our nursery schools?](#)
- [Should school staff continue to use CaviWipes to clean school equipment even though Cavi Wipes are in high demand/short supply and the equipment haven't been used since March?](#)

Screening

- [Why aren't the staff doing active screening wearing Personal Protective Equipment PPE?](#)
- [How can I sign up for a screening shift?](#)
- [Has there been any direction from public health about updating our screening questions given that a substantial portion of new cases are from community spread?](#)
- [Why aren't temperature checks part of the screening process?](#)
- [Do I need to be re-screened if I leave the hospital for a short break during my shift?](#)
- [Is the screening process at Holland Bloorview going electronic?](#)
- [Where can I find the self-screening form?](#)

HR related questions

- [What is Holland Bloorview's re-deployment strategy?](#)
- [Are Holland Bloorview staff able to work from home?](#)
- [What about compensation during pandemic?](#)
- [If I am being asked to be quarantined, can I work from home? Will I be paid?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's sick policy?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's policy on health care workers employed in multiple institutions?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's summer vacation policy?](#)
- [Will the maximum cap on vacation accrual benefit entitlements for staff be extended since staff can't take more than one week off at a time for time being?](#)
- [With summer vacations coming up, can staff go on vacation outside of Canada?](#)
- [Will Holland Bloorview implement a temporary pay raise for staff who are not deemed eligible by the government to receive the Pandemic Pay?](#)
- [What is Holland Bloorview's policy on hiring at this time?](#)
- [How can I request an ethics consult during COVID-19?](#)

Mask Policy at Holland Bloorview

- [What is Holland Bloorview's mask policy?](#)
- [What's the difference between level 1 and level 2 procedure masks?](#)
- [How do I use my mask while I am working in client care?](#)
- [What do I do with my mask when I am on break or eating lunch?](#)
- [How long can I use my procedure mask for?](#)
- [Where do I pick up my masks?](#)
- [If I need more than 2 masks where do I get another one from?](#)
- [Why aren't we collecting used procedure masks anymore?](#)
- [Why aren't we collecting used N95 masks anymore?](#)
- [Is there an expiry date for N95 masks?](#)
- [How do I handle the procedure mask I get at screening each day?](#)
- [How can I preserve my mask when I leave the hospital if it is not soiled?](#)
- [Is there an optimal way to place the mask in a paper bag?](#)
- [Should I get a new paper bag every day at screening?](#)
- [Can I leave the paper bag with the mask at my desk?](#)
- [What should I do with my mask if it is soiled and cannot be used again?](#)
- [How can I tighten my mask? What are 'ear savers' and where can I get one?](#)
- [What measures are screening staff taking when handling the masks they provide us?](#)
- [Can I take masks home for personal use?](#)

- [Can I wear my reusable procedure mask when taking the transit?](#)
- [Where can I get a cloth mask to use outside of the hospital?](#)
- [Can I keep my mask on until I get to my car?](#)
- [Will Holland Bloorview be able to purchase masks with clear windows so our lips can be seen?](#)
- [Should we be wearing eye protection during clinical care?](#)
- [Do I need to wear goggles when working with a family member and can't maintain 2 meters distance \(i.e. working on completing forms\)?](#)
- [I wear glasses, can I use a face shield instead of goggles when interacting with clients?](#)
- [What if I don't have my own goggles? Where can I access protective eye gear?](#)
- [Can protective eye gear be shared among users?](#)
- [How often should goggles/face shields be cleaned?](#)
- [What can I do to prevent my glasses from fogging while wearing a mask?](#)
- [The new level-2 masks are not fitting properly. What can I do to make them fit better? Can we use the original level-2 masks instead?](#)

Staff Wellness

- [Do staff have access to mental health and wellness resources at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What else is Holland Bloorview doing to support staff at this time?](#)
- [Are there external supports we can use?](#)
- [Is the Gymnasium open for staff use?](#)
- [Will there be any other incentives offered for staff who are working diligently each day?](#)

Ways to help

- [How can I help clients and families at Holland Bloorview?](#)
- [What should I do if I receive a donation offer/inquiry?](#)
- [I have a heartfelt story that I would like to share. What can I do?](#)

Food Service updates

- [Why did Tim Hortons' hour of operation change?](#)
- [Why did Sodexo pause all hot food offerings at The Garden Grill?](#)

General Health Information

- [What should I do if I'm feeling sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing?](#)
- [What can I do to protect myself from virus spread?](#)

- [I've been increasingly concerned and nervous with taking transit to work as the COVID-19 situation continues to grow and spread. Wondering what I can do to keep myself and those I serve safe.](#)
- [What is the best way to protect myself from COVID-19?](#)
- [What can I do to protect myself and loved ones if a family member in my home is sick?](#)
- [With community spread now happening in Toronto, how do I protect my loved ones at home?](#)
- [Should I keep hand sanitizer in the car?](#)
- [Are there risks of lighting cigarettes after applying hand sanitizer?](#)

General information on the COVID-19

- [What is a coronavirus/ novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)?](#)
- [What are the symptoms of someone infected with a coronavirus?](#)
- [Can coronaviruses be transmitted from person to person?](#)
- [Is there a vaccine available for this infection?](#)
- [Are there reliable places I can get more information?](#)
- [What's the difference between seasonal coronaviruses and Covid-19?](#)
- [What are the different types of COVID- 19 contact? What do I do in various scenarios?](#)

Recovery planning

[\(Back to top\)](#)

Where can I find recovery decisions and support documents?

With many new decisions and communications circulating in relation to our recovery efforts, we have created a new sub-section of the [COVID-19: Resources for Staff web page](#).

In this section, you will find a [recovery planning decisions](#) document that will be updated as new decisions are made and communicated to you. We have also created [A Quick Guide for Working on Site](#) as well as a document outlining [How is Holland Bloorview ensuring the safety of clients, families and staff during COVID-19](#) to support staff returning and reintegrating back to work at 150 Kilgour.

Holland Bloorview procedures

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What proactive measures is Holland Bloorview taking to prevent the spread of viruses?

Holland Bloorview's infection prevention and control (IPAC) team is actively monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak, working closely with public health agencies and the Ministry of Health to follow all appropriate guidelines to ensure the safety of our clients, families, volunteers, visitors and staff.

In addition, we're doing the following:

- **Active screening at the door for hospital staff and visitors**
 - As of Monday, March 16, all clients, families, visitors, vendors, staff, learners and volunteers will be screened at the main entrances. We will be asking all entrants a series of questions about their health and travel history. Those that are feeling ill or have travelled outside of Canada will be re-directed.
 - To facilitate this process, all staff, volunteers and learners are asked to use the Bloorview School entrance from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. After 7 p.m. you can use the main entrance.
 - During this time, we're asking everyone to exit the building using the door by the pool window on Level 1. The main doors can be used at any time as an accessible exit or for Wheel-Trans pick up or drop off.
 - As of Saturday, March 28, we have updated our masking policy. Please check the 'Holland Bloorview masking policy' section for more information.
 - As a general safety measure, **all staff MUST wear Holland Bloorview ID badge** at all times.

- **Cancelled community programming:** Out of abundance of caution and in line with overall COVID-19 prevention measures, the hospital has cancelled most on-site appointments, services and

community programs until further notice. Programs and services will gradually re-open in alignment with the province's re-opening phases and guidance.

- **Travel restrictions and self isolation requirements**

- Following a directive from the Ministry of Health, announced March 19, 2020, some healthcare workers who have travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days will need to quarantine while others, who have been deemed essential by Holland Bloorview, will be required to report to work wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

If you have travelled out of the country since March 13, assume you will be self-isolating for 14 days, UNLESS you receive a call from your manager to report to duty.

Please inform your manager if you'll be travelling outside of Canada for your upcoming vacation. You will need to account for the 14 days quarantine post-travel.

- Staff that have plans to leave the country this summer will be required to self-isolate for 14 days upon return and work from home where possible. If they're unable to work from home, they will need to take unpaid leave, vacation or lieu time.

- **Family and caregiver presence policy restrictions:**

As we have throughout the pandemic, Holland Bloorview has been closely monitoring the number of COVID-19 cases in Toronto and surrounding area. The number of daily new cases in Toronto is now remaining steadily below 100. We've also seen a consistent reduction in outbreaks across the province in long-term care homes and hospitals. We also know from listening to families that in-person caregiver support is crucial for the well-being of both our clients and their families and the restrictions to caregiver presence, while necessary because of COVID-19, have been difficult for some. With these facts in mind, we are pleased to announce substantial changes to our caregiver presence policy that allow for greater onsite presence and flexibility **as of July 15**. In summary:

- 3 caregivers can now be designated per client, up from 2. This means up to 3 individuals over the age of 16 may be designated to be the primary bedside support for each client. All must still undergo screening. Inpatient families must provide their care team with the third caregiver's information.
- 2 caregivers can now be onsite, up from 1. This means up to 2 designated caregivers over the age of 16 can be onsite to visit their child at any given time (except overnight, see below)
- 1 caregiver may remain overnight after 11 p.m. No change from current practice.

We'll continue to have daily screening, masking and swabbing where necessary to ensure overall safety for our clients, families and staff. Overall, we hope these changes will reduce stress on children and their caregivers, allow easier handover between caregivers, facilitate training and allow for easier participation in family/team meetings.

We will revisit and possibly have to modify family presence if there is a surge in COVID-19 cases in the community, if we experience a COVID-19 outbreak at Holland Bloorview or if we receive new directives from Toronto Public Health or the Ministry of Health.

