



# **MOVING FORWARD**

**COVID-19**  
**Employee Return to Work Information**  
**May 2020**



### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is important that all parties in a workplace understand their roles and responsibilities. Employers have obligations to protect workers from hazards in the workplace as set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations as well as the directives coming from the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Health and safety is the responsibility of everyone. Workers should immediately raise any concerns to their:

- Supervisor
- Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Health and Safety Representative

Under Ontario law, employers have the duty to take every reasonable precaution to protect workers from hazards in the workplace. Hazards in the workplace should be controlled. Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work. If health and safety concerns are not resolved internally, a worker can seek enforcement by filing a complaint with the Ministry's Health and Safety Contact Centre at: 1-877-202-0008.

### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?**

According to Health Canada, symptoms can appear in as little as a few days or as long as 14 days after being exposed to someone who is positive. COVID-19 can cause a range of symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath.

### **IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS, STAY HOME!**

If you have COVID-19 symptoms or you have been in close contact with someone who has:

- Immediately self-isolate or self-monitor
- Complete the online self-assessment (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>)
- Call Niagara Public Health info line: 905-688-8248 press 7, then press 2 or 1-888-505-6074

### **PROTECTING YOURSELF AND CO-WORKERS**

Coronaviruses are spread through close contact. Here are some helpful tips to prevent the spread of infection:

- If you are sick, stay home!
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol) if soap and water are unavailable.
- Sneeze and cough into your sleeve.
- If you use a tissue, discard immediately and wash your hands afterward.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid high-touch areas, where possible, or ensure you clean your hands after.



- If you cannot maintain 6 feet of separation from your co-workers, wear a mask.
- Do not touch your face with gloved hands. Put on and remove gloves in a manner that avoids contamination of the hands. Ensure you wash your hands after removing gloves.
- Wash your clothes as soon as you get home.
- If you are ill: notify your supervisor immediately, complete the self-assessment (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>) and follow the instructions.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF A STAFF MEMBER BECOMES SICK?**

To minimize the potential exposure and risk of Town staff becoming ill with COVID-19, the following steps will be followed in response to employees becoming sick in the workplace.

#### **All Town of Pelham staff will:**

1. Report immediately to their Supervisor/Manager/Director any illness or symptoms.
2. Immediately go home to self-isolate.
3. Call the Public Health COVID-19 Information Line at 905-688-8248 ext. 7019. Public Health will advise on current recommendations.
4. Not return to work until they are symptom free for 72-hours (during the pandemic).

#### **Management will:**

1. Immediately direct ill staff to go home and self-isolate.
2. Ensure the ill employee's workspace is properly sanitized.
3. Report symptomatic staff to Human Resources.
4. Ensure ill staff remain at home until they are symptom free for 72-hours (during the pandemic).

#### **Human Resources will:**

1. Contact the ill employee to obtain a list of Town staff they have come in contact with when at work.
2. Advise these staff that they may have come in contact with an employee who attended the workplace with symptoms.
3. Advise these staff to self-monitor and, if necessary, self-isolate.
4. Refer staff who have any additional questions or concerns to Public Health.
5. Respect the privacy of all staff.

#### **Public Health will:**

1. Work with any positive individual on contact tracing.
2. Contact people if there is a positive diagnosis.

If you are not contacted by either Human Resources or Public Health, this means you have not had direct contact with a diagnosed case of Coronavirus.





### **MITIGATING ANXIETY AROUND RETURNING TO WORK**

We realize that returning to work may create feelings of nervousness or anxiety to those who have become accustomed to working from home. People are worried about their personal health, and the health of their loved ones. We also recognize that there may be challenges with respect to child care as schools and day care space is at a premium. For anyone feeling worried about returning to work, please know that the Town is doing everything possible to ensure this transition is done safely and responsibly. All decisions will reflect the recommendations from the Provincial government as well as Public Health.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RETURN TO WORK?**

- Some tasks are more easily completed in the office. Having direct access to all necessary resources (files, scanners, printers, colleagues) may increase productivity and response time.
- Socialization with colleagues.
- Getting up, dressed, out of the house and back to a regular routine will have positive impacts on mental health.
- Work routines offer better time management; working in an office opposed to at home provides some a better work/life balance.

