



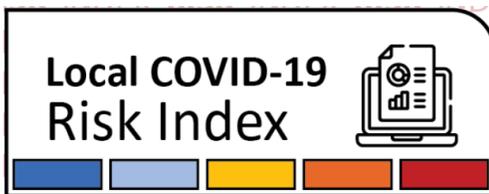
MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 13, 2022, Peterborough

COVID-19 Community Risk Index Reaches “Very High” Level

Avoid Social Gatherings and High-Risk Settings



Health indicators show that COVID-19 transmission in the local region has reached “very high” levels according to Peterborough Public Health’s Community COVID-19 Risk Index. This is the first time the Index has reached highest level since it was launched on March 30, 2022.

“It is clear that the sixth wave is continuing to surge and I remain very concerned for the health of our most vulnerable residents,” said Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health. “I know this is not the news we wanted to hear before a long holiday weekend, but the safest course of action is to wear a mask and avoid indoor social gatherings and high-risk settings where transmission can occur. This is important for us all to decrease transmission, but especially those at high risk of severe illness with COVID-19.”

With a “very high” risk of transmission of COVID-19 in the community, Peterborough Public Health offers the following guidance to local residents:

Guidance for General Population:

- Mask: Strongly Recommended for all interactions with people from outside your household.
- Social Gatherings: Avoid social gatherings in all indoor settings.
- High-risk Settings*: Avoid attending high-risk settings.

Guidance for High Risk Population**

- Mask: Strongly Recommended for all interactions with people from outside your household, using a respirator mask if possible, e.g. N95 or KN95.
- Social Gatherings: Avoid social gatherings in all indoor settings.
- High-risk Settings*: Avoid attending high-risk settings.

*A high-risk setting is a place where transmission levels could be higher due to large capacity limits and limited physical distancing.

**High-risk populations include those who are immunocompromised, medically-at-risk, unvaccinated, or adults aged 60 years and older.

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This guidance for “very high risk” is in addition to these ongoing recommendations for everyone as the COVID-19 pandemic continues:

- get vaccinated with every dose you are eligible to receive – three doses for most residents, four doses for those who are immunocompromised;
- stay home if sick, even if mildly - your mild symptoms could be deadly to someone you pass it along to;
- use rapid antigen tests and continue to report both positive and negative to PPH using our confidential online [reporting survey](#);
- get tested and treated if you're eligible, if in doubt whether you are eligible, use the new provincial screening tool www.ontario.ca/antiviralscreener or seek PCR testing to confirm. Many people do not realize that they are eligible for newly available lifesaving treatments.

The COVID-19 Community Risk Index incorporates data such as wastewater surveillance signals, number of hospitalizations and deaths, percentage positivity of PCR tests and community-reported rapid-antigen tests (through Peterborough Public Health’s [online survey](#)), and the local case incidence rate per 100,000. The Index provides a risk level for each data point based on current values, which is then used to inform the overall risk level for the community. The Index is updated weekly each Wednesday by 4 p.m.

Residents are encouraged to check it regularly in the same way they check a weather forecast. It is available online at www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/covid-risk-index, or by phone at 705-743-1000 to hear a recording stating the current level and associated public health guidance.

Peterborough Public Health is one of the first health units in Ontario to produce a local COVID-19 Community Risk Index. It continues to pilot this community tool and encourages residents to share how useful it is in the context of learning to live with COVID-19. Feedback can be shared via the online survey that can be found on the same webpage as the Index itself, or by clicking on [this link](#). More than 170 responses have been received to date.

More information about the COVID-19 Community Risk Index can be found in this explainer video by Dr. Piggott [here](#). To bookmark the Index, please visit www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/covid-risk-index.

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