- **Limited meetings and large gatherings**

- Please cancel all unnecessary meetings or consider using virtual options if the meeting cannot be cancelled or rescheduled to a later date.
- When booking meetings, please book a space large enough to ensure physical distancing of at least 2 meters between each attendee.

Please be advised that visitors will be screened at the door and will be turned away if they are sick or if they've travelled. Please contact all guests in advance so they are aware of this.

What will happen if a client shows symptoms of COVID-19 or we get a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Holland Bloorview?

In the event that a client exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, we would follow our standard outbreak procedures.

Any client with respiratory symptoms would be placed in contact/droplet precautions OR contact/droplet/airborne precautions if the client was on CCC and needed tracheotomy and ventilation support. Any staff member that would be working with the client will be wearing appropriate PPE. Swabs would be taken and sent for testing to confirm positive or negative for the virus. **Only** staff providing direct care to the client would be allowed in the room and be provided appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure they can continue to provide care safely.

If a client does test positive for COVID-19, infection control would inform key individuals and contact Toronto Public Health. The client would be moved to an isolation room (the client would already be in an isolation room so we wouldn't move after the fact so this can come out) Toronto Public Health would advise us as to whether staff that have been in close contact with the client, or other clients are eligible for testing. All therapies will be cancelled for the client. Should the client's health status warrant it, we may transfer them to SickKids or Sunnybrook, depending on their age.

If a staff member tests positive:

- Occupational Health would contact key individuals including Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Toronto Public Health
- Infection Control would assist with contact tracing for clients who have been in contact with the staff member
- Occupational Health would work with the operations manager to also conduct contact tracing to determine if anyone else came into contact with the staff member
- Staff member would be instructed to self-isolate for 14 days if well enough to stay at home
- Toronto Public Health would advise hospital if staff/clinicians/other clients who had close contact with COVID-positive staff member can be tested

Based on direction from public health, they would declare us to be in an outbreak if we have 2 confirmed positive cases in a patient, staff, or a combination of both.

What is the likelihood of our hospital accepting patients with COVID-19 from other hospitals to treat them?

The system is working hard to create acute bed capacity and so far those efforts are paying off. There is good capacity should we see a surge in cases. At this moment, we don't anticipate Holland Bloorview becoming a centre for COVID 19 patients but is not out of the realm of possibility.

For the moment, Holland Bloorview continues to receive new inpatients from partner hospitals and the community. We are taking all necessary precautions to prevent potential spread of COVID-19, including testing new clients and their families before arriving to Holland Bloorview.

In cases where this can't be done prior to arriving, we will be isolating the client and their designated family members in a private room until we receive results.

Should one of our inpatients test positive for COVID-19, they will remain in isolation and staff who care for that client will be required to wear full PPE when providing care. Should their health status progresses, the client may be transferred to the acute care setting.

What guidance are you providing on meetings at Holland Bloorview?

- Please cancel all unnecessary meetings or consider using virtual options if the meeting cannot be cancelled or rescheduled to a later date.
- When booking meetings, please book a space large enough to ensure physical distancing of at least 2 meters.

Please be advised that visitors will be screened at the door and will be turned away if they are sick or if they've travelled. Please contact all guests in advance so they are aware of this.

Are there any guidelines/policies regarding wearing gloves during covid-19?

There are three instances when gloves should be worn:

- When staff member may come into contact with bodily fluids during provision of care
- Housekeeping staff should wear gloves when cleaning rooms/emptying garbage cans
- Food services staff handling and serving food

Note: We discourage the use of gloves outside of these circumstances as they have the potential to be a transmitter of virus spread if not used properly.

Always remember to practice good hand hygiene.

Can I request for a hand sanitizer bottle for my work station?

Our hand sanitizing supply is limited to common areas and clinical areas. If you would like to buy your own, we recommend hand sanitizers that are at least 70% alcohol and scent free and bring it with you to

work for personal use.

I usually park at Bellwood. Can I come to the main lot?

With the gradual increase of staff, volunteers, clients and families on site, we are closely monitoring the capacity of the main parking lot on 150 Kilgour Rd. to ensure enough available spots for everyone coming to our hospital.

Based on recent number projections, we are able to extend the current parking policy until August 31 which means anyone parking at the Bellwood parking lot can park at the main site at no extra cost (this policy will be revisited for potential extension at that time). You can collect your temporary pass from reception.

Please note that this will be the last extension to this policy. Please return your temporary parking passes to reception after August 31. Effective September 1, staff with a Bellwood parking pass are asked to use the Bellwood lot for parking.

I don't have a parking pass but am coming in regularly to the hospital as a result of redeployment. Can I get a discounted rate for parking?

For staff who do not have a parking pass and wish to drive to Holland Bloorview and park in the Hospital's main lot, monthly passes are now available for purchase at reception for \$40. This is equivalent to the Bellwood monthly parking pass price. This price is valid for your next purchase and does not apply to previously purchased passes.

If you have questions, please contact Jeffrey Chi at jchi@hollandbloorview.ca.

Will you offer free parking for staff working on site or a discount to anyone with an existing parking pass that is no longer coming in/working from home?

Unfortunately, we are not providing parking discounts or free parking for existing parking pass holders. Many financial factors come into play including the cancellation of many revenue-generating programs at the hospital and a substantial investment in technology (increasing virtual private network (VPN) and Citrix access) that allows people to work from home. As well, administration of parking deductions/adjustments would generate additional workload for teams that are already at capacity during the pandemic. It is worth noting that we have one of the lowest parking rates (perhaps the lowest) for Toronto-area hospitals.

Additionally, Holland Bloorview continues to be obligated to pay its regular monthly rent to CAMH, the property owner of the Bellwood lot and operate and maintain the Kilgour lot in normal fashion, irrespective of the number of current users.

Thanks for your understanding of the many considerations that factor into this decision.

If we work offsite and can't cancel parking passes can we give our pass to someone who is now working onsite and typically does not?

While this practice is normally not allowed, an exception is granted for the period up to June 30, after which we will reassess. Employees are responsible for the safe return of loaned passes.

Because of COVID-19, we had to change a lot of what we do rapidly. Is the senior management team thinking about how that will affect our workforce going forward? Will there be changes to our work-from-home policy?

This is an important discussion to be had with the senior management team over the coming weeks. Tremendous amount of work has taken place by our IT department enabling a large majority of employees to work from home, allowing us to be productive and continue to provide the same great care to our clients and families. While nothing will replace the face-to-face interactions with our clients, the pandemic has opened up new ways for all of us to work together while still supporting each other and our clients and families. Updates and results of this discussion will be provided to you when available.

Will there ever be a stage in this crisis where layoffs may occur at Holland Bloorview?

While we can't predict what the future may hold, at this time we are not planning to lay off any employees. For many departments it has been business as usual and that the normal accountabilities and responsibilities have been continuing. We also have many clinical employees providing virtual care to our clients and families, many have been redeployed to our inpatient team and others who have been assisting departments on the delivery of projects and programs. We are so grateful that everyone is doing their best to adjust to this new way of working.

Is there a possibility that Holland Bloorview staff be redeployed to long-term care homes?

As a children's hospital, we have not been asked to support the plan of long-term care homes redeployment, nor has SickKids. For now, the adult and acute care hospitals have the bandwidth that is needed to support long-term care and retirement homes. We don't anticipate that our staff will be redeployed to work in long-term care, but we will keep an eye on any developments in this realm.

What is "contact tracing" and when would it be initiated?

Contact tracing refers to determining who has been in contact with a COVID -19 positive person. At Holland Bloorview, contact tracing would be initiated once occupational health and/or infection control knows of a confirmed COVID-19 positive staff/patient/family caregiver.

While keeping the affected individuals' confidentiality/privacy, staff who have been in direct contact (i.e. not wearing appropriate PPE, were standing closer than 2 meters of the individual for longer than 15 minutes, had contact with bodily fluid/droplets, etc.) will be contacted by occupational health to be informed on next steps, including testing.

Part of contact tracing is determining where the individual was in the facility **48 hours** prior to the onset

of symptoms. This can be the challenging part of contact tracing. However, if we have a client that is in isolation, we have a log sheet outside the client's room that will help us identify staff and caregivers who may have had contact with the client.

How many positive COVID-19 cases should we have before we are declared to be in an outbreak?

Based on Ontario Public Health directives, we fall under the public acute care guidelines which state that a hospital will need to have 2 confirmed positive cases in a patient, staff, or a combination of both to be declared in an outbreak.

What does direct care mean?

Direct care is care that is being performed on a client where you are unable to maintain 2 meters (6 feet) of physical distance. This may include nursing procedures, therapy sessions, recreation activities etc.

What should I do if I see concerning community activity in our parking lot?

If you witness community activity in the parking lot that poses safety issues (i.e. too many community members gathered at once, physical distancing rules not respected, family members meeting outside of the exit only doors or visiting by the fence), please contact security at ext. 6101.

How will the [directive](#) for testing in Ontario impact Holland Bloorview? Does that mean that all Holland Bloorview staff should be tested?

We are still in the process of reviewing the Premier's guidance on testing and what that would mean for Holland Bloorview. We do not have the capacity to do mass staff testing on site. However, if staff members are asymptomatic and wish to get tested, then that is their prerogative. Positive test results would then need to be disclosed immediately to Occupational Health only. The staff member is also required to inform their manager that they will be absent from work due to illness. They are not obligated to share results test results with their manager. Occupational Health will only release the name of someone with a positive test to their manager with the employee's permission and if contact tracing is required.

