

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: March 17, 2020

HEALTH UNIT FOLLOWING CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S RECCOMENDATIONS

NORTH BAY, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) is aligning with the guidance from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the province of Ontario's declaration of a State of Emergency, and is strongly recommending that bars, theaters, libraries, recreational programs, daycare centres and places of worship close effective today. Restaurants may remain open for pick-up and delivery only.

"It is important that we look at the bigger picture and work together as a community to help slowdown the spread of COVID-19," said Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health. "The risk to Canadians and those within our district still remains low. Within the Health Unit district there are no positive COVID-19 cases and no known community spread. By taking such measures we are helping to ensure that we protect ourselves and the ones we love from COVID-19."

The Chief Medical Officer of Health has also recommended that gatherings remain less than 50 people and that people practice social distancing. Social distancing will help prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 from person-to-person. This is important so a large number of people do not get sick at the same time. Social distancing does not mean that you are required to stay at home, rather it means:

- Talk to your supervisor, manager, or employer about the possibility of working from home where possible.
- If you have meetings planned, consider doing them virtually instead of in person.
- Whenever possible, spend time outside and in settings where people can maintain a 1-2 meter (3-6 feet) distance from each other.
- Change how you greet one another – greet with a friendly wave or an elbow bump.
- If possible, limit or consider cancelling group gatherings especially those larger than 50 people or in places that you cannot distance yourself (1-2 meters, 3-6 feet).
- Avoid non-essential trips in the community.
- If you have to go into the community for an essential trip via taxi or rideshare, be sure to keep the windows down.
- Avoid visits to Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Supportive Housing, Hospices and other care settings unless the visit is essential. Older adults and those with underlying health problems are most at risk of becoming ill with COVID-19.

The best way for the public to protect themselves is through simple hygiene practices such as, regular handwashing or using alcohol-based sanitizers, not touching your face, and covering your cough or sneeze. If you are sick, stay home. Four out of five people who become ill with COVID-19 will have no symptoms or mild symptoms and recover within a week or two.

Employers are encouraged to support employees to work from home and to visit the Health Unit's [website](#) for information on preparing and responding to the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Be Informed. Be Prepared. Be Protected. Visit myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19 for more information.

-30-

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