

County of Simcoe Statement: Public Health measures and the need for adherence

Midhurst/December 22, 2021– On December 19, in response to the surge of the Omicron variant, the Province implemented additional measures to ensure the safety of residents and proactively address hospital capacity concerns. These enhanced measures include reduced capacity in businesses, community and recreational spaces, and for personal gatherings. The County is joining our partners at the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) to remind residents and businesses to please adhere to all public health measures. For full details regarding provincial guidelines, vaccine clinics and access to testing, please visit the SMDHU website at simcoemuskokahealth.org.

According to Public Health, we are facing a critical period right now, and we are on track for much higher infection rates unless we take more action to curb the spread. Our hospital capacity, and our health and emergency resources, are limited, so please continue to do your part and follow all requirements to protect yourself, your family, friends and communities. No one is happy about this news as we head into the holidays; however, now, more than ever, we need to come together and support public health recommendations and provincial mandates. We are hopeful that the 50 per cent capacity limits, and other measures, will have the desired impact through the next few weeks, and that major extended impacts to our businesses, labour force and economy, which we experienced in previous waves, can be avoided if we all do our part now.

Further to the [Province's announcement on December 15, 2021](#), we encourage residents to continue to get vaccinated if they have not already, and book a booster shot as soon as they are eligible. As of December 20, residents over the age of 18 are able to book a booster shot in as little as three months after their second shot. In addition to this, free rapid testing will be provided at pop-up locations and select LCBOs to encourage a safer holiday season. All residents over the age of five are eligible for vaccination in Ontario.

Please follow guidelines and help us move in the right direction. Additionally, please don't forget the basic pandemic health and safety measures: wear a mask; wash your hands and watch your distance. Stay safe, stay strong, and look after each other. We will get through this, together and stronger.

The County and our staff continue to work safely to provide essential services to our residents. From long-term care to paramedic services, to landfills and waste collection, to LINX transit and social supports, to children's services and economic development, to continued investment in infrastructure and snow plowing, to supporting tourism businesses and providing customer service to residents in need. These services are vital to our communities, and we ask our residents to help keep our staff safe as they continue to serve you in frontline roles.

On behalf of the County of Simcoe, we wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy New Year, and please stay safe.

George Cornell
County of Simcoe Warden

Helpful Links:

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit:

www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

County of Simcoe Coronavirus Service Impacts:

<https://www.simcoe.ca/CorporateCommunications/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>