

FACT SHEET – COVID-19 CLASS ORDER FOR SELF-ISOLATION

Last revised: November 23, 2021

A class order under Section 22 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act has been issued by Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's Medical Officer of Health (MOH) to enforce COVID-19 self-isolation requirements. The order took effect October 6, 2020, was revised on March 1, 2021, May 27, 2021, September 21, 2021, and November 24, 2021, and remains in effect until the MOH declares it is no longer needed.

What is a COVID-19 class order?

This class order is a legal order that enables Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) to direct people to stay home and self-isolate until they are not contagious. The purpose is to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of everyone in Simcoe and Muskoka. While most people who have or may have COVID-19, as well as their close contacts, have been compliant with instructions from public health authorities to self-isolate, there are individuals who do not take these measures seriously enough or whose life circumstances make it difficult to follow this order. This class order is a legal tool to help us ensure that everyone who needs to self-isolate complies with that direction.

Who does the class order apply to?

The class order applies to:

- People with symptoms of COVID-19, regardless if they are fully vaccinated¹ and/or regardless if they get tested.
- People who test positive for COVID-19.
- People in recent close contact with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or who tested positive for COVID-19. This includes caregivers and household members.
- Household members of people in recent close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

How long must people who test positive for COVID-19 self-isolate for?

People who test positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate for 10 days from the day the person's symptoms began (refer to list of symptoms [here](#)). This is because the period of time you are contagious is for most people up to 10 days from the start of symptoms. Sometimes people are asked to stay home longer, depending on their symptoms and if their immune system is affected by medical conditions or medication.

How long must people who have been identified as a close contact self-isolate for?

People who are not fully vaccinated and who have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, which generally means being within 2 metres of that infectious person for at least 15 minutes without adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), must self-isolate for 10 days even if they don't have symptoms. This is because the period between exposure to an infection and the appearance of the first symptoms generally occurs within 10 days. Adequate PPE is using both a medical mask and protective eyewear. Cloth face coverings are not adequate PPE. People who are fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms are exempt from the order to self-isolate and can return to work, school, errands immediately.

¹ An individual is considered **fully vaccinated** if they have received:

- A full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines;
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada;
- and they received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

FACT SHEET – COVID-19 CLASS ORDER FOR SELF-ISOLATION

However, if you reside in a congregate living setting or you have a moderate to severe immunocompromising condition you will be required to self-isolate (even if you receive a third vaccine booster).

- You must wear a mask and maintain physical distancing when outside of the home to reduce the risk of transmission to others if you become a case.
- Testing as a close contact is still recommended.
- You are asked not to visit vulnerable settings such as long-term care homes, hospitals, schools or child care settings unless essential for work, education and/or care.
- It is recommended that you notify your workplace that you have been exposed to COVID-19.

UPDATED: How long must household members of a close contact self-isolate for?

It is required that anyone 18 years and under who are not fully vaccinated and who live in the same house as a close contact must follow the same isolation recommendations as the close contact and not leave their property unless it is to go for testing or to seek necessary medical attention. They do not need to get tested if they do not have any symptoms.

It is also required that adults (19 years or older) who are not fully vaccinated and who live in the same house as the close contact to stay home except for essential reasons*, as long as they themselves are not close contacts, and there are no COVID-19 cases in the household.

This does not apply for those household members who are fully vaccinated OR who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days.

*Essential reasons for leaving home include going to the grocery store or pharmacy; accessing health care services; attending school and/or child care; and for essential in-person work.

What happens if a household member develops symptoms?

Unless they are fully vaccinated or recently tested positive for COVID-19, household members of people who have symptoms of COVID-19 must self-isolate until the ill person receives a negative COVID-19 test result or receives an alternate diagnosis by a healthcare professional.

If the person with symptoms in the household does NOT get tested, everyone else in the household must stay home for:

- 10 days from the last contact with the person with symptoms if the ill person can self-isolate away from the rest of the household; or
- 20 days from start of the ill person's symptom(s) if the ill person CANNOT self-isolate away from the rest of the household.

Can some people be exempted from the class order?

If absolutely necessary someone who is not fully vaccinated and in self-isolation may still be able to go to critical/essential medical appointments, but they should contact the health unit for instructions on how to do so safely.

Some health care workers who are not fully vaccinated and who are close contacts with no symptoms may be permitted to work if the health care facility requires them to ensure critical services are offered. However, they must self-isolate at home when they are not working or travelling to/from work. Exceptions may also be made for people leaving domestic violence. The health unit will review exceptions for each situation.

How does self-isolation work?

Self-isolation means staying at home or in an isolation facility. Do not leave your property or have visitors. Avoid close contact with others. Shop online or have someone pick up supplies for you. If you need support with groceries, prescriptions or other services, please call 211 for advice.

Keep as much distance as possible from the people you live with. Use a separate bathroom and bedroom if you have one. See [how to self-isolate](#).

FACT SHEET – COVID-19 CLASS ORDER FOR SELF-ISOLATION

While self-isolating, people must remain reachable for monitoring by public health. This helps SMDHU make sure they are doing what is necessary and to identify if they need support while self-isolating.

What happens if someone does not self-isolate?

A person who ignores the class order to self-isolate can be charged and fined up to \$5,000 per day. The Health Protection and Promotion Act also allows the Medical Officer of Health to go to court and seek additional orders to protect the health of the community.

Can someone legally challenge the class order?

The person listed in the class order can challenge it by appealing to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board: <http://www.hsarb.on.ca/scripts/english/contact.asp>.

What do I need to know about the federal order under the Quarantine Act?

The federal quarantine order applies to all travellers entering Canada, effective March 25, 2020. It requires most travellers to self-quarantine for 14 days regardless of vaccination status. More information is available [here](#).

In some cases, people who must quarantine under the federal order may also be subject to the order issued by SMDHU's Medical Officer of Health (for example, people who are diagnosed with COVID-19 and have also recently returned from travel).

More Information

For a health assessment, call your doctor's office or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000. For more information about the class order, call Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520.