

COVID-19 Update

Employee and Physician Information



October 27, 2021

- October 12 to 25 – 116 new cases
 - 82 in Eastern Health
 - 8 in Western Health
 - 25 in Central Health
 - 1 in Labrador-Grenfell Health
- Total number cases: 1,964
- Active cases: 90*
- Recovered cases: 1,852
- Total number deaths: 15
- Total number in hospital: 1
- Total vaccine doses administered in NL: 861,478 (as of October 25, 2021).
- # health-care workers (HCW) vaccinated in the Eastern Health region (as of October 25, 2021):
 - 732 HCW are partially vaccinated (one dose), and
 - 24,892 HCW are fully vaccinated (two doses)
- Most up-to-date data: [Provincial COVID-19 pandemic data hub](#).
*(*Excludes 6 cases that left the province).*

Provincial COVID-19 Update

- Marystown-Burin Area is in Alert Level 3.
 - There is a cluster in the Marystown area. As of Tuesday, October 26, there have been 69 confirmed cases of COVID-19 connected to the cluster.
- Remainder of the Province is at Step 2. More information: www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/.

Visitor Restrictions (Burin Peninsula)

- Temporary visitor restrictions are in place for hospital patients and long-term care and personal care home residents at all facilities and sites on the Burin Peninsula, due to an increase in COVID-19 cases and ongoing investigation in the area.
- Two designated visitors and a support person (if required) are permitted for inpatients in a hospital setting and residents of long-term care homes.
- More information: [PSA \(October 22\) Eastern Health Implements Visitor Restrictions on the Burin Peninsula](#).

Mandatory Vaccination Policy

- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced its [Mandatory Vaccination Policy](#) that applies to public service employees in core provincial government departments, as well as agencies, boards and commissions. More information: www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2021/health/1015n05/.

- By December 17, 2021, all provincial government employees are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved medical exemption.
- The mandatory vaccination policy will apply to Eastern Health staff, physicians, students and volunteers as well as on-site vendors, suppliers and contractors.
- Current information is available via the Government of NL's 'Mandatory Vaccination Policy' webpage: www.gov.nl.ca/exec/tbs/mandatory-vaccination-policy/.
- Eastern Health will share additional information as it becomes available (i.e.: exemption process, how proof of vaccination will be provided to the employer, etc.).

Vaccine Passport (Visitors)

- Effective October 22, 2021, in line with provincial [vaccine passport guidelines](#), visitors to long-term care facilities, personal care homes and community care homes are required to present proof of COVID-19 vaccination status or an approved medical exemption.
- **Visitors, ages 12 years and older**, are asked to present the following upon entry: Digital/paper QR code or copy of an official vaccination record (proof of COVID-19 vaccination status) and identification with name and date of birth (name on vaccination passport/record must match ID).
- **Children under the age of 12** can visit when accompanied by an adult who is eligible to visit. As per provincial vaccine passport guidelines, children have three months from their 12th birthday to get fully vaccinated.
- **For more information, please visit:**
 - PSA (October 21, 2021): [Eastern Health Provides Update on Vaccine Passport Requirements for Visitation](#)
 - Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's 'Guidance for Residents' webpage: gov.nl.ca/covid-19/life-during-covid-19/vaccination-record/citizens/

Vaccine Passport (Guidance for Residents - General)

- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced the launch of its vaccine passport on October 7, 2021. More info.: www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2021/exec/1007n01/
- As per [provincial guidelines](#), individuals must be [fully vaccinated](#) or have an [approved medical exemption](#) in order to access certain businesses and settings.
- **Proof of vaccination** or an approved medical exemption is **required** for **visitors to long-term care facilities, personal care homes and community care homes**.
- **Proof of vaccination is not required** for other **health-care facilities**, including **private health clinics**.
- Note: people entering businesses and settings for **work purposes** have until **December 17, 2021** to be **fully vaccinated**.
- For more information, please visit the Government of NL's webpages:
 - Guidance for Residents: www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/life-during-covid-19/vaccination-record/citizens/
 - Frequently Asked Questions: www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/life-during-covid-19/vaccination-record/faqs/

Travel Restrictions

- **Travel outside of the province:** As per the provincial government, Newfoundland and Labrador's participation in the Atlantic Canada bubble was **suspended on September 30, 2021**.

- Staff who are returning from travel outside of Newfoundland and Labrador (excluding communities along the Labrador-Quebec border, Labrador City, Wabush, Fermont, the Labrador Straits area and Blanc Sablon) that are **fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms are NOT required to isolate**.
- However, staff who are **partially or unvaccinated must self-isolate until they receive negative results from a test taken on day 7 or later** and call Occupational Health upon return; staff are directed to report any symptoms to Occupational Health during the required self-isolation period.
- As an employee, if you are planning to travel outside of the province, you must discuss this with your manager in advance. The isolation period (as applicable) will be taken into consideration when requesting/approving leave. Also, please be advised that isolation requirements upon return to the province are subject to change at any time based on current epidemiology.
- For information regarding provincial travel restrictions, please visit: www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/travel/travel-restrictions/.