### **WHY CAN WE BENEFIT FROM CONTINUED WORK FROM HOME?**

We have seen over the last few months that staff have adjusted well to working from home and productivity has remained consistent. We recognize that it will be some time before all of us are able to return to the office on a full-time basis. The Town is creating work from home guidelines, and some positions will be required to work from home on a rotational basis. Some of the benefits of continuing work from home include:

- Work-life balance
- Not having to commute each day lessens our environmental impact, saves money, and decreases wear on personal vehicles.
- Alleviate the challenges around family responsibilities.
- Teleconference and other virtual meetings have proven to be effective.
- Reducing the amount of space required in the office and allows staff in our buildings to keep the appropriate physical distance.
- Increased productivity by removing commute, promoting flex time to accommodate the household, and alleviating anxiety by not going out; can still work from home if ill.



### CHANGES TO YOUR WORK LIFE

The health and safety of staff is of top concern amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the Town has adopted an increased focus on health and safety, in order to ensure we return to work in the safest means possible. The following changes have been made to minimize exposure risk of COVID-19:

- Staff and visitors will be screened prior to entering any Town owned buildings.
- Anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to go home. Staff who are ill will be required to remain at home until they are symptom free for 72 consecutive hours.
- Where possible, meetings and appointments will be held virtually or by telephone.
- Office staff will be seated a minimum of 6 feet apart and will not be permitted to share work stations, telephones, keyboards or desks. Workspaces will be redesigned to ensure compliance with physical distancing recommendations.
- Where 6 feet of separation is not possible (i.e. more than one occupant in a Town vehicle), separators are being purchased and installed and masks should be worn.
- Town facilities will be cleaned daily. All facilities will be deep cleaned periodically each year.
- Start times, breaks and lunches will be staggered.
- Seasonal staff in the Public Works department need not report to the Tice Road operations building and will instead report directly to their job sites.
- Town staff will have easy access to cleaning supplies and are instructed to wipe down high touch surfaces in their immediate area when they arrive to work, throughout their day, and before they leave.
- Shared spaces (i.e. printer/copy machines) will be disinfected after each use.
- Temporary plexiglass has been installed on the second floor counter at Town Hall to act as a barrier between staff and the public. This is a temporary measure until a free-standing, better quality unit can be sourced, purchased, and installed.
- The cut outs in the glass on the first floor of Town Hall have been reinstalled.
- Glass barriers have been installed at the Meridian Community Centre to protect staff.
- Numerous policies and procedures are being developed and Town staff responsible for cleaning will receive proper training.
- Ventilating systems in all facilities have been inspected, cleaned where needed, and filters replaced.
- Training on how to properly don, doff, and dispose of masks is being provided to all staff by the Fire Chief. Masks will be available to those who choose to wear them while at work.

We also recommend the following:

- If you or anyone in your immediate family are struggling, please utilize the Town's Employee and Family Assistance program, operated by Lifeworks. Lifeworks can be reached at: 1-866-331-6851 or [www.lifeworks.com](http://www.lifeworks.com)
- Please speak with your Director and/or Human Resources if you require Family Status accommodation. We will deal with each circumstance on an individual basis.
- Use vacation and/or banked time if you are unable to return to work at time of re-opening and are not ill.



## Attention Town of Pelham Staff

Do you have any of the following symptoms right now?

- 1 Fever and/or
- 2 Sore throat
- 3 New cough or a cough that is getting worse
- 4 A runny or congested nose (not allergies)

If the answer is **YES** to any of these,  
**DO NOT** enter the building.

Please contact your manager/supervisor.

[pelham.ca/covid19](https://pelham.ca/covid19)

