

Memorandum

To: All Families & Stakeholders
Date: March 10, 2022
From: EMT
Subject: Agency COVID-19 Updates

Good afternoon everyone. We hope you and your families are safe and well. Thank you for your patience as we work through the pandemic together!

We do have several important Provincial, MCCSS, Agency updates and reminders to share with you today (due to the recent announcements made this week).

Province of Ontario

As many of you know, yesterday, Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, provided an update on 'Ontario's Plan to Live with and Manage COVID-19'. Dr. Moore's Statement can be found here: [Statement from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health | Ontario Newsroom](#). The highlights include:

- The Reopening Ontario Act would be allowed to expire on March 28, 2022
- COVID-19 vaccination policies for covered organizations will be revoked effective March 14, 2022. Vaccination policies may continue at the discretion of each agency as part of overall health and safety requirements.
- Ontario will remove mask mandates for most settings on March 21, 2022.
- Exempt settings where mask mandates will continue include: Public Transit, Healthcare, Long-Term Care and **Congregate Care Settings**. Those Locations will see the mask mandates lifted on April 27, 2022.
- Mask mandates may need to be revisited in future if there is a new variant of concern or when winter returns.
- The announcement also stated that a number of changes would be coming specifically for long-term care and other congregate care settings.
- All remaining Emergency Orders will also be lifted as of April 27, 2022 These orders include:
 - **Ontario Regulation 121/20 (Emergency Staffing and Redeployment)** – This order has been used by agencies throughout the pandemic to do anything necessary in respect of staffing and redeployment, to respond to, or alleviate outbreaks of COVID-19. This order also exempted employers from many of the full requirements of the Quality Assurance Measures regulation.
 - **Ontario Regulation 177/20 (Congregate Care Order)** – This order imposed a very limited single employer order on developmental services congregate

- care settings, but perhaps more importantly, it required such agencies to comply with all public health recommendations and instructions.
- **Ontario Regulation 195/20 (Bill 124 Exemption Order)** – This exempted temporary COVID-19 related payments from the impact of Bill 124 (wage restraint legislation) in many developmental services settings.
 - **Ontario Regulation 364/20 (Step 3 of Reopening)** – This order sets out many rules relevant to developmental services agency, including the obligation to follow vaccination policies issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
 - The announcement comes at the same time that Dr. Moore, the Chief Medical Officer warned that the pandemic is not over and the risk is not gone.

MCCSS Interim Direction

- MCCSS has advised that there are no changes to their '**February 2022 Interim Direction**' at this time (this was provided via memo on February 17, 2022) and the agency is to continue to follow this direction. MCCSS will continue to provide details on any updates and ministry-specific COVID-19 measures as they become available over the next several weeks.
- The ministry is working closely with health and service partners on updated guidance related to IPAC and testing, recognizing that health measures will be lifted more slowly in high-risk settings than in public spaces.

Agency Enhanced Protocols

In light of the Provincial and MCCSS announcements and the current state of the province and the agency, EMT has revised the agency enhanced protocols. The agency continues to have staff away due to COVID-19 illness and isolation requirements.

Protocols will be reviewed by EMT on March 28, 2022 or sooner pending any updated direction or guidance. The updates in protocol apply to the following supports and services:

- Community Participation supports is in the planning process of a staged re-opening. Transition planning is underway as we consider all the directives and our phase one organizational restructuring (outlined in greater detail below).
- In-person meetings of up to 5 people are permissible based on the capacity of the meeting space.
- The Administration Office employees and location managers will continue to work remotely for three (3) days per week where possible. We realize that there are positions that will need to work in the office/onsite more than two days per week in order to keep the day-to-day operations of organization flowing.



- Surgical/procedural masks must continue to be worn in all agency congregate and non-congregate settings.
- Essential and non-essential in-person training (Fit Testing, CPI, and First Aid/CPR) will continue with attendance limits of up to 10 people based on capacity limits (including the trainer), enhanced screening and PPE requirements in place.
- All non-essential contractor visits will continue as scheduled by the Property Manager and coordinated through the location manager.

Family Information Night

We look to hold a Family Information Night in mid-to-late April with more details to follow soon.

Thank you again everyone. We will look to keep you as updated as possible. Be safe and well!

Sincerely,

EMT
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