As many asymptomatic staff members choose to undergo COVID testing, will they be allowed to work until they receive the results?

Asymptomatic staff who choose to get tested for COVID-19 can still come to work while waiting for the results. If your test comes back positive, you will need to inform Occupational Health and you will be required to self-isolate. Furthermore, Occupational Health and the IPAC team will look at different risk factors to further assess the situation (i.e. where was the individual within the past 48 hours, was she/he wearing appropriate PPE at all times, did she/he follow physical distancing rules etc.)

What should we keep in mind when eating outside or going out for a stretch before returning to the building?

- If eating at the picnic tables, physical distancing still applies
- A limit of two people per table is required, seated diagonally from one another

- Masks need to be placed on a clean surface, not directly on the table
- Bring a small, travel-size hand sanitizer with you so you can sanitize your hands before removing your mask, and again after applying the mask when you are done eating
- If you leave the building to go out for a walk, wear a non-medical mask, especially if you cannot keep physical distance from others
- Upon return to the building after a short break re-screening is required

Can staff or members of the community use the picnic tables at the front of the building to eat lunch or rest?

No. The two picnic tables at the front of the building are reserved for families to have a visit with their loved ones. These visits are being scheduled and should be left vacant as they may be booked.

Should the picnic benches be sanitized with CaviWipes after every use? Will environmental staff disinfect these surfaces?

Picnic tables and the tables in the cafeteria are not cleaned between staff use. The tables in the cafeteria are cleaned daily by environmental services. If there are spills, or if the picnic tables are sticky, environmental services can be called to clean the picnic table by request only.

Is there an elevator capacity as we welcome more people in to our building?

As we welcome more staff members, volunteers, learners, clients and families in to our building, we want to ensure that physical distancing rules can still be followed in common areas. As such, we are implementing an elevator capacity limit to six people at a time.

We ask staff to please give priority to clients and visitors when using the elevators and use the stairs if possible.

Tech information

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What is Holland Bloorview doing to increase security of Zoom meetings?

Cybersecurity is top of mind. We are doing our utmost to protect the privacy of our staff whether they are holding video conferencing meetings or to providing virtual care for clients and their families. To further enhance security of Zoom video conference meetings, we are moving to Zoom for Healthcare.

The benefits of Zoom for Healthcare includes robust security features such as:

- Enhanced security of patient health information and personal information
- Mandatory use of passwords and hosts to activate meetings
- Lock button to be used by host once meeting has started to prevent uninvited participants from joining

Contact Greg Vanden Kroonenberg at gvandenkroonenberg@hollandbloorview.ca if you have more questions or would like to set up a new Zoom account for corporate purposes.

How can I get access to Holland Bloorview COVID-19 resources from home if I don't have access to Citrix and VPN?

In response to the challenges some of you have expressed accessing documents shared in our pandemic communications, we have added a [COVID-19: Resources for Staff](#) page to our website to make sure you can access important resources while working from home if you can't access HBConnect. Integrated into the site is our COVID-19 FAQ, a Mental Health and Wellness resource for staff, and a working from home guideline (among others tools). We will continue to update this page with additional content to support you during this time.

Do we have official Holland Bloorview backgrounds to use during zoom calls?

With virtual calls now a regular part of our day-to-day at Holland Bloorview, our very talented graphic designer, Yvonne Koo, has created eight different backgrounds that can be downloaded and used when on virtual video calls with colleagues, clients and families.

The backgrounds are available for download on the [COVID-19: Resources for Staff](#) web page.

An [instruction sheet](#) has also been created to help you successfully download and use the backgrounds.

Can I host a webinar on zoom?

All Holland Bloorview licensed users can now host Zoom video webinars that allow to broadcast a Zoom meeting to up to 500 view-only attendees, depending on the size of your webinar.

To learn about how you can host a webinar on zoom, watch [this tutorial](#).

Is there a general Zoom tipsheet that we can access?

A new comprehensive [Zoom tip sheet](#) is now available to help all Holland Bloorview Zoom users learn more about:

- Zoom roles
- Different settings
- Virtual background changes
- Accessibility
- Security options

And much more...

The sheet can be found on our website under the [COVID-19: Resources for Staff](#) page and [on the HB Virtual: Resources page](#).

What is COVID Alert?

A new free app from the Government of Canada that can notify people about potential exposure to COVID-19 is now available to download. Using Bluetooth technology, the app – called COVID Alert –

detects users nearby, and if a user later tests positive, they can inform other users with whom they were recently in close proximity.

We encourage staff to help stop the spread of the virus and download the app, which is totally voluntary and does not store or share personal information.

Read more about the [app](#), including details on downloading and how it works.

Information on policies affecting clients and families

[\(Back to top\)](#)

Are we still providing weekend passes for families?

Starting the weekend of July 18, our inpatient team will be taking a phased approach to test the use of leaves of absences (LOA)/weekend passes. As clients get within a few weeks of discharge and as part of a safe rehabilitation journey, families benefit from home assessments and greater preparation. Our inpatient team working closely with Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) has developed a process to ensure that our inpatient clients and families feel supported and set up for success when going home.

We are proud to be able to offer this important part of our service developing leading practices that we will share as the first rehabilitation hospital in the Greater Toronto Area offering LOAs/weekend passes at this time. As such, we are taking a systematic evidence-informed and safety focused approach to consider all of the issues at hand including:

- Infection prevention and control measures to protect our clients and their loved ones
- Availability of resources our clients and families may need when in their home community
- Use of LOAs in a therapeutic manner to bring about benefits and minimize harm

Many of our inpatient clients and families have been at Holland Bloorview since the beginning of the pandemic. We have heard directly from them that while they understand that protocols and practices have had to be different because of COVID-19, the impact on their sense of wellness, on their families, and in some cases on their mental health has been real. As such, we are excited to be able to provide some of our families the opportunity to return to their homes as part the rehabilitation journey. Thank you team.

Why are staff working in Complex Continuing Care wearing full PPE?

To protect our most vulnerable clients, we are making changes to our infection control practices in Complex Continuing Care (CCC).

As of April 8 all staff members providing care/treatment/recreation therapy in the **CCC close observation rooms** (i.e. 4-bed rooms), with tracheostomies and/or ventilated clients are required to wear full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (mask, goggles/face shield, gowns and gloves).

While not directly linked to COVID-19, this infection prevention and control measure is being made as a result of the aerosols that are released from the ventilators, along with some of the procedures that are carried out with our clients, like humidified air or cough assist. Staff on the CCC unit provide care to multiple clients and this measure is being taken as a precautionary infection prevention and control measure. Families in the CCC unit are not required to wear full PPE.

When finished providing care/treatment/recreation therapy, please remove all PPE except your mask. Please remember to practice good infection control practices on removal.

If you have questions, please talk to your manager.

Is it possible to increase frequency of cleaning of common surfaces on the inpatient units? Specifically the keyboards, computers, phones, key codes on doors (equipment room, med room), as well as the shared kitchen area for families (fridge, sink etc.)

Since start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have increased cleaning/disinfection of key touch points. Extra labour and supplies have been added for this purpose and the extra cleaning has been ongoing. Units have Cavi Wipes for any additional cleaning they feel is required for personal spaces/touch areas.

What is happening with Ambulatory Care programs and services?

With input from programs, decisions have been made to ramp down ambulatory programs and move to alternative means to support our clients and families where possible, such as phone or virtual care.

In a very exciting development, a new directive has been developed that opens up new options for virtual care. Under this directive, subject to consent properly documented in Meditech Expanse, staff will be able to use email to communicate with clients/families and use telephone or videoconferencing for virtual visits. So, in addition to Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), staff will be able to use Zoom, WhatsApp, and Skype to increase access to our services.

Our management team has reviewed each individual ambulatory program to assess how and/or if we can continue to meet the needs of clients in each program through these alternative means. We have outlined the current status of each program and services [here](#).

Please note as part of this, we have paused access to the Ronald McDonald Playroom until further notice, effective March 18, 2020.

Decisions related to consultant clinics are forthcoming.

What is the mask policy for family caregivers and clients?

Starting Thursday, July 16, we are allowing all visitors, including inpatient and outpatient families, and clients if their caregivers choose to have them wear a mask, the choice of wearing their own cloth masks while at Holland Bloorview. This decision was made based on [guidance](#) from Toronto Public Health that cloth masks are an effective means to prevent infection spread in addition to hand washing/sanitizing and physical distancing. It also reflects the increased use and availability of masks generally and acknowledges that the management of personal protective equipment remains a long-term healthcare system priority.

For those without masks, we will continue to provide them at screening. We also have an excellent inventory of cloth masks that have been provided by the community, available at main reception.

Please note that if family caregivers/visitors are more comfortable with wearing our procedural masks while at the hospital, they still have access to one at the screening booths.

We will revisit and possibly have to modify the cloth mask option if there is a surge in COVID-19 cases in the community, if we experience a COVID-19 outbreak at Holland Bloorview or if we receive new directives from Toronto Public Health or the Ministry of Health.

To make it clearer for our teams on when family caregivers can and can't remove their masks, here are a few scenarios:

Scenarios where you may notice the changes

- Family caregivers wearing a mask in their loved one's room, especially if in a shared room when physical distancing cannot be maintained with other clients or family caregivers
- Family caregivers wearing a mask when members of the care team come into the room
- Families and all staff (not just clinical) wearing masks in common spaces like the elevators, stairs, hallways.

