

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES – STEP 2

Last revised: July 7, 2021

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is currently in Step 2 of the province's [Roadmap to Reopen](#). This document provides guidance for outdoor recreational amenities by following [Ontario Regulation 263/20: Rules for Areas in Step 2](#) (O. Reg 263/20) under the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Approach to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#). All businesses and organizations in the County of Simcoe and District of Muskoka must also adhere to the SMDHU medical officer of health's [letter of instruction](#) dated March 11, 2021.

Outdoor recreational amenities are public locations that are not operated in conjunction with amenities for indoor or outdoor sports and recreational fitness activities and have been previously identified by the province to include, but not limited to:

- Parks and recreational areas
- Baseball diamonds
- Batting cages
- Soccer, football, and sports fields
- Tennis, platform tennis, table tennis and pickleball courts
- Basketball courts
- BMX parks
- Skate parks
- Golf courses and driving ranges
- Frisbee golf locations
- Cycling tracks
- Trails
- Horse riding amenities
- Shooting ranges, including those operated by rod and gun clubs
- Playgrounds
- Portions of parks or recreational areas containing outdoor fitness equipment
- Archery ranges
- Boat and watercraft launch
- Lawn game courts, including lawn bowling, bocce and croquet courts
- Horseshoe pits

INDOOR ACTIVITIES

Indoor recreational or sports activities are not permitted in Step 2 with limited exceptions. The exceptions listed under [O. Reg 263/20](#) are associated with use of amenities for elite athletes, for the purposes of first aid services, to provide take-out or delivery service or outdoor dining, or for the use of washroom amenities. For further information, please contact the health unit.

Indoor access for clubhouses is permitted only for the following reasons:

- to serving food or beverages to members or patrons in accordance with Section 1 of Schedule 2 (restaurants, bars, etc.) of [O. Reg. 263/20](#).
- to be used by appointment as event or meeting space in accordance with Section 4 of Schedule 1 (meeting or event space) of [O. Reg. 263/20](#).
- to the extent, they provide access to equipment storage, a change room, shower room or washroom or a portion of the facility that is used to provide first aid.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Outdoor recreational amenities may open if they comply with requirements under [Ontario Regulation 263/20](#) including the following conditions:

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Team sports or games that may result in personal contact must not be practised or played at the amenity unless the sport or game has been modified to avoid personal contact.
- It is recommended to limit the volume of music (e.g., to be no louder than the volume of a normal conversation) and that instructors use a microphone to avoid loud talking/shouting for outdoor activities.

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES – STEP 2

SAFETY PLAN

- A [safety plan](#) must be written and available on request. In addition, a copy of the safety plan must be posted in a conspicuous location where it can be viewed by staff and patrons (i.e. posted on a notice board, at a clubhouse or public washrooms, available on the internet, etc.)
- The safety plan shall describe the implementation of public health measures in the location, including screening, physical distancing, masks/face coverings, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and objects, and the wearing of personal protective equipment.
- Additional guidance on how to develop your safety plan can be found [here](#).

CAPACITY LIMITS AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- *Fitness, exercise class and personal training session participants:* Every person participating in an outdoor fitness or exercise class or personal training session must maintain a physical distance of at least 3 metres (9 feet) from every other person.
- *Personal training:* Any services must be provided outdoors. Services may not be provided, at one time, to more than the number of persons who can maintain a physical distance of at least 3 metres (9 feet) from every other person in the outdoor space where the services are provided.
- *Members of the public:* The total number of members of the public permitted to be at the outdoor facility at any one time must be limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from every other person at the facility.
- *Spectators:* The number of spectators at the outdoor facility at any one time must not exceed 25% of the usual seating capacity for a facility that has an area designated for spectator seating. For a facility that does not have an area designated for spectator seating, 25% capacity is determined by taking the total square metres of the area, dividing that number by 16 and rounding the result down to the nearest whole number.
- Persons waiting in line or congregating outside must maintain 2 metres (6 feet) distance from every other person.

SCREENING AND RECORD KEEPING

- All staff must be actively screened before attending work each day. Please see the letter of [instruction](#) from the SMDHU's medical officer of health for direction on screening workers.
- **NEW:** Patrons attending the amenity related to fitness, exercise class and personal training sessions must be actively screened before attendance, in addition to those attending the amenity related to any other business or activity where active screening is required. Please see the instructions from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health for direction on screening patrons. Patrons who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should be refused entry to the premises.
- Staff and patrons should conduct a COVID-19 [self-assessment](#) before attending the amenity and follow the direction provided. If they have COVID-19 symptoms, they should stay home, seek testing, and [self-isolate](#).
- The Province of Ontario has implemented a [website for all categories of screening, including of workers and patrons at fitness amenities](#).
- Post [screening signs](#) at all entrances.
- The facility operator or person holding a permit must keep a contact log for ALL patrons entering the amenity, including a first and last name, as well as a telephone number (or e-mail address).
- Maintain log records for at least one month.
- Only disclose records to a medical officer of health or a public health inspector.

PERSONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS TRAINERS

Personal physical fitness and sports trainers may operate at an outdoor recreational amenity if they comply with the following conditions:

- Services may not be provided, at one time, to more than the number of persons who can maintain a physical distance of at least 3 metres (9 feet) from every other person in the space where the services are provided.

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES – STEP 2

- Any person who is engaged in physical fitness or sports training activities must maintain a physical distance of at least 3 metres (9 feet) from any other person.
- Team sports or games that may result in personal contact must not be practised or played unless the sport or game has been modified to avoid personal contact.
- The personal trainer or sports trainer must prepare a COVID-19 [safety plan](#) in addition to the one prepared by the facility and actively screen the patrons they provide services to each day.
- The personal trainer or sports trainer must:
 - actively screen individuals
 - record the name and contact information of every member of the public whom they are providing services to
 - maintain the records for a period of at least one month, and
 - only disclose the records to a medical officer of health or a public health inspector under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* on request for a purpose specified in section 2 of that Act or as otherwise required by law.

USE OF MASKS, FACE COVERINGS AND EYE PROTECTION

- Every person indoors for a permitted reason shall wear a mask or [face covering](#) unless exemptions apply as per [O. Reg 263/20, Step 2](#).
- Masks can only be removed indoors:
 - to eat and drink, while seated
 - health and safety reasons
- Staff are required to wear a face shield or approved eye protection in addition to a mask or face covering when within 2 metres (6 feet) of someone without a mask.

HAND AND RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

- Encourage all visitors to [wash](#) or [sanitize](#) their hands using alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60-90% alcohol content often, especially as they arrive at the amenity.
- Encourage visitors to sneeze and cough into their elbow or use single-use tissues followed by hand hygiene. Post [Cover Your Cough](#) posters in locations where they can be clearly seen around the facility.
- Encourage visitors to avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Post handwashing and hand sanitizing posters in high traffic areas.
- Ensure properly stocked, frequently cleaned and disinfected handwash and/or hand sanitizer stations are made available at the entrance and throughout the outdoor facility for everyone to wash/sanitize their hands as required.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

- The person responsible for an outdoor recreational amenity that is open shall ensure that any washrooms, change rooms, or similar amenities made available to the public are cleaned and disinfected as frequently as necessary to maintain a sanitary condition as per [provincial direction](#).
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces/equipment frequently.
- Equipment and areas must be cleaned and disinfected between use (e.g., free weights, weight/fitness machines, etc.) while in operation.
- Equipment (e.g., mats, weights, kettle bells, etc.) must not be shared during an activity/class.
- Remove equipment that may be difficult to clean and disinfect (e.g., foam rollers, yoga blocks, mats that are absorbent, straps, ropes, etc.).
- Use only disinfectants with a Drug Identification Number (DIN) given and approved by [Health Canada](#) and follow the manufacturer's directions regarding contact time.
- Increase cleaning and disinfection of all high contact surfaces and surfaces frequently touched (i.e., hand contact areas, door handles, switches, tabletops, chairs, sneeze guards, restrooms, taps, utensils and dispensers, credit card machines).
- Maintain logs of cleaning and disinfecting.

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES – STEP 2

- Please refer to [Public Health Ontario's fact sheet for cleaning and disinfection for public settings](#) for best practices, including cleaning scheduling and cleaning products.

SIGNAGE

Post signs promoting wearing masks/face coverings, handwashing, and physical distancing and make them visible to staff and patrons. Sample signage can be found [here](#).

SUPPORTING EACH OTHER AND OUR COMMUNITY

We understand that this is a challenging time, but public health measures like this are needed to limit the spread of COVID-19. We thank you for the service that you provide to the community.

Please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's Health Connection line if you have any questions at 1-877-721-7520, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m..

Effective Saturday July 10, 2021, Health Connection's hours of operation will be Monday to Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m..

While the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit aims to provide relevant and timely information, no guarantee can be given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information provided. This guidance is not intended to, nor does it provide legal advice and should not be relied upon or treated as legal advice. Users seeking legal advice should consult with a qualified legal professional. No one should act, or refrain from acting, based solely upon the materials provided in this guidance, any hypertext links or other general information without first seeking appropriate legal or other professional advice. Please visit the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit website regularly for updates and additional guidance.