

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: March 19, 2021

Health Unit Shifting to Yellow – Protect Level of Ontario’s COVID-19 Response Framework

NIPISSING & PARRY SOUND, ON – The Government of Ontario has announced that the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) will be moving into the Yellow – Protect level of the provincial COVID-19 Response Framework (Colour-Coded) effective March 22, 2021 at 12:01 a.m.. This shift in the framework allows more flexibility than the current Red – Control level.

“I want to take the time to thank residents and businesses in our district. You have demonstrated that by working together and by following the public health measures, we can limit the spread of COVID-19,” shares Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health. “Although we are moving into the Yellow – Protect level, we all need to be vigilant and not forget how easily we can reverse our progress if we are not careful. We must remember that we are not an island, therefore we cannot control who comes and goes in our district. I strongly recommend that residents limit close contact with people from other households as much as possible, and to keep following public health measures.”

Changes to public health measures in the Yellow - Protect level include:

Organized public events, social gatherings and wedding, funeral and religious services, rites and ceremonies

- Limits for certain organized public events and social gatherings such as functions, parties, dinners, gatherings, barbeques or wedding receptions held in private residences, backyards, or parks, where physical distancing can be maintained:
 - 10 people indoors
 - 25 people outdoors
- Limits for organized public events and gatherings in staffed businesses and facilities, where physical distancing can be maintained:
 - 50 people indoors
 - 100 people outdoors
- Limits for religious services rites or ceremonies, including wedding services and funeral services, where physical distancing can be maintained (applies in any venue other than a private dwelling):
 - 30% capacity of the room indoors
 - 100 people outdoors

Restaurants, bars and other food and drink establishments

- Require patrons to be seated; two (2) metres minimum or impermeable barrier required between tables
- Limit of six (6) people may be seated together

- No buffet style service
- Face coverings required except when eating or drinking only
- Establishments must be closed from 12 a.m. to 5 a.m.
- Liquor sold or served only between 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- No consumption of liquor is permitted between 12 a.m. to 9 a.m.
- Dancing, singing and performing music is permitted, with restrictions

Retail

- Stores must have passive screening for patrons (for example, posting signs outside the storefront about not entering if you have COVID-19 symptoms)
 - This does not apply to indoor malls, which are required to actively screen their customers before they enter the mall. Malls can use the [patron screening tool](#) to help meet this requirement.
- A COVID-19 [safety plan](#) is required to be prepared and made available upon request
- Fitting rooms must be limited to non-adjacent stalls
- Line-ups and patrons congregating outside venues must be managed by the venue; two (2) metres distance and face covering required
- Limit volume of music to be low enough that a normal conversation is possible
- For malls, a COVID-19 [safety](#) plan is required to be prepared and made available upon request

Personal Care Services

- Oxygen bars, steam rooms and saunas closed

The Health Unit reminds everyone that the best way to protect yourselves and your loved ones is by following public health measures, such as continuing to stay home, regularly washing your hands or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers, wearing a face covering, physically distancing, not touching your face, and coughing or sneezing into your sleeve.

To read the full list of guidelines for the Yellow-Protect level, please visit [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#).

Visit [Ontario's website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.

For more information, please visit myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19.

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