Scenarios where removing the mask may be possible for family caregivers if physically distanced from others by 2 meters:

- Inpatient room (i.e. when eating or sleeping)
- Family lounges on the 3rd floor
- Cafeteria
- Reflection Room
- Bathroom
- Outside (i.e. Spiral Garden, outdoor terraces on the 3rd floor)

Physical distancing is not required between family caregivers and their loved one unless if/when they are receiving aerosol generating medical procedures.

What platforms/apps is the organization exploring to provide asynchronous virtual care?

We are currently investigating cloud-based file sharing solutions that would allow clinicians and clients to securely share files and videos that have been identified as a specific need. Information Systems understands the importance of virtual care so we are prioritizing this work.

There are significant privacy and security concerns related to sharing personal health information (PHI) and personally identifiable information (PII) in the cloud so due diligence needs to be done before we move forward.

What's the plan for staff working in the community (i.e. providing services in-home/schools)?

We will be waiting for directions from Public Health and central MOHLTC/Ontario Health planning tables on this topic. There will have to be a lot of planning around how staff can safely return back into the

community. This is a much longer term plan that will need to be co-developed with staff that work in the community. Currently, our plan is to support virtual care first and then slowly ramp-up a return to onsite in-person visits. This might take a few months. More information to be shared when available.

Are inpatient families allowed to have visitors inside or outside of the hospital?

Starting the week of July 13, inpatient families can start booking indoor and outdoor visits with their extended family. Visits will take place in designated spaces inside and outside of the hospital with a maximum of six people including the client; all participants must maintain 2 meters (six feet) of physical distancing.

The availability of indoor/outdoor visits supports increased engagement and interaction with loved ones that in turn, helps to support our clients' rehabilitation journey.

What's the recommendation for masking of inpatient and outpatient clients?

Wearing facemask can help stop the spread of viruses when keeping at least two meters of space between people is not possible. With more people in the hospital as we continue to ramp up, we know that physical distancing will become more and more challenging.

Therefore, as an extra precaution, inpatient and outpatient children, at the discretion of their caregiver, can wear a procedural or a cloth mask while at Holland Bloorview.

Generally, children 6 years and older can wear a mask safely. At the same time, we know that family caregivers are in the best position to make a decision about masking while weighing many factors including age, ability and willingness.

What are the masking requirements for singing during clinical appointments?

We've had a few inquiries about masking for staff and clients while singing as part of speech language, occupational, physio and music therapy appointments. See below for guidance that acknowledges that we've seen community spread of COVID in choirs where masks have not been used:

- **Indoor:** singing permitted only if both the clinician and client are masked
- **Outdoor:** singing permitted outside and unmasked if 2 meters of physical distance can be maintained.

Staff can get their mask from the screening tables at entrances while clients can ask a member of the nursing team. Please direct any remaining questions about singing to covid19@hollandbloorview.ca.

What is our outpatient Family Caregiver Presence Policy?

As we've opened up caregiver support for in-patient clients, we've had some questions about increased onsite presence for our outpatient ambulatory clients.

A team looked at this topic in-depth and applied a bioethical review of the many factors at play. At this time, we have decided to adhere to our one family caregiver rule that allows one individual (16+) to accompany a child for an outpatient appointment and for research studies. We will also continue to

have no siblings under 16 years of age rule until further notice. Exceptions are possible, but need to be assessed and approved by the clinical team, bioethics and infection control leadership.

This decision was taken with many factors in mind including: an environmental scan across Canada that showed consistency in the 1 caregiver policy for ambulatory visits, limited space in the atrium/waiting area which makes social distancing a challenge and potential increase in pressure on screeners. We will also be playing close attention to feedback from our ambulatory families on this policy and will use this feedback to reassess this policy as we get closer to stage 3 of our recovery.

How is Holland Bloorview helping families that face financial stress and barriers in physically accessing the hospital?

The Client and Family Integrated Care team has launched the new Emergency Transit Fund (ETF) across inpatient and outpatient programs. The fund is designed to alleviate the financial stress and barriers of physically accessing Holland Bloorview services by providing up to \$500 of wheelchair accessible taxi cabs and a parking voucher to eligible families. This was made possible through a generous donation from the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association.

To learn more about the ETF and how clients and families can access the fund, visit [Emergency Transit Fund](#) on HB Connect.

Summer programming at Holland Bloorview [\(Back to top\)](#)

What's happening with summer programming at Holland Bloorview?

We have begun evaluating how and whether we can accommodate the number of programs we typically offer to children and youth during the summer months.

As part of this assessment, we have made the difficult decision to cancel some of our summer program offerings for a number of safety reasons including the inability to ensure physical distancing of participants, challenges around masking protocols, and the reduced number of volunteers because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Confirmed summer 2020 sessions cancelled to date include:

- The Independence Program – 3 week overnight residential program
- Turning Point – 1 week overnight program
- Camp Connection – 4 day overnight program

In addition to the above, we are assessing the feasibility and interest of conducting some of our programs (or aspects of them) virtually.

We know that this will be very hard for many clients and families who have been looking forward to participating in these programs. A survey is going to be distributed in the coming weeks to our clients and families to assess the interest in virtual learning, coaching and workshops. We know that our programs are critical in supporting our clients achieve their goals and are disappointed that we cannot run them this summer.

Our assessment is ongoing and we will continue to communicate our decisions once they have been made.

Physical distancing practices

[\(Back to top\)](#)

How is Holland Bloorview enforcing physical distancing and what can I do to help?

Physical distancing which refers to keeping physical distance is a key measure to fight the spread of COVID-19. Here are the measures we've taken to support physical distancing at Holland Bloorview:

- Active screening with line ups that support physical distancing
- Enhanced signage around the hospital to promote physical distance of at least 2 meters
- Reduced in-hospital staffing and increased work-at-home capability
- On March 25, we closed the staff workout gym. Payroll deductions for this service are paused until further notice.
- On March 25, we paused all staff group gatherings in the gymnasium below the school. This includes ball hockey and basketball.
- With reduced traffic in the hospital, many work stations are free. Please ask your manager about using someone else's workspace if you find you are in close quarters with colleagues.

Here are a few things you can do:

- As some essential in-person meetings are still necessary, please make sure that the room booked allows for adequate distancing between attendees (2 meters). If you cannot keep this distance between every person, your meeting should be moved to a bigger space or people should be asked to join the meeting by phone.
- If you're standing in line in the cafeteria/Tim Hortons, make sure you keep adequate distance (at least 2 meters) between you and the person in front of you.
- If you're having lunch with your colleagues in the cafeteria or anywhere else in the building, please make sure you leave at least an empty chair between you and the next person sitting next to you.

Continue to find creative ways to stay connected while keeping your distance (i.e. phone calls, email, Skype, Zoom, Facetime to name a few.)

What are ways we can practice physical distancing in smaller, communal spaces (i.e. atrium stairs, elevators)?

We have kept the atrium stairs open, as it is a frequently used and key access point to the second floor.

We ask staff to maintain physical distancing wherever possible, even in smaller communal spaces such as

the stairs and elevators. People can wait until the stairs are clear or take the next available elevator if the maximum capacity of 6 people is reached.

How can we maintain physical distance during therapy sessions?

A key factor is to look at the size of the room to ensure proper physical distancing. With more empty spaces, more options are available to run programs.

For staff: because of the nature of our work, it may be challenging or in some cases, impossible, to maintain proper physical distancing with patients while providing care and conducting therapy sessions. This is why we are requiring all staff who interact with our clients to wear appropriate PPE.

We are also offering virtual therapy as an option as well if appropriate.

As always, we encourage staff to practice good hand hygiene, avoid touching their face as much as possible to prevent potential virus exposure.

Can we use the outdoor picnic tables?

The outdoor picnic tables, accessible through the door in the cafeteria, are ready for use by staff, clients and families.

Please remember:

- Physical distancing rules still apply outdoors when using picnic tables. Our Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) team recommends only 2 people per table at a time sitting on opposite ends to maintain 2 meters of distance.
- Do not re-position the tables. Tables are strategically placed to maintain safe distance between them.
- Smoking and vaping is not allowed on hospital grounds

As the weather gets warmer, we want our staff, clients and families to enjoy the fresh air. However, we ask that we all work together to ensure that rules followed inside of the hospital are also followed when on the hospital grounds outdoors.

How many people can sit at the same picnic table at once?

We ask that only two people are seated at a picnic table at a time. Individuals should be sitting on diagonally opposite ends to maintain at least 2 meters of physical distancing.

Students and volunteers

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What guidance do you have for volunteers?

Volunteer Resources and the Family Leadership Program are communicating with registered volunteers regarding COVID-19. Updates and information are being shared via the password-protected Volunteer

Portal and via email. During the pandemic, volunteers and family leaders have continued to contribute actively to hospital activities through virtual volunteer opportunities.

As of June 22, 2020, volunteers have resumed limited activities on-site including supporting ambulatory care registration, family/caregiver visits, and inpatient therapeutic recreation. Volunteers are required to adhere to Holland Bloorview's active screening and masking protocols while in the building.

Staff supervisors of volunteers: In the event that you receive a question from a volunteer regarding their personal health situation, please refer to this FAQ document to provide guidance, and/or contact the Volunteer Resources department at x7033 or volunteers@hollandbloorview.ca for assistance. Volunteers that are sick should stay home, call the AWAY line (ext. 3020) and state their role as a volunteer, their symptoms, and if necessary, ask for a call back from Occupational Health to determine their status.

What guidance do you have for students?