# STOP

## clean your hands

with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



Wet hands and wrists



Use soap to scrub palms and backs of hands



Scrub in between and around fingers and thumbs



Rinse well under running water



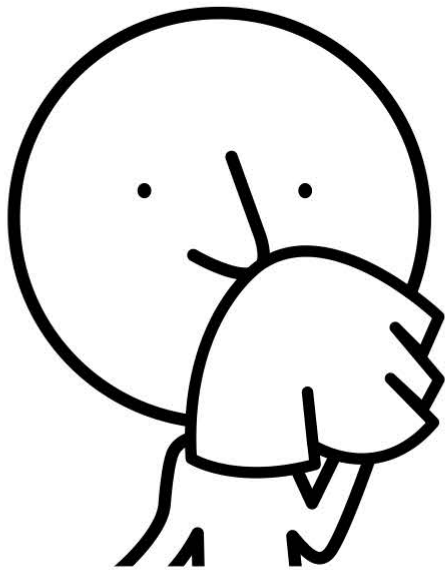
Wipe and dry hands with paper towel



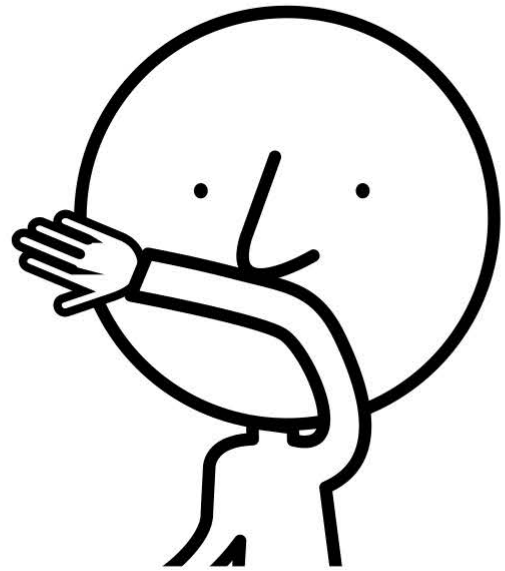
Turn off water using paper towel

# STOP

## Cover your cough



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.



Cough or sneeze into your sleeve, **not your hands.**

Put your used tissue in the garbage.  
Clean your hands with soap and water  
or alcohol-based hand rub.





**STOP**  
the spread of  
infection!



Get a flu shot.



Stay home if you are sick.  
Return when you are well.



Wash your hands. Use soap  
and water or hand sanitizer.



Cover your cough or sneeze  
with a tissue or into your sleeve.



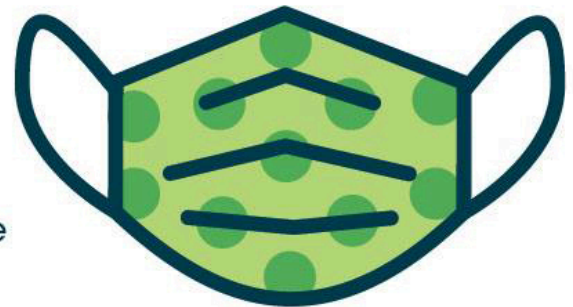
Keep your distance.  
Avoid shaking hands and close  
contact with people who are sick



[www.pelham.ca/covid19](http://www.pelham.ca/covid19)

## HOW TO SAFELY WEAR A FACE COVERING

Wearing a face covering for essential trips, even if you have no symptoms, is an additional measure that you can take to protect others around you.



- ✓ Clean your hands before putting it on and taking it off
- ✓ Make sure it fits. It should cover your mouth and nose.
- ✓ Keep your hands away from your face while wearing a face covering
- ✓ Wash your cloth face covering in the laundry
- ✓ Continue to stay two metres (six feet) away from others
- ✓ Clean surfaces that a dirty face covering touches

**Save the medical-grade masks for health care professionals.**

# WHAT IS PHYSICAL DISTANCING?

Physical distancing means avoiding close contact with others to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and can include:

**Keeping a distance of 6 feet from others**



Avoiding non-essential trips in the community



Limiting, postponing or cancelling gatherings



Working from home, where possible



Conducting meetings virtually



Keeping kids away from group settings



Avoiding visits to long-term care homes and other care settings



# COVID-19: DON'T TAKE IT HOME!

## A GUIDE FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS

### TAKE INTO WORK

Only take what you need for the day. Leave bags that you won't need at home. Put credit cards, driver's license, cell phones etc. in Ziploc bags. Take food in a disposable bag.



### WHEN AT WORK

Follow your workplace infection prevention and control procedures.



### BEFORE LEAVING WORK

Disinfect the personal items and devices you bring home. Wash your hands and arms. Leave any pens or other items that you used during the day at work.



### WHEN YOU GET HOME

Leave shoes outside or in the garage. Change your clothes before interacting with other household members. Wash clothes in hot water. Disinfect personal items and dispose of Ziplock and disposable lunch bags. Have a hot shower.



### IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

Stay home when you're not at work. Practice physical distancing. Practice exemplary personal hygiene. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces within your vehicle and within your home.



# PHYSICAL DISTANCING WHEN EXERCISING OUTDOORS



Clean your hands before going out and after you return home.



Go out when it is less crowded so you can keep a distance of 2 metres (6 feet) from others.



Check current guidelines around park amenities (e.g. sports fields, tennis courts).



Step aside or pass others quickly and courteously on sidewalks.



Ride solo or with people that you are currently living with.

[www.pelham.ca/covid19](http://www.pelham.ca/covid19)



## Prevent the Spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

### Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces daily



High touch surfaces can include toilet handles, sink tap handles, doorknobs, light switches, and electronics.

[www.pelham.ca/covid19](http://www.pelham.ca/covid19)

