

COVID-19 Information Bulletin #13

Date issued: April 29, 2020

Purpose of bulletin: To keep local stakeholders informed of the quickly-evolving novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and its implications for Wellington County, Dufferin County and the City of Guelph (WDG).

Due to the evolving nature of the situation, further updates may be forthcoming. For more information visit www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca

Surveillance

- Information about cases in WDG can be found on [our website](#) and information about institutional outbreaks can be found in our [Retirement and Long-Term Care Outbreak Bulletin](#).

Webinar: Managing Stress During COVID-19

- The Guelph Family Health Team is offering an online workshop **today on April 29** from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Interested in participating? Visit their [website](#) to learn more.

24/7 Mental Health Support for Frontline Workers

- Kids Help Phone has partnered with the Crisis Text Line and Shout UK to offer free, 24/7 mental health support for Canadian healthcare workers.
- Text FRONTLINE to 741741 to reach a Crisis Responder.

U of G Study Recruitment: COVID-19 in cats, dogs and ferrets

- The University of Guelph is recruiting for a study by veterinarians about COVID-19 in pets. They are looking for individuals who have a positive COVID-19 test result or have symptoms of COVID-19 and have a cat, dog or ferret.
- Pets will be swabbed and tested and the results will be reported back to participants.
- To join the study, contact:
 - Dr. Dorothee Bienzle: dbienzle@uoguelph.ca or text 519-830-6097
 - Dr. Scott Weese: jsweese@uoguelph.ca or text 519-835-0322

New or Amended Guidance Documents

- **New:** WDGPH's [Guidance for Businesses: Employers and Employees](#) [April 27, 2020]

- **Amended:** Ministry of Health's [Guidance for Primary Care Providers in a Community Setting](#) [April 27, 2020]
- **Updated:** Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 Screening Tool for Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes](#) [April 24, 2020]
- Ministry of Health's [Reference Document for COVID-19 Symptoms](#) [April 22, 2020]
- Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 Patient Screening Guidance Document](#) [April 22, 2020]
- Please visit the Ministry of Health's [website](#), WDGPH's [website](#) and Public Health Agency of Canada's [website](#) regularly for updated guidance documents.

Announcements and Changes to Services

- On April 27, the [Government of Ontario launched](#) the [COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers](#) website to **help businesses** overcome the unique challenges created by the global pandemic. Businesses working to retool their operations to produce health-related products, or those that want to continue their operations in this new environment of physical distancing, can submit any potential roadblocks to the website
- On April 27, the [Government of Ontario released](#) a [Framework for Reopening our Province](#), which outlines the criteria Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts will use to advise the government on the loosening of emergency measures, as well as guiding principles for the safe, gradual reopening of businesses, services and public spaces. The framework also provides details of an outreach strategy, led by the Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee, to help inform the restart of the provincial economy.
- On April 27, the [Canada Revenue Agency \(CRA\) launched](#) the [application process](#) for the **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)** on behalf of the Government of Canada to help employers keep and re-hire workers amidst COVID-19. As of today, employers can apply for the CEWS through [My Business Account](#) or through the CRA's [online application portal](#), and their representatives can apply through [Represent a Client](#).
- On April 26, the [Ministry of Education announced](#) that **all publicly-funded schools will remain closed** until at least May 31, 2020, as part of an effort to keep students, staff and families safe from COVID-19. For more information, visit the [news release](#).
- On April 25, the [Government of Ontario announced](#) frontline staff will be provided with a **temporary pandemic payment** in recognition of the dedication, long hours and increased risk of working to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.
 - Amount: \$4/hour worked on top of regular wages and monthly lump sum payments of \$250 for four months to eligible frontline workers who work over 100 hours per month – meaning eligible employees working an average of 40 hours per week would receive \$3,560 in additional compensation.
 - Duration: Effective for 16 weeks, from April 24, 2020 until August 13, 2020.
 - Eligibility: Staff working in long-term care homes, retirement homes, emergency shelters, supportive housing, social services congregate care settings, corrections institutions and youth justice facilities, as well as those providing home and community care and some staff in hospitals. Staff providing frontline

clinical services, along with those providing support services, such as cleaning and meal preparation, will be eligible to receive the pandemic payment. For more information about eligible workplaces and workers, visit the [pandemic pay backgrounder](#).

- On April 25, the [Government of Ontario extended](#) the closure of Ontario's **provincial parks and conservation reserves** to May 31, 2020. This includes car camping, backcountry camping, roofed accommodations, day use opportunities, access points and all public buildings.
- On April 25, the [Government of Ontario introduced](#) new emergency orders and amended existing emergency orders to:
 - Allow health service providers, including hospitals, to temporarily reassign frontline staff to provide services and supports in **long-term care homes**. This will help to quickly provide much-needed staffing support to long-term care homes while they continue to fight outbreaks.
 - Provide staffing flexibility to service providers and employers in **the intervenor services sector**, which helps people who have a combined loss of hearing and vision. This will give employers the temporary authority to redirect staff to carry out essential tasks to support and protect people who are deafblind. It will also ensure staffing measures are in place to allow for physical distancing.
 - Permit the **use of allotment gardens and community gardens** across the province. These gardens are an essential source of fresh food for some individuals and families, including those who face food insecurity. Local medical officers of health will provide advice, recommendation and instructions that the gardens must meet in order to operate, such as physical distancing, and cleaning and disinfecting commonly used equipment and surfaces.
- On April 24, the [Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs announced](#) the governments of Canada and Ontario an investment of \$2.5 million to grow **agri-food e-business**. The Agri-Food Open for E-Business initiative will help food producers, farmers markets, retailers, garden centres, greenhouses, nurseries, and agricultural associations develop online business, providing consumers with greater access to a wide variety of food and agriculture products.
- On April 24, the [Government of Ontario issued](#) an emergency order for certain **congregate care settings**, placing a limit on work locations for staff.

Additional Resources

- Free YMCA [programs](#) for fitness, wellness, families or kids
- [Information](#) for animal owners seeking veterinary services by the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO)
- [Information](#) about caregiving in the era of COVID-19 – what to expect and how to cope by the Mental Health Commission of Canada
- [Resources](#) for Ontarians experiencing mental health and addictions issues by the Ministry of Health

- Ontario Community Support Association for [information](#) about helping isolated, low-income seniors get meals, groceries, medicine and other essentials to stay safe at home during COVID-19
- Ten [tips](#) to help seniors who may be socially isolated during COVID-19

Contact Information for Additional Support

Updated: WDGPH COVID-19 Call Centre

- **For health-related questions**, including symptoms, close contacts, travel or if you are a health care provider:
 - Call 519-822-2715 ext. 7006
 - Available Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and weekends from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- **For non-health related questions**, including business or workplace concerns, social distancing questions or non-emergency reporting questions:
 - Call 519-822-2715 ext. 4020
 - Available Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Reliable information sources:

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health website: www.wdgppublichealth.ca

Ontario Ministry of Health webpage: www.ontario.ca/coronavirus

Public Health Agency of Canada webpage: www.canada.ca/coronavirus