



St. Thomas Site
Administrative Office
1230 Talbot Street
St. Thomas, ON
N5P 1G9

Woodstock Site
410 Buller Street
Woodstock, ON
N4S 4N2

MEMO

Date: November 23, 2020

To: Businesses Operating within Oxford County, Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas

Re: Revisions to the SWPH Medical Officer of Health's Letter of Instruction Regarding Mandatory Use of Face Coverings

On July 30, 2020, I issued a Letter of Instruction (LOI) to all businesses and organizations operating within the Southwestern Public Health region. This letter mandated the wearing of face coverings in all enclosed public spaces within the region with the goal of lowering the transmission of COVID-19 in these spaces. At the time, face coverings were recommended, but not mandated, across the province.

In early October, the Province of Ontario updated [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) to mandate face coverings within indoor spaces of business or organizations province-wide. ***It is your responsibility as a business or organization operating in the province to familiarize yourself with this Regulation.***

The Ontario mandatory face covering regulation aligns very closely with our original Letter of Instruction. As a result, to fully align with the rest of Ontario, the Ministry regulation (364/20) as outlined above will replace the SWPH Letter of Instruction, but with *some critical pieces from our original letter carried over.* Our revised Letter of Instruction is dated November 23, 2020.

What You Need to Know:

In addition to the requirement for face coverings, our Letter of Instruction includes complementary measures deemed necessary for public health and safety during the novel coronavirus pandemic. These additional items are still required in the SWPH region.

For the business or organization with areas that are **not accessible to members of the public**, in addition to the mandatory face covering requirement where physical distancing is not possible, you must:

- Ensure routine screening for COVID-19 symptoms, require those with symptoms to stay home, and advise them to be tested for COVID-19.
- Promote excellence in hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette.
- Ensure enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces within the premise.

Also:

- Businesses must post appropriate **visible signage** indicating that all persons entering or remaining inside the indoor space must wear a face covering.

- Require that employees provide verbal reminders to persons entering the indoor publicly accessed space without a face covering or persons unreasonably removing the face covering while in the premises.
- Ensure the availability of alcohol-based hand rub (60% alcohol or more) at all entrances and exits for the use of all persons entering or exiting the premises.
- Ensure that all employees are aware of the policy and are trained on implementation and enforcement.
- Have a **written policy** to describe how you will meet the requirements of [O.Reg.364/20: Rules for Areas in Stage 3](#), Section 2 of Schedule 1, sub-sections (4), (5), (6) **and** the additional public health safety requirements required within Version 2 of the SWPH *Letter of Instruction*.

Please note the following face covering exemption included in the LOI issued on July 30, 2020 has been revoked:

“Where sufficient barriers are provided for employees/volunteers that protect the persons from close contact from a member of the public, a face covering is not required for the employee/volunteer, but is required for the member of the public.”

Business leaders must be able to provide a copy of their policy/policies, upon request, to a Public Health Inspector or other person authorized to enforce the *Reopening Ontario Act*.

As per the *Reopening Ontario Act*, those who do not comply with the above-noted requirements may be fined. Individuals may be liable for a fine of \$750-\$1,000 up to a maximum of \$100,000, while corporations may be liable for a fine of up to \$10,000,000 for each day or part of each day on which the offence occurs or continues.

Southwestern Public Health is committed to supporting local businesses and organizations to operate safely. Please visit www.swpublichealth.ca to access the workplace toolkit for [sample policies, checklists, signage](#), and a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) resource. For more information, call our COVID-19 Call Centre at 1-800-922-0096 x 9.

Sincerely,



Dr. Joyce Lock
Medical Officer of Health
Southwestern Public Health

Copy: Cynthia St. John, CEO, Southwestern Public Health

Enclosure: Letter of Instruction (version 2), revised November 23, 2020