The Teaching and Learning Institute is communicating with all students regarding COVID-19. Updates and information are being shared via email.

**As of Monday, March 16, all unpaid student placements in clinical areas (i.e. nursing, health discipline and medical office administration students) were paused until July 6.
July 6 is the beginning of Phase 1 of the re-integration of students.**

The planning process for learners is interconnected with the broader hospital recovery strategy for clinical and operational activities, and includes consideration of Provincial directions and recommendations, our ability to implement protective and preventative measures (including PPE), physical space, health human resources and our ability to mitigate a potential resurge.

Reintegration of learners will continue to be phased, enabling Holland Bloorview to reintegrate learners safely and effectively, while appreciating capacity and needs. Throughout the phases, we will **prioritize reintegrating advanced learners who require placements to complete their academic programs and graduate on time (or approximately on time), and where eligibility for licensure may be impacted.**

In the event that you receive a question from a student please contact Kim Jones Galley at ext. 3645 or at kgalley@hollandbloorview.ca for additional information.

Bloorview Research Institute

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What is happening with the Bloorview Research Institute?

All communications related to changes in work-flow will be communicated directly by Dr. Tom Chau and Mani Kang going forward. If you have any questions, please reach out to Mani Kang directly. Note that due to the nature of work conducted within the institute, practices may differ slightly from the hospital.

I'm running a clinical trial involving kids coming to the hospital receiving therapies that need to be

monitored. Are there any considerations?

Clinical trials can continue subject to the new screening measures. Depending on health and travel history, some visitors to Holland Bloorview will be asked to return home.

Bloorview School Authority and Kindercircle

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What is happening with the Bloorview School Authority and our nursery schools?

As announced by the provincial government, all publicly funded Ontario schools and nursery schools, will be closed from March 14 until further notice. This includes Bloorview School Authority and Holland Bloorview-run nursery schools. This decision was based on advice from Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, and the experts at the provincial COVID-19 Command Table. This is an important public health measure to help slow down the spread of COVID-19 in our province.

Holland Bloorview must continue to deliver vital healthcare services despite any school closures. We will continue to provide safe, high quality patient care and we depend on all of you to make this happen. We understand that these changes are very difficult for families with school aged children; however, we need all our team members to report to work as scheduled.

Should school staff continue to use CaviWipes to clean school equipment even though Cavi Wipes are in high demand/short supply and the equipment haven't been used since March?

Yes. Please use CaviWipes to clean the school equipment even though they haven't been used since March.

Screening

[\(Back to top\)](#)

Why aren't the staff doing active screening wearing Personal Protective Equipment PPE?

Our active screening booths have been set up purposefully to allow our screeners to perform their duties without the need of PPE. The tables for staff screening allow appropriate physical distance and new Plexiglas windows have been set up for staff screening clients and families which provides the appropriate barrier to ensure their safety.

How can I sign up for a screening shift?

If you are volunteering or being redeployed to screen you can now sign-up online with PickATime. The PickATime system is accessible from home and will allow staff to log in and book a shift that is convenient for their schedule. The system will then generate automatic confirmation emails and reminder emails 24 hours before shifts start. Text message reminders are also enabled for users who enter their cellphone numbers.

To get more information on how you can sign up for a shift, go to our [COVID-19: Resources for Staff page](#) and look under 'Sign up for a screening shift'.

Has there been any direction from public health about updating our screening questions given that a substantial portion of new cases are from community spread?

Our Infection Prevention and Control team reviews provincial guidance and the practices of our healthcare partners, factoring in Holland Bloorview needs/risks, on a daily basis and adjusts our screening questions accordingly.

For that reason, please listen to the questions carefully because they do change on almost a daily basis.

Why aren't temperature checks part of the screening process?

We are following the guidelines issued by our medical experts at the local, provincial and federal levels when developing and revising our screening procedures. Currently the guidelines are not recommending that hospitals to do temperature checks as part of their screening process. Should this change, we will update our screening procedures accordingly.

Do I need to be re-screened/show my online attestation if I leave the hospital for a short break during my shift?

Yes. Screening is mandatory upon every entry to the hospital if you leave the hospital grounds. Even if it was just for a short period of time. Please cooperate with our screeners who are an essential part of our Holland Bloorview community and a key line of defense against the virus.

Is the screening process at Holland Bloorview going electronic?

Phase 2 of digital screening is now available, as of **July 15 after 5 p.m.** This change will allow staff and students with access to our network to self-screen by completing a screening form (via HB Connect) every seven days and attesting that if you develop any COVID-like symptoms or the answers to the screening questions change over the seven days, you will contact Occupational Health immediately.

This new phase will mean a faster and more efficient screening process while continuing to ensure a safe work environment for everyone in our community.

Where can I find the self-screening form?

- The blue "COVID-19 Screening" button is available directly on the right hand side of the [HB Connect homepage](#).
- After entering the COVID-19 Screening hub, select "Self-Screening Form" under the *Staff and Student Resources* heading on the right side
- When completing and submitting the screening form, you will automatically receive an email confirmation to your Holland Bloorview email address. You can also choose to receive the confirmation email to an alternate email account (such as gmail) to make it easier to show screeners on your mobile device

- After showing this email with your ID badge, you will only be asked two questions to determine the appropriate mask/PPE required to safely perform your duties at work

Please note that you are required to present the email confirmation with your ID badge to screeners every time you enter the hospital, including during your shift when you come back from your break if you decide to leave the building, via your mobile device or printed copy. This email will be valid for seven days (i.e. Monday to Monday). The self-screening process described above must be completed by the end of the seventh day, or before your next planned shift on-site.

HR related questions

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What is Holland Bloorview's re-deployment strategy?

In health emergencies such as the current pandemic, it is not unusual for members of health care teams to be asked to participate in activities that are outside of their normal duties. At Holland Bloorview, we are taking a systematic approach to determining our re-deployment strategy, with planning that is designed to ensure the needs of our inpatients, who continue to require 24/7 care.

This includes assessing the many dimensions of care we provide and cataloguing the transferable skills we have to determine where redeployment is possible. All staff re-deployed will receive the necessary training (including Meditech if required), before beginning their duties. No-one will be put in a position where they can't succeed or can't ensure safety for them or the children they are serving.

We have launched the [Redeployment Centre](#) on HBConnect in order to connect areas in need of support to staff available for redeployment.

For more information, please visit [this page](#) or send an email to redeployment@hollandbloorview.ca.

Our ultimate goal is to sustain the safe operations of our hospital in service to our clients.

Are Holland Bloorview staff able to work from home?

We have made significant progress identifying staff that can do their work from home since sharing guidelines for [working from home](#).

Technology remains a big piece in moving this forward and we are actively increasing Citrix and virtual private network (VPN) licences to support our remote worker needs. Managers can use their discretion to allow their team members to work from home if they can do so effectively and are already equipped with the technology they need.

Please know that working from home is not a final destination. You may be called back at any time or be redeployed to help in other areas of the hospital and potentially outside of your regular work hours (such as evenings and weekends).

we know that some have expressed concern about coming in at all. As a hospital providing essential service, we need to perform our duty as healthcare workers, clinical and non-clinical alike, even under the stressful conditions we see today. If you choose to take time off, you'll need to discuss with your manager whether you will use vacation time or unpaid leave.

What about compensation during pandemic?

As we work to reduce the number of staff reporting into the hospital to do our part to 'flatten The curve', we want to reassure you that Holland Bloorview will continue to compensate staff with their regular wage if they are being asked to work from home or are being redeployed.

Some pandemic practices will differ for BRI. If you have any questions about compensation or funding related to your research, please contact Mani Kang (mkang@hollandbloorview.ca) or Dr. Tom Chau (tchau@hollandbloorview.ca).

If I am being asked to be quarantined, can I work from home? Will I be paid?

Where possible, quarantined staff should check with their manager and make arrangements to work from home. Where this is not feasible, we will compensate fulltime, part-time and contract employees from a designated fund that does not impact departmental budgets.

What is Holland Bloorview's sick policy?

Please review [Holland Bloorview's sick policy on HB connect](#).

What is Holland Bloorview's policy on healthcare workers employed in multiple institutions?

Staff that also work at another hospital, on a unit where a COVID outbreak is taking place, should not attend work at Holland Bloorview. This is the same protocol we follow for staff working at other hospitals where an influenza outbreak is in place. Note, if the team member worked at a hospital that had an outbreak, but they did not work on the affected unit, then they can continue to work at Holland Bloorview.

The only exception to this policy is for respiratory therapists that also work outside of Holland Bloorview in an ICU or in a COVID-19 outbreak unit. They can report to work as long as they have no symptoms of COVID-19. This policy supports meeting the needs of our clients, ensuring we have proper staffing during all shifts, and follows all provincial guidelines.

If you have any questions about this, please speak to your manager.

What is Holland Bloorview's summer vacation policy?

As of August 1, 2020, you will be able to request up to 2 weeks of vacation at a time subject to approval by your manager. Currently, staff are entitled to take a maximum of 1 week vacation per month (2 under exceptional circumstances).

If you have questions or would like to book your summer vacation, please speak to your manager.

Will the maximum cap on vacation accrual benefit entitlements for staff be extended since staff can't take more than one week off at a time for time being?

Yes. we will be extending the maximum cap on vacation accrual to September 30, 2020 from August 31, 2020. Effective October 1, 2020 we will reinstate the maximum cap on vacation accrual. On this date, employees who have exceeded their 18-month accrual will not accrue additional hours until they fall below their 18-month limit. The maximum cap on vacation entitlements was temporarily lifted during the earlier phases of the pandemic until August 31, 2020.

