

This message has been approved by Tanya Rowell, CEO of the Public Service Commission

-Please post this message for employees who do not have computer access-

Premier Dennis King and Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Heather Morrison, announced 407 new cases of COVID-19 today in Prince Edward Island as well as increased hospitalizations and cases in Intensive Care. As a result, enhanced public health measures are being implemented, effective midnight tonight, for a two week period, until January 31, 2022. During this time, organized gatherings are not permitted, personal gatherings are limited to households and two support persons where needed, recreation facilities such as gyms will be closed, restaurants will close to in-room dining and retail operations continue to be limited to 50% capacity. For a full list of the enhanced measures, please go to <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/news/enhanced-public-health-measures-put-in-place-until-january-31-407-new-cases-of-covid-19>.

What does this mean for Civil Service employees?

Our goal is to move as many people out of our workplaces as quickly and safely as possible to reduce contact between individuals. All employees who can, will be required to work remotely during this this period. Only those who cannot work from home and must be at the workplace to conduct their work can be working onsite.

- Deputy Ministers and CEOs are working with their departments on any necessary operational amendments as a result of today's announcement and are to communicate with their staff and clients as soon as possible to advise of any changes in process or service delivery.
- Departments and agencies should make every effort to facilitate all staff who can work remotely to begin to do so immediately. Supervisors are to touch base with those staff and make the necessary arrangements.
- All meetings are to be held remotely during this time and services are to be offered virtually where possible. Public access is to be limited and if a service cannot be offered virtually, it must be done safely and in accordance with CPHO guidelines.
- Zax Café at the PAB Complex will be operational for takeout only. You are encouraged to e-mail or call in your order before you go via cafe@gov.pe.ca or [902-370-2233](tel:902-370-2233) (menu at: <http://www.gov.pe.ca/cafeteria/menu.php>).

Service Delivery

Departments and agencies will determine how to best provide services to the public within the new restrictions. This may mean offering more services remotely or providing curbside pick-up/drop-off. Store front services (e.g. Access PEI, LCC Stores, Taxation Payments) will continue to operate within current retail public health guidelines, i.e. limited to 50% capacity.

Schools

- The opening of schools to in-class learning is delayed until January 31. The province has a number of [child care supports for children and families impacted by COVID-19](#) available during this time.
- If your child's school is closed and you can't arrange childcare, as noted in the [December 30th Employee Update](#), please talk with your Supervisor about working from home, modifying your work hours, or about other flexible working arrangements or leave options. Departments are asked to be as flexible as reasonably and operationally possible.

Negative and Positive COVID-19 Test Results Now Available Online

Those who are tested at a provincial clinic can now access negative and positive results online at [My test result](#). The results will be posted online within four to 24 hours after the test has been completed. If you do not have access to a computer, you can call 1-833-533-9333 to get confirmation of your results.

As the capacity of the Chief Public Health Office and Public Health Nursing continues to be exceeded to contact positive cases in a timely manner, individuals over the age of 50 years who are positive will now be prioritized for public health follow up. More information for people who test positive can be found at www.princeedwardisland.ca/TestedPositive.

Adherence to [public health measures](#) and the following is key to slow the spread of the Omicron variant:

- Stay home if you aren't feeling well. [Get tested](#) if you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), even after a previous negative test, and [self-isolate](#) until tested and until a negative result is received.
- If you have tested [positive for COVID-19](#), have been notified you are a [close contact](#), have symptoms or concerns about possible COVID-19 exposure, and/or have been advised that you need to be [tested](#) and/or [self-isolate](#), talk with your Supervisor as soon as possible. Supervisors are to then work confidentially and directly with their HR Manager to confirm appropriate measures to be taken at the workplace as well as a plan for the employee's safe return. **Employees are not to return to work until they have consulted with their Supervisor and HR Manager.**
- Employees and clients who are required to self-isolate **are not** permitted to enter a Government site; per the [Civil Service COVID-19 Exclusion Policy](#).
- **Those who are in the workplace must adhere to public health measures at all times (including during lunch and break times)**, Wipe down high touch surfaces in common areas such as photocopy rooms and lunch areas after use and avoid unnecessary visits to other offices, shared spaces or public areas to limit in-person interactions.
- Strict physical distancing between people from different households is required in ALL workplaces, businesses, and organizations.
- Workplaces must ensure measures remain in place to maintain physical distancing and ensure monitoring of and adherence to same.
- [Get vaccinated](#) against COVID-19 if you are eligible, including getting a booster six months after last dose.
- **[Wearing a mask is mandatory in indoor public places](#)**, see [Civil Service Mask Protocol](#). A three layer, well-fitting mask is recommended. Staff may also choose to double mask if they wish. It is important to note that some departments may have more specific safety requirements regarding masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) in place, given the nature of their services. This is not meant to supersede that direction.
- Visitors coming into buildings are to be screened with the [Screening Script](#).
- [Travel](#): Out-of-province travel should be restricted to essential travel only.
- Stay informed by checking www.princeedwardisland.ca/covid19 regularly for updates from the Chief Public Health Office.

Don't hesitate to reach out to your **Employee Assistance Program** for confidential and professional counseling and resources at (902) 368-5738, (toll-free) 1-800-239-3826, or eap@gov.pe.ca. For more information, please see: <https://psc.gpei.ca/employee-assistance-program>.

If you and/or your team have additional questions and/or support needs, talk with your Supervisor or HR Manager.

The safety of our employees and Islanders is our top priority, and we will continue to follow the guidance of our Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Heather Morrison, to make decisions. We will provide additional information as it becomes available.

Thank you,

Tanya