

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SWPH CLASS ORDER, SECTION 22: SELF-ISOLATION

COVID-19 Class Order

Dated: February 8, 2021

Under what authority did Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) issue a Class Order related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

The *Health Protection and Promotion Act* authorizes the Medical Officer of Health to make a Class Order to address the risks presented by the potential spread of COVID-19 in Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas.

Why did the Medical Officer of Health issue this Class Order?

COVID-19 has been designated as communicable under Ontario Regulation 135/18. COVID-19 has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. The Province of Ontario has declared an emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act because of the pandemic.

COVID-19 is present in the region served by Southwestern Public Health and therefore poses a health risk to the residents of the region through community transmission. Most residents are compliant with public health measures directed by Southwestern Public Health, but not everyone takes these measures seriously. This Order is a proactive measure that strengthens our ability to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and ensures the health of individuals residing in our region.

Who is required to comply with this Order?

The Order applies to all persons residing in or present in the health unit's region (Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas) who are identified as:

- a) Are a confirmed case or probable case of COVID-19;
- b) Have new symptoms (even mild symptoms) or worsening symptoms of COVID-19, have

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SWPH CLASS ORDER, SECTION 22: SELF-ISOLATION

been tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting the results of their test;

- c) Otherwise, have reasonable grounds to believe they now have symptoms (even mild symptoms) of COVID-19, or have had such symptoms within the past ten (10) days;
- d) Are a close contact of a person identified in a. even if they do not themselves have any symptoms of COVID-19; or
- e) Are a parent, or person with responsibilities of a parent, of a person under 16 years of age identified in a., b., c. or d. who resides or is present in Elgin County, Oxford County or the City of St. Thomas.

What does the Order entail?

- If you are a confirmed case or probable case of COVID-19; have new symptoms (even mild symptoms) or worsening symptoms of COVID-19, have been tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting the results of their test; or otherwise, have reasonable grounds to believe they now have symptoms (even mild symptoms) of COVID-19, or have had such symptoms within the past ten (10) days;
 - You must remain in self-isolation for a minimum 10-day period that begins on the day you first show symptoms, are tested or diagnosed with COVID-19, whichever is earliest unless otherwise instructed by Southwestern Public Health in accordance with the current Ministry of Health guidelines, as amended. If you receive a negative COVID-19 test result during this period, you may discontinue self-isolation after symptoms are resolved for 24 hours.
- If you are a close contact of a person identified of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (even if you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19):
 - You must remain in self-isolation for 14 days after the day on which you last had close contact with the person with confirmed/probable COVID-19, unless otherwise instructed by Southwestern Public Health.
 - If during this 14 day period you are tested for COVID-19 and the test result is negative, you must still complete the 14 days of self-isolation.
- While in self-isolation, you must conduct yourself, so you do not expose any another person to infection or possible infection from COVID-19. You must follow the instructions on self-isolation [found here](#).

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SWPH CLASS ORDER, SECTION 22: SELF-ISOLATION

- During self-isolation, you must remain reachable for monitoring by Southwestern Public Health and/or other public health staff. Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g. difficulty breathing) by calling 911 and telling them of your COVID-19 related diagnosis or symptoms. Follow any further directions provided to you personally by Southwestern Public Health and/or other public health staff pertaining to COVID-19 and the terms of this Order. This includes sharing the names and contact information for all contacts and other information requested by Southwestern Public Health and/or other public health staff to permit appropriate case and contact management for COVID-19.
- Parents and guardians of children under 16 years of age are required to ensure compliance with this Order by the child under 16 years of age.

When is the Order effective? How long must people comply with the Order?

This order is effective from **12:01 am on February 9, 2021**. It will remain in effect until the Medical Officer of Health determines it is no longer required.

What is the definition of “Close Contact”?

“Close contact” means a person who, within the past 14 days, has had a high-risk exposure to a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case. For example, a person who:

- Lived with or otherwise had close, unprotected and prolonged contact, e.g., within 2 metres (6 feet) for more than 15 minutes, with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 during their period of communicability;
- “Unprotected” means without appropriate P.P.E. (personal protective equipment). A non-medical mask or face-covering is not P.P.E.
- Have been identified by Southwestern Public Health or another public health unit as a close contact of a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.

How could the Order be enforced if a person fails to comply?

Individuals residing in the region served by Southwestern Public Health (Oxford County, Elgin County, the City of St. Thomas) are required to follow the requirements under this Order. Those who do not do so, can be charged and fined up to \$5,000 per day.

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Can a person challenge the Order?

Individuals identified in the Class Order may challenge the Order by appealing to the [Health Services Appeal and Review Board](#).

More Information

If you have questions about the Class Order, please call Southwestern Public Health at 1-800-922-0096 x 9 to speak to a member of our team.