See our [vacation policy \(page 3\)](#) for additional explanation of vacation accrual.

With summer vacations coming up, can staff go on vacation outside of Canada?

With summer vacations upon us, we are offering guidance on out-of-country travel for you. Due to the continued possibility of community transmission, we strongly advise that staff do not leave Canada.

If you have plans to leave the country this summer, you will be required to self-isolate for 14 days upon return and work from home where possible. If you're unable to work from home, you will need to take unpaid leave, vacation or lieu time. All vacation must be approved by your manager and for travel outside the country, requests will need to include self-isolation time.

For any travel, in or out of Canada, please check with your destination's local authorities for any restrictions or self-isolation requirements.

Will Holland Bloorview implement a temporary pay raise for staff who are not deemed eligible by the government to receive the Pandemic Pay?

Unfortunately, we do not have the funding or excess in our budget to be able to support a temporary pay raise.

Despite valiant efforts by Ontario Health, the Ontario Hospital Association and our Toronto Academic Health Science Network partners advocating for pandemic pay for all healthcare workers, we were disappointed to learn that no additional changes would be made to the eligibility list.

Information related to the distribution of the pandemic pay will be delivered to the leadership team the week of August 4, 2020. Eligible employees will be notified afterward.

What is Holland Bloorview's policy on hiring at this time?

Some have asked if we can continue to hire staff. The answer is yes! We have no restrictions on hiring at the moment. However, if you have any questions or concerns that may impact your decision, please speak to your manager. Again these procedures may be different in the BRI.

How can I request an ethics consult during COVID-19?

Staff may continue to request consults for themselves or on behalf of their team from our Ethics Service,

by directly emailing Dolly Menna-Dack. There are also ethics resources on HB Connect under the Ethics Department Hub.

Mask Policy at Holland Bloorview

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What is Holland Bloorview's mask policy?

As of Wednesday, May 6, all staff will be provided with a procedure mask at screening every morning. You will be provided with one or two masks for the day depending on the work you do.

Staff are expected to wear a mask at all times where physical distancing of at least 2 meters (six feet) is not achievable.

This includes:

- All care and therapy areas throughout the building
- In common areas like stairs, elevators, hallways
- In shared offices where physical distancing is not achievable

Note, physical distancing of at least 2 meters (six feet) is mandatory before your mask can be removed. Some common scenarios where removing the mask may be possible: lunch rooms and cafeteria, meeting rooms, outside (i.e. Spiral Garden), when a physical barrier is available (i.e. screening desks, The Garden Grill cash desks, etc.)

For tips on how to properly don and doff a procedure mask and how to correctly place a mask on a clean surface when taking a break, [check out this video](#) or [this poster](#).

For information on mask policy for family caregivers, [click here](#).

What's the difference between level 1 and level 2 procedure masks?

Level 1 masks are used for short procedures and exams that don't involve aerosols, sprays of fluids or when no direct care is being performed.

Level 2 masks are for procedure involving low to moderate levels of aerosols, sprays and/or fluids. Or when normal direct care procedures are being performed

How do I use my mask while I am working in client care?

- The mask is to be worn continuously on the unit, without removing the mask between patient encounters

- If assessing a client who is on droplet/contact precautions – don additional personal protective equipment (PPE) such as a gown, eye protection and gloves -- when going into the room and leave the same procedure mask on.
- When exiting the room remove gown, gloves and eye protection and perform hand hygiene. The procedure mask does not need to be changed unless soiled, damaged, or very moist.
- Please dispose of masks in a sanitary manner when you are no longer using them and kindly remind people who might not be familiar with mask use that they must be disposed of safely.

What do I do with my mask when I am on break or eating lunch?

- You can remove your procedure mask during breaks and while eating lunch.
- To remove the mask:
 - Perform hand hygiene – wash your hands or use hand sanitizer
 - Remove the mask using the ear loops only
 - Place the mask on a clean surface with the inner mask facing upwards to avoid contamination (white side facing up)
 - Perform hand hygiene (hand washing or sanitizer) before re-applying your mask
- Once your break is done: Perform hand hygiene and reapply your mask

Please note –Inpatient Nursing Unit Report Rooms are considered a patient area, therefore masks cannot be removed in these area. Eating is not permitted in these rooms

How long can I use my procedure mask for?

You should change your mask if it becomes visibly soiled, very moist or damaged.

Where do I pick up my masks?

The masks will be distributed at screening desks for staff and family/caregivers.

If I need more than 2 masks where do I get another one from?

If you require an additional mask please ask your operation managers during business hours. After hours please ask the hospital charge nurse.

Why aren't we collecting used procedure masks anymore?

Ontario Health has concluded that there are limited possibilities for effective reprocessing of procedure masks. As a result, we will no longer collect used procedure masks upon exit from our building starting Wednesday, May 13.

Why aren't we collecting used N95 masks anymore?

After careful deliberation, we have decided to stop collecting N95 masks.

Safe and effective ways repurpose N95 masks are underway and the supply of masks required has been met. As Holland Bloorview uses a small number of N95 masks, we have come to the conclusion that collecting N95 masks is not necessary at this time.

Is there an expiry date for N95 masks?

Yes. N95 masks expire every 5 years.

How do I handle the procedure mask I get at screening each day?

1. Pick up your mask at screening. Be sure to pick up a paper bag as well. Put on your mask while at screening before going to your workspace.
2. When you leave for the day, wear your mask to the exit door by the pool. Clean your hands thoroughly at the hand sanitizer station by the exit.
3. If your mask is clean, place it in the paper bag you got earlier that morning. Facemasks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself. You can wear it again the next time you are at work.
4. If your mask is very moist, soiled or damaged, throw out your mask in the garbage bin near the exit door and get a new one the next time you come in.

How can I preserve my mask when I leave the hospital if it is not soiled?

If your mask is not soiled, wet or damaged, best evidence suggests storing it in a paper bag. To support preservation efforts, paper bags are being distributed at the screening booths.

When returning to the hospital, don it when you return following appropriate hand hygiene practices and only take the masks that you need at screening. [This video](#) has been created by our team to showcase proper donning and doffing techniques.

Is there an optimal way to place the mask in a paper bag?

Yes. To store your facemask safely and avoid potentially contaminating the paper bag, fold the mask so that inside of the mask (white side) is facing out when you place it in the bag.

Should I get a new paper bag every day at screening?

You can reuse the same bag multiple times given that you store your mask properly by folding it so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. When the outer surface of the mask touches the inside of the paper bag, you will need to use a new bag.

Can I leave the paper bag with the mask at my desk?

You can't leave your mask and paper bag at your desk as the mask should be taken off at the exit door.

What should I do with my mask if it is soiled and cannot be used again?

If your mask is visibly soiled (i.e. is marked with makeup), please place in the garbage bin near the exit door as you leave the hospital.

How can I tighten my mask? What are 'ear savers' and where can I get one?

To tighten your mask you can use 'ear savers', a device that helps ensure the mask fits better on your face if it's loose and protect the ears from getting sore if you wear your mask for long periods. Some ear savers are made out of headbands while others are plastic, made out of 3D printing. We have a limited supply of ear savers at our screening stations.

What measures are screening staff taking when handling the masks they provide us?

According to the new protocol put in place the week of April 6, two types of masks are now located outside the plexiglass where the screening staff sit.

Once staff are screened, they are instructed by screening staff to sanitize their hands first, and then pick up their mask by lifting it out of the box by the ear loop.

Can I take masks home for personal use?

No, we need to ensure that we have enough supply for staff here at the hospital who require the use of N95 respirators. There are no directives indicating the use of masks outside of a hospital setting

Can I wear my reusable procedure mask when taking the transit?

We encourage the use of the procedure masks to be worn at Holland Bloorview only for providing protection to our staff, clients and families. In the community (i.e. in transit or at grocery stores) we encourage the use of the non-medical cloth masks.

If staff members wear the procedure masks given to them at the beginning of their shift when taking transit, that mask should not be reused for a second shift at the hospital even if it's still in good shape. By wearing your procedure mask out in the community, you're exposing the outside of the mask to a greater risk of virus exposure as not everyone outside of Holland Bloorview will be wearing a mask.

Where can I get a cloth mask to use outside of the hospital?

You can get a cloth mask at reception courtesy of community donations [from our mask drive](#).

Can I keep my mask on until I get to my car?

Yes, as long as you sanitize your hands before and after placing your mask in the paper bag properly. If you want to dispose of your mask after you get in the car, you can deposit in a garbage bin.

Will Holland Bloorview be able to purchase masks with clear windows so our lips can be seen?

We are happy to share that we have received an order of masks with a clear panel that will help improve communication with clients and/or caregivers who may have hearing impairments and rely on speech reading.

These masks are reserved for staff who cater to specific client needs like speech-language pathologists, staff conducting psychological testing, staff working with hearing impaired clients, BRI staff working on specific projects that require clear masks, etc.

Staff who have identified the need to wear a clear mask and haven't received one yet, please speak to your manager.

Should we be wearing eye protection during clinical care?

We've updated our guidance for wearing eye protection during the provision of client care. Goggles or face shields must be worn for all client care:

- If you are within less than 2 meters of a client and providing prolonged client care activities (i.e. bathing, changing diapers, physical assessments, suctioning, hands-on therapy, feeding, etc.), you must wear eye protection along with a mask. If you're just talking or meeting with a family caregiver, a face shield or goggles is not required.
- If you are more than 2 meters of a client when providing care then you don't need to wear eye protection with your mask (i.e. changing an empty bed, talking with a client from a distance, during some recreational activities, during some group activities, housekeeping, food services, fixing a lightbulb, etc.)

