

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

COVID-19 Class Order

Dated: August 30, 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.

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 by requiring those with COVID-19 symptoms, infected with or exposed to COVID-19 to self-isolate as directed by Southwestern Public Health.

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

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- 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 once fever is resolved for at least 24 hrs without the use of fever-reducing medication, respiratory symptoms improved for 24 hrs and GI symptoms have resolved for 48 hrs.
- If you are a close contact of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (even if you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19) and you are not fully vaccinated:
 - You must remain in self-isolation for 10 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 10 day period you are tested for COVID-19 and the test result is negative, you must still complete the 10 days of self-isolation. This is because it is still possible for one to become infected with the COVID-19 virus for up to 10 days after exposure.
- If you are a close contact of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (even if you do not

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have any symptoms of COVID-19) and you are fully vaccinated (it has been at least 14 days since your second vaccine dose):

- You are not required to self-isolate as long as you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 but must self-monitor for symptoms and seek COVID-19 testing. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you must follow the guidance above (self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing).
- You should meticulously follow all public health measures, including maintaining physical distancing from others outside your household, wearing a face covering if physical distancing is not possible (including when outdoors), practicing good hand hygiene, and avoiding contact with vulnerable individuals.
- While in self-isolation, you must conduct yourself, so you do not expose any other person to infection or possible infection from COVID-19. You must follow the instructions on self-isolation [found here](#).
- 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 August 30, 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"?

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"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.

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.