

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

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Yesterday, Dr. Heather Morrison, our Chief Public Health Officer, announced [eleven \(11\) new cases of COVID-19](#) in Prince Edward Island. Earlier this week, Dr. Morrison announced a confirmed case of the Omicron variant and advised that effective 8:00 am on Friday December 17 until early January, [new temporary public health measures](#) are in place as an added layer of protection regarding travel, masks, personal gatherings, worship services, long term care, community care, acute care, tournaments, businesses and restaurants. These are in addition to existing measures, and a brief explanation on some of these new measures can be found below:

- **Travel** – Everyone travelling to PEI will be asked to wait for two (2) hours for their result of their point of entry test, before joining their family or going to a public place. Individuals arriving in PEI are strongly recommended to test on day four (4) and to follow modified isolation during those first four days. This means not attending large gatherings, larger personal gatherings, or visiting those in long term care, community care or other congregate settings. They should also avoid visiting with immune compromised or elderly individuals until their day four test if possible.
- **Masks** – Masks will continue to be required in indoor public places, preferably a medical grade or three-layer mask worn properly over both the nose and mouth. Masks can be removed when actively eating or drinking and can no longer be removed when seated at organized gatherings like worship services or concerts. Masks should be worn in workplaces where physical distancing cannot be maintained and in any outdoor spaces when you are in close contact with people from outside your household.
- **Personal gatherings** – The limit for personal gatherings is reduced to a maximum of 20 people (including those in your household).

For more detailed information on public health measures and current public exposure notifications, visit <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/news/omicron-variant-identified-in-pei-new-temporary-public-health-measures-three-new-cases-of-covid>.

Personal Travel

The Chief Public Health Office continues to advise Islanders to limit travel while appreciating that seeing family and friends is important. Further requirements and guidance on travel can be found [here](#).

If you travel outside PEI and it becomes necessary to self-isolate prior to returning to PEI, you must use vacation or other accrued leave during the self-isolation period. If you are planning to travel, you must discuss your travel plans including contingency arrangements if self-isolation is required, with your supervisor in advance. Sick leave is not available unless symptomatic or you test positive for COVID-19.

If you are required to self-isolate upon return to PEI, and are not approved to work remotely, you may be eligible to work isolate through the online application at <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/work-isolation> provided you have your employer's support to work isolate if approved. **Managers are to discuss work isolation requests with their Director and Human Resource Manager.** If you do not apply to work isolate in advance and are required to self-isolate, you must use vacation or other accrued leave during the self-isolation period, unless you have pre-approval to work remotely.

Holiday Gatherings and Events

It's essential to exercise due care and caution in order to prevent further spread in considering hosting and/or attending gatherings and other events. Outdoor activities with smaller numbers pose less risk.

When considering hosting or attending events and gatherings, please review CPHO's [Holidays, Celebrations and Observances Guidance](#) and the [Civil Service Holiday Gathering Guidance](#).

We must adhere to [Public Health measures](#) at all times and consider the risks including individual levels of risk such as vaccine status, your health and the health of others, the risk of serious outcomes, the types of activities and events you would be participating in, as well as the level of COVID-19 presence in the community. Do not attend gatherings or events if feeling unwell and [get tested](#) if experiencing any [symptoms of COVID-19](#).

The following important public health measures remain in place in the Civil Service:

- [Get vaccinated](#) against COVID-19 if you are eligible.
- [Wear a mask](#) in indoor public places, see [Civil Service Mask Protocol](#).
- Practice physical distancing of 2m/6ft. and wash your hands frequently.
- Stay home when you are sick or experiencing [symptoms of COVID-19](#). [Get tested](#) if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (even if the symptoms are mild).
- Report to your Manager immediately if you have symptoms or concerns about possible COVID-19 exposure or if Public Health has advised that you need to be [tested](#) and/or [self-isolate](#). Anyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 at work must immediately perform hand hygiene, report to their Manager, avoid contact with staff, leave as soon as it is safe to do so, and arrange to be tested. Managers should then consult with their HR Manager on next steps.
- Visitors coming into buildings are to be screened with the [Screening Script](#).
- [Travel](#): Work related 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.

If you have any questions, please contact your Manager or HR Manager.

Wishing you safe and happy holiday celebrations,

Tanya