If you wear glasses, have hearing aids or microtia a face shield or mask with visor might be easier to wear. If you don't fall under the mentioned criteria then please use the goggles.

If you have questions about what personal protective equipment (PPE) to wear during clinical care, we've created a [visual guide for what PPE](#) to wear. This graphic is posted on the [COVID 19: Resources for staff page](#) and on the third floor and will be updated when there is a change in practice.

Do I need to wear goggles when working with a family member and can't maintain 2 meters distance (i.e. working on completing forms)?

Goggles are meant to be worn for direct care with a client when 2 meters distance is not achievable. The only time you would wear goggles when interacting with a family member is when you can't maintain 6 feet of distance and you feel more comfortable with eye protection, when the individual has been isolated due to experiencing possible COVID-like symptoms, and because he/she has been newly admitted to the hospital and has to isolate in the room.

I wear glasses, can I use a face shield instead of goggles when interacting with clients?

Yes, if a face shield can be worn in place of goggles should that be a more comfortable choice for you.

What if I don't have my own goggles? Where can I access protective eye gear?

Face shields and goggles are available at the main pod nursing station, on the CCC nursing station and the 2nd floor pods. If goggles/face shields are needed in your area, please contact your operations manager who'll then contact Frank Venturino at FVenturino@hollandbloorview.ca.

Can protective eye gear be shared among users?

Goggles and face shields can be reused after cleaning. After you're done using, please thoroughly disinfect them with Cavi-Wipes and place them in the allocated bins located on the 3rd and 2nd floor. **This practice does not include masks with visors attached. Those are to be disposed in regular garbage.**

How often should goggles/face shields be cleaned?

Re-usable goggles and face shields should be cleaned:

- At least once a day
- When visibly soiled
- Exiting an isolation room
- Have been splashed or sprayed with bodily fluids
- Between use of different individuals (i.e. when shared among different individuals, not use between client interactions)

To properly clean goggles and face shields, use one cavi wipe to clean the surface and a second to disinfect.

What can I do to prevent my glasses from fogging while wearing a mask?

There are a number of solutions to prevent glasses from fogging while wearing procedural masks, including (source: [New York Times](#)):

Mold your mask. Medical masks have built-in, bendable metal strips that you can mold to the bridge of your nose.

Tighten the mask. Adjust the ties or the ear loops so the mask fits snugly against your face. The ear savers are good for this.

Pull up your mask. An easier tip for day-to-day mask wear is to use the weight of your glasses to block the air. Pull the mask up over the bridge of the nose as high as you can (make sure it's still under your chin too) and let your glasses rest on top of the mask.

Try other home remedies. Popular suggestions for treating lenses this way include baby shampoo, toothpaste and shaving cream. (My girlfriend used shaving cream and said it worked for her). However, I would be cautious with this if your lenses are treated with a coating which promises protection against UV rays, glare, scratches, smudges, dust and water.

The new level-2 masks are not fitting properly. What can I do to make them fit better? Can we use the original level-2 masks instead?

The new level-2 masks still adhere to the same standards as the original level-2 masks, even though the fit may be different for some. We suggest using the earsavers strap to make the masks fit better. If that doesn't work, try tying a knot at the base of each strap (part of strap that is near the mask (see this [YouTube](#) video). If both of these solutions don't work, call Occupational Health to see if they have other suggestions to help you keep your mask safe and secure while working.

Staff Wellness

[\(Back to top\)](#)

Do staff have access to mental health and wellness resources at Holland Bloorview?

Taking care of your mental health and wellness is critically important to making it through this pandemic. You are encouraged to block off time in your day to turn off the news and do something to help connect to yourself, your family and loved ones.

We have a number of resources available on our [HB Connect Mental Health Hub](#) (only accessible via HB Connect) to support you with mental health needs. All employees also have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that will connect with you a licensed counsellor. This service is available 24/7 and can be reached by calling 1-800-268-5211. It is also available by app in the Google and Apple stores under "My EAP."

We have also launched a [Wellness Initiatives and Resources](#) page on our website to help support you during this pandemic.

Some of the resources shared include:

- Tips on how to adjust to working from home and dealing with new technologies for staff and managers.
- Information on companies supporting healthcare workers at this time (spoiler: free coffee and chicken).
- Details on how to take advantage of the Solution-Focused Health Care Coaching program and sign up for a one-on-one virtual coaching session.

[The Wellness Initiatives and Resources](#) page will be updated regularly with new resources! If you have any suggestions for what information would be beneficial, or come across a tip/resource that you think is important to share, please contact humanresources@hollandbloorview.ca.

What else is Holland Bloorview doing to support staff at this time?

We have never been more proud and appreciative of our staff who are maneuvering through this situation with resilience, patience and excellence as you put our clients and families first. We are looking at ways to alleviate some of the stress and anxiety some of you might be feeling by providing opportunities within the hospital to decompress and feel at ease as much as possible. These offerings include:

- Changes to the parking policy (check Q&A on parking)
- As of March 25, staff will have access to the pool showers and change rooms if they wish to take a shower before heading home.

- Effective immediately, anyone coming to work at the main site can dress casually.

To get access to more initiatives and resources, visit our new [Wellness Initiatives and Resources](#).

Are there external supports we can use?

Canada's largest mental health teaching hospital, CAMH, is now accepting [self-referrals from health care workers in Toronto-based hospitals who are impacted by COVID-19 and require support for their mental health](#).

Is the Gymnasium open for staff use?

A few weeks ago, the Gymnasium (0W300) was made available for staff use only on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 12-2 p.m. and 3-5 p.m. on a drop-in basis with supervision required. As of July 29, the pandemic steering committee approved self-supervised gym visits, which means that supervisor shifts are no longer required.

In order to maintain physical distancing and avoid sharing of equipment, group games and team sports are not permitted at this time. The gym's capacity is five individuals at a time.

Staff using the gym should:

- Wash hands upon entrance to the gym and before leaving
- Complete sign in/sign out sheet
- Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet
- Disinfect all equipment after use and return them to the gym storage room
- Ensure cleaning supplies (i.e. disinfectant wipes and gloves) remain in the gym for others to access

For inquiries:

- Email Kristen English at kenglish@hollandbloorview.ca or Heather Keating at hkeating@hollandbloorview.ca if you have questions about the operation this program
- Email Kristen English at kenglish@hollandbloorview.ca to inquire about cleaning supplies at the gym if unavailable
- Email Kaley Carveth at kcarveth@hollandbloorview.ca and Cara Sudoma csudoma@hollandbloorview.ca for questions related to employee health and safety or infection control

Thank you to everyone who signed-up for a supervisor shift and supported this program.

Note: This initiative is for staff only. If clients/families inquire about using the gym during the mentioned times, please ask them to refer to their Therapeutic Recreation (TR) schedule and/or their TR specialist. There are designated times for TR groups throughout the week as well as family drop-in on Thursdays.

Will there be any other incentives offered for staff who are working diligently each day?

In addition to the supportive measures we've put in place like the wellness centre resources on our website, the main thing that will be offered is the pandemic pay that the province is presenting.

Despite valiant efforts by Ontario Health, the Ontario Hospital Association and our Toronto Academic Health Science Network partners advocating for pandemic pay for all healthcare workers, we were disappointed to learn that no additional changes would be made to the eligibility list.

Our Toronto Academic Health Science Network partners, the People and Culture Team, the Finance Team, and the Leadership Team are working together to implement a process to have eligible COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay (TPP) and lump sum pay administered. We will be communicating the pay schedule with you shortly. Thank you for your patience. For more information, please visit the [Government of Ontario's Temporary Pandemic Pay site](#).

Ways to help

[\(Back to top\)](#)

How can I help clients and families at Holland Bloorview?

If you're looking to provide support to our clients and families during this challenging time, you can do so through the No Boundaries Fund and the Family Support Fund.

No Boundaries Fund

Call for applications to the No Boundaries Fund. Do you have a bright idea that can support our clients, families and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic? Thanks to our Foundation and the generous support of community donors we are able to fund the ideas that will make the greatest impact at this time.

What's your bright idea?

We are looking for any ideas that promote the health, wellness and support of our clients, families and staff that have been impacted by COVID-19. If your idea is related to safety equipment provided by the hospital, we ask that you contact your manager to discuss before applying. All ideas should also adhere to current physical distancing directives that we're all following.

Who can apply?

Any staff of Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital can apply and ideas can also be co-created with clients and families.

How do I apply?

No lengthy applications or red tape; just answer the questions below:

- 1) Applicant's name, job title and department
- 2) Your idea and the impact you hope it will achieve
- 3) An estimated budget (up to a maximum of \$1,000)
 - a. We will consider requests over \$1,000 under special circumstances

Send your responses to the questions above by email to noboundariesfund@hollandbloorview.ca with the subject line 'No Boundaries Fund Application'.

How are ideas selected?

Applications will be monitored daily. At the end of each week all applications will be reviewed by Julia

and we will get back to applicants within 7 days of submission.

Questions?

Email noboundariesfund@hollandbloorview.ca

Family Support Fund

During this Covid-19 pandemic, many of our clients are under strict isolation. And their parents are too – sacrificing paid work for an unknown period of time when their financial resources are already strained.

