

# RESPIRATORY ILLNESS EXPOSURE GUIDANCE MEASURES

## For Community Based Congregate Living Settings

19 April 2023

In the event of a respiratory illness exposure, the following guidelines are intended to be used by site operators of Community based Congregate Living Settings

### Some Examples of Community Based Congregate Living Settings:

- Shelters
- Modular Housing
- Drying Out Centers
- Bed Based Treatment and Supported Living
- Mental Health and Substance Use Sites (all sizes)

### For Site Operators

When you become aware of a Respiratory Illness exposure at your site, implement the guidance measures below **immediately**

GUIDANCE MEASURES FOR SITE TO IMPLEMENT	
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimize opportunities for congregation, such as staggered times for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Communal spaces (e.g. TV room, smoking area, bathroom, kitchen)</li></ul></li><li>• Consider physical distancing at meals, suggestions include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Staggered meal services</li><li>○ Spacing between tables</li></ul></li><li>• Consider physical distancing in sleeping arrangements, suggestions include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Head-to-toe</li><li>○ Alternate bunks</li></ul></li></ul>
Isolation of Symptomatic Clients or Confirmed cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Isolation for clients with respiratory symptoms or those identified as cases</li><li>• Symptomatic clients should be put on Droplet Precautions for the length of their symptoms. If tested and positive, they should be under isolation and infection control precautions for the specific disease (a minimum of five days from the date of symptom onset for influenza or COVID-19).</li><li>• Single room occupancy for symptomatic clients or confirmed cases, if possible</li></ul>
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medical/procedural masks should be available for asymptomatic clients/non-cases to use. Consider encouraging mask use based on risk assessment (e.g. common areas, large group activities)</li><li>• Daily symptom screening of clients and staff</li><li>• Additional cleaning of high touch areas using Health Canada approved products</li></ul>
Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff and resident testing guidance, <a href="#">follow BCCDC COVID-19 Testing Guidance</a></li><li>• Influenza testing is recommended by the client's most responsible provider</li></ul>
Staff Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assign staff to same area/clients whenever possible to limit cross over</li><li>• Masks and other PPEs are to be worn based on Point of Care Risk Assessment</li></ul>
Admissions and Transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admissions and transfers can continue</li></ul>

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### When can Measures be Stopped?

Measures can be stopped when all of the following criteria are met:

1. Cases have recovered
2. No new cases have been identified
3. There are no new symptomatic clients, discontinue the above recommendations

### Resources and Additional Supports

- BC Centre of Disease Control (BCCDC) – [COVID-19](#)
- Healthlink BC – [Influenza \(Flu\) Season](#)
- Community Fraser Health Owned and Operated and Affiliated Sites: [Mental Health & Substance Use \(MHSU\) Toolkit for Prevention and Control of Respiratory Illness and Gastrointestinal Illness](#)
- Public Health is available to answer questions, reinforce best practices and provide additional guidance if necessary: 778-368-0123

**NOTE:** Should clients continue to experience symptoms and are negative for COVID-19, Influenza and RSV, consider another illness, such as Tuberculosis (TB), and support the client to see a physician for further testing and assessment.