Flu Vaccines

- Getting a flu shot is important every year, and particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the flu shot will not protect against COVID-19, it will help reduce the risk of getting the flu which, if combined with COVID-19, could result in a higher risk for severe illness.
- Getting vaccinated will also help reduce the spread of influenza in our communities and help reduce the impact on the health-care system.
- **Staff vaccinations** began on **October 25, 2021**. For more information and to view the **schedule**, please visit the [‘Influenza 2021-2022’ mini-web](#).
- **Public influenza vaccination clinics** also began this week (October 25, 2021).
 - Flu clinics are **by appointment only**. Appointments can be made online at www.timefortheshot.ca. Those unable to book online can schedule an appointment by calling 1-833-951-3904 (toll-free).
 - More information: [PSA \(October 21\)](#).

COVID-19 Vaccines

- Eastern Health continues to support the scientific, evidence-based approach and advice of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Health Canada, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), and the Chief Medical Officer of Health in regard to the safety and effectiveness of vaccination against COVID-19.
- Eastern Health is awaiting Health Canada’s decision regarding approval of the COVID-19 vaccine in children, ages 5 to 11. More information (Health Canada Statement): [Health Canada receives submission from Pfizer-BioNTech to authorize the use of Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine in children 5 to 11 years of age](#).
- **COVID-19 vaccine clinics** continue to be available across the region. Clinics are available for first and second doses for individuals 12 years and older. For the **current COVID-19 vaccine clinic schedule**, including times, please visit: www.easternhealth.ca/covid19/vaccine/covid-clinic-schedule/. Individuals are advised to check the website prior to proceeding to their clinic of choice.
- Due to the high demand, the Village Mall COVID-19 vaccine clinic is currently by appointment only and is no longer accepting walk-ins. This process will be monitored daily. [More information: PSA \(October 26\)](#).

- Important to note: Due to increased demand, **appointments** are **strongly recommended**. Individuals may **book appointments** throughout the Eastern Health region by visiting www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/vaccine/gettheshot/ or by calling 1-833-951-3904. Walk-ins will be accepted as capacity allows in all clinics, with the exception of the Village Mall.
- **Third COVID-19 Vaccine Dose (Moderately to Severely Immunocompromised Individuals):** Eastern Health is offering a third COVID-19 vaccine dose to individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, including those receiving immunosuppressive therapies who may have a lower immune response to COVID-19 vaccines compared to the general population. **More information:** [PSA \(September 16\)](#).
- When booking your COVID-19 vaccine appointment, if you experience issues accessing/loading the Pomelo website, please open Google Chrome and clear your web browsing cache by clicking Ctrl+F5.
 - For additional information, please visit Eastern Health's "COVID-19 Vaccine" webpage via: www.easternhealth.ca/covid19/vaccine/.

Reminders: Social Distancing and Masking Requirements

- Staff/students/physicians/volunteers are reminded to please keep a distance of six feet between co-workers when eating/drinking and when unmasked.
- Mask usage and physical distancing are part of a comprehensive plan to support prevention and control measures that can limit the spread of COVID-19. Everyone's safety depends on the appropriate use of a mask and physical distancing practices.
- **Social distancing:** There is **no such thing** as a "**work bubble**" with colleagues; while in the workplace, staff are required to follow the guidelines below (re: mask wearing and physical distancing) when they are with co-workers in **break rooms, cafeterias, workspaces, elevators**, etc.
 - Eat/drink only in designated areas, e.g., break rooms, cafeterias.
 - Keep a distance of six feet between others when unmasked while eating and drinking.
 - Masks can only be removed in designated eating areas or when alone in an office space; masks are required in shared spaces and common areas.
 - Masks are also required when working behind plexiglass with openings and interacting/working with the public.
 - **Staff are also reminded to please maintain social distancing while using elevators.**
- **Mask compliance:** Regardless of vaccination status, **mask compliance continues to be mandatory** for all Eastern Health employees, students, physicians and volunteers while in an Eastern Health facility, or while working for the organization outside of an Eastern Health site/facility, such as during home visits by staff in the community, at community-leased sites and at vaccination clinics. **Questions** regarding mask usage in Eastern Health facilities can be directed to your program's infection control practitioner or Workplace Safety (mysafety@easternhealth.ca or 777-7777, pathway 3-3).

Reminders: Infection Prevention and Control & Workplace Safety

- **Mask compliance audit:** Staff should continue to conduct visual audits on mask compliance within Eastern Health facilities and to complete the online survey based upon what they have observed during their workday. Each area/unit is expected to complete a minimum of one audit per week. To view instructions and to complete the survey, please visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/maskcomplianceEH>.
- Meetings should continue to happen virtually whenever possible.

Reminders: Occupational Health

- **Daily COVID-19 self-assessment:** Staff and physicians are reminded to complete the online staff self-screening tool via forms.healthenl.ca/selfassessment. **If staff members have any one symptom, they are advised to stay home and to notify Occupational Health.**
- For staff health-related questions regarding COVID-19, please call Occupational Health at 777-7777, pathway 3-2.
 - If you are waiting for a return call from Occupational Health, please be advised that the telephone number will show as “No Caller ID/Unknown or Private Caller.”

Important to Note

- Essential Health Care Worker documents are available via [COVID-19 Intranet -> Resources -> Essential Workers](#).
- Staff are reminded to show their work **Eastern Health ID** for security when entering a site. Please ensure that your ID is out and visible upon entry.

Report all potential communicable diseases to Occupational Health: 709-777-7777, line 3, line 2, or email occhealth@easternhealth.ca.

Navigator Line: 709-752-3663 | www.easternhealth.ca/covid19 | [COVID-19 Intranet page](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)