Under the leadership of our amazing Foundation, the Family Support Fund is being doubled so that we can help more families access the funds so they can make ends meet. Donations up to \$20,000 will be matched by the DH Gordon Foundation.

If you're interested in donating, click [here](#).

What should I do if I receive a donation offer/inquiry?

During this challenging time, many people are rallying together to help our most vulnerable population and those who are supporting them.

If you get approached by an interested community member or a business, or receive an email about donation offers/inquiries of in-kind products (i.e. food, flowers, toys, personal protective equipment) please reach out to Molly McKeown at mmckeown@hollandbloorview.ca or Sandra Hawken at SHawken@hollandbloorview.ca from the Foundation. They will be able to determine next steps on gift acceptance, coordinate logistics and donor recognition.

I have a heartfelt story that I would like to share. What can I do?

We've heard stories from many of you about how proud you are to be part of the Holland Bloorview extended family and community at this time.

You've expressed thanks for compassionate and creative colleagues; have heard from families who have commended our innovative approaches to care; and continue to shout-out team members for their resiliency and readiness to help out in new roles.

We want to amplify and share those stories widely - whether it's via our website, social media channels or through media. Please e-mail **#HBStories** and help us transform those hallway conversations into narratives of gratitude.

Food Service updates

[\(Back to top\)](#)

Why did Tim Hortons' hour of operation change?

As we restrict the amount of people at our building, we are modifying Tim Hortons service hours to reflect the lower number of people in the hospital.

Tim Hortons will be open Mon-Fri until 4 p.m. and will be closed on the weekend starting, March 25. Complimentary coffee will be delivered every evening and twice on weekends to inpatient third floor. Vending machine options are also available on first and third floors (including coffee).

Shifting the hours of Tim Hortons also gives us flexibility to redeploy resources to other initiatives such as the aforementioned free inpatient family caregiver dinners being provided until the end of April.

Why did Sodexo pause all hot food offerings at The Garden Grill?

In an effort to minimize contact and reinforce physical distancing protocols at Holland Bloorview, **Sodexo has paused all hot food offerings at The Garden Grill as of April 15.** In its place, they have developed **two new programs** to support our dedicated staff, attentive caregivers and clients during this time of modified service.

Meals to Go Program

Pre-packaged entrees are made available at the cafeteria in the open air fridges for reheating in microwaves at your convenience. Weekly rotational menus will be posted in the café and on HB Connect. From those menus, staff and families can also pre-order precooked single serving meals and family size meals to take home by e-mailing Chef Todd McKinnon at tmckinnon@hollandbloorview.ca by 5 p.m. daily for next-day pick-up in the café between 2-3 p.m.

Grocery to Go Program

Need the essentials but also trying to maintain physical distancing which is hard at grocery stores? Sodexo has you covered at their Pop-Up Grocery store. You'll find everything from fresh produce and dairy products to your everyday pantry items, prepackaged and available at grocery store prices. This pop-up store is located in the salad bar area of the Garden Grill and is available between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday.

If you have any questions or suggestions for items you'd like to have available, please contact Chef Todd McKinnon at tmckinnon@hollandbloorview.ca.

General Health Information

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What should I do if I'm feeling sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing?

- Stay home and avoid contact with other, with the exception of seeking medical care.
- If you stay home from work, notify your manager and call Holland Bloorview's AWAY line (x3020).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

What can I do to protect myself from virus spread?

Keep your workspaces clean and hygienic; surfaces and objects (e.g. telephone and keyboards) should be wiped with disinfectant daily. Remember the [4 moments of hand hygiene](#), wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub for at least 20 seconds. Also, practice physical distancing (2 meters) and wear your mask in public places at all times.

I've been increasingly concerned and nervous with taking transit to work as the COVID-19 situation continues to grow and spread. Wondering what I can do to keep myself and those I serve safe.

We recognize that staff who commute via TTC may feel increased anxiety around potential exposure to COVID-19. We know that the best way to protect yourself is by performing proper hand hygiene and avoiding touching your face, practice physical distancing and wear your mask at all times in public place.

TTC is taking extra precautions to protect riders. Since January, they have significantly increased their cleaning and disinfection of all their vehicles, especially around high-touch points such as grab points, buttons, railings, handles and straps. And they recently enforced mask wearing on all their vehicles at all times.

They have also posted safety tips on their website on how to take public transit safely during pandemic.

What is the best way to protect myself from COVID-19?

- Stay home if you are feeling sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- Practice physical distancing
- Wear your mask in public areas at all times
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol content if soap and water are unavailable.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, especially with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.

Use cleaning products to disinfect objects and surfaces you commonly touch, such as doorknobs, countertops, phones and toys.

What can I do to protect myself and loved ones if a family member in my home is sick?

If someone in your home is ill (with COVID-19 or other seasonal ailments), we recommend the following measures to protect yourself and other members of your family:

- Practicing good hand hygiene
- If possible, practice physical distancing
- Dedicate one bathroom to the person that is sick
- Dispose of tissues as they are used
- Clean and disinfect your kitchen and bathrooms more frequently
- If possible, have the person who is sick wear a procedure mask

With community spread now happening in Toronto, how do I protect my loved ones at home?

We know that the pandemic outbreak has created a lot of worry for our staff who can't self-isolate due to the nature of their work. To protect your family from potential exposure to COVID-19, we recommend following procedures that you would normally take during more familiar outbreaks, like the seasonal flu or Rhinovirus.

Some tips include:

- Practicing good hand hygiene
- Wear appropriate PPE when working with children in isolation
- Remove street/work clothing and taking a shower when you get home before contact with your family **OR** take a shower and change into street clothing before returning home

Should I keep hand sanitizer in the car?

During the summer, it is not advisable to keep hand sanitizer in the car. The heat can degrade the effectiveness of hand sanitizer.

Are there risks of lighting cigarettes after applying hand sanitizer?

Yes, if the hand sanitizer is not completely rubbed into your hands, there is a chance that the alcohol in the hand sanitizer may ignite. Please be very cautious.

General information on the COVID-19

[\(Back to top\)](#)

What is a coronavirus/ novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). A novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

What are the symptoms of someone infected with a coronavirus?

Common signs include (but not limited to) respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. Most cases are mild. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and in rare cases death.

Can coronaviruses be transmitted from person to person?

Yes, some coronaviruses can be transmitted from person to person, usually after close contact (two meters) with an infected person. Transmission occurs through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes.

Is there a vaccine available for this infection?

At this time there isn't a vaccine available for the COVID-19.

Are there reliable places I can get more information?

Yes, you can get more information at any of these sites:

- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Ontario Hospital Association](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Centres for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

What's the difference between seasonal coronaviruses and Covid-19?

The seasonal coronavirus is NOT the same as the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. Seasonal coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses (including the common cold), and can spread easily between people. Common symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. There are strains of coronaviruses that have caused more severe illness in humans in the past, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and now, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). COVID-19 is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough.

What are the different types of COVID- 19 contact? What do I do in various scenarios?

With community transmission occurring in the province, it's possible to come in contact with presumptive or confirmed positive individuals.

We are most concerned about "close contact" that includes kissing, hugging or sharing eating and drinking utensils, close conversations, contact with secretions, being in the same childcare room, classroom or carpool.

Distance and prolonged exposure are also factors to look out for. For example, if you were standing/sitting within 6 feet from the infected individual and if you've spent more than 15 minutes with them.

Here are a few scenarios and recommended procedures to follow if you are suspected to have come into contact with a COVID-19 positive person. In all cases, you can reach out to occupational health for

guidance.

1. You've received an email from a business you recently visited to inform you that one of their employees has tested positive for COVID-19.

- If you are currently asymptomatic, you can still come to work and follow appropriate infection prevention and control protocols, going through active screening and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- In most stores, many procedures are put in place to practice safe physical distancing and minimize the risk of community spread like lines on the floor to mark two meters of distance, Plexiglas barriers, staff wearing PPE, mandatory masks for everyone entering the store, etc.

2. You test positive for COVID-19

- Occupational health will advise you to isolate yourself at home/hospital for 14 days since symptom onset or until a negative test result is received and no new/worsening symptoms develop.
- Follow the guidance of public health and Holland Bloorview's occupational health team.

3. Your spouse tests positive and you're asymptomatic.

- This is considered direct contact. You would be advised to stay home and self-monitor for 14 days. In this case, your coworkers are not considered a contact, hence no further action is required.

4. Your spouse tests positive, you are symptomatic and have tested positive yourself.

- Occupational health and infection control will advise you to stay at home and will initiate the contact tracing process at Holland Bloorview. Only individuals who you have been in direct contact with would be contacted with information on next steps.

5. You have direct contact (examples include kissing, hugging or sharing eating and drinking utensils, close conversations, contact with secretions, being in the same childcare room, classroom or carpool) with a COVID-19 individual?

- Occupational health will advise you to self-isolate at home for 14 days from contact with positive individual and monitor yourself for symptom development.
- Work self-isolation is a possibility where you would maintain self-isolation measures outside of work for 14 days but you may be able to attend work while adhering to universal masking recommendations, meticulous hand hygiene and maintaining physical distancing except in care provision. This would be determined on a case-by-case basis based on staffing needs and client safety.
- If you become symptomatic, please stay home, contact the AWAY line at ext. 3020 and follow the direction of occupational health.

As a reminder, if you are symptomatic in any way, please stay home and call the AWAY line at ext. 3020 to report your symptoms and wait for further direction from occupational health.

If you are unsure of what you should do, please reach out to occupational health or leave a request for a call back at the away line.

