

Positive COVID-19 Case Planning for

OPTIONS NORTHWEST

95 Cumberland Street North, Thunder Bay, ON P7A 4M1 (807)344-4994

OPTIONS NORTHWEST emergency contact: Manager On-Call (807)343-6300

Direction will be taken from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit

First Steps:

- If two people we support in the same home are showing symptoms of COVID or have tested positive then Management will contact the Thunder Bay District Health Unit- Infectious Disease Control (Liz) at **623-4505** to provide notification and to seek direction. Please note that they will only respond during the regular work week. An outbreak may be declared by TBDHU if two or more residents in one setting contract COVID-19 around the same time period. Start outbreak precautions in the meantime.
- The Thunder Bay District Health Unit will provide guidance with respect to any additional measures that should be implemented to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the setting.
- The Pandemic team will meet as soon as possible to discuss whether the people who have tested positive can isolate in their home or must be moved to an alternate site, under the direction of the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. This meeting should include the Supervisor from the affected area. This may also be done by email.
- All staff with the primary assignment to the area in outbreak will be notified of the outbreak by the Supervisor or Supervisor On Call. ONW scheduling department will also be notified and should alert people accepting shifts in the home of the outbreak. Outbreak signs will be posted on the outside doors to alert people. Ensure there is adequate PPE and cleaning supplies on hand.
- Employees working within the outbreak area will be encouraged whenever possible to work in the one primary location.
- Detailed directions of what to do in case of suspected or confirmed outbreak will be sent to staff via email.
- Access to key supports will be maintained for people in the affected area such as medication delivery, medical care with physicians, emergency care if their condition deteriorates, the Community Resource Team support and community supports as needed.
- Serious Occurrence reporting will be done by the Supervisor, a Manager, or a Director to MCCSS if the person supported is positive for COVID and needs to seek medical attention. Serious Occurrence reporting related to staff testing positive is no longer required.

People in Outbreak Area

If COVID-19 positive:

- The COVID lead person will contact Liz from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit at 625-8313 if two or more residents in one location test positive for COVID-19.
- TBDHU may or may not determine an outbreak for the home.
- Please note that the TBDHU is using a risk management approach to determine if there is an outbreak.
- To get a PCR test done, please book an appointment at the Assessment Centre 807-935-8100 or at <https://tb.covidresponse.ca/> PCR testing is free of charge for employees and the people we support and is a more comprehensive test than a RAT.
- The TBDHU may direct ONW to complete a line list.
- The COVID Lead will send an email of detailed instructions to employees associated with the home.

If people will isolate in their own home:

- As much as possible, the individual(s) affected should isolate in their own rooms.
- Employees working in the affected area must wear surgical/procedure masks, eye protection and gowns for all interactions with individuals. Gloves must be worn when providing direct care. N-95 masks are strongly encouraged in these cases. Remain diligent with proper hand washing.
- Have signage up to encourage proper donning/doffing of PPE, carts outside the bedroom door, and a lined garbage can for **each** COVID positive person.
- The Thunder Bay District Health Unit may provide further specific guidance on the use of PPE based on individual circumstances. Additional Infection Prevention and Control team (IPAC team) support can be requested through the TBDHU.
- Bathrooms must be cleaned and disinfected after each use by people. Consider bringing in commodes for use by COVID-19 positive individuals in their room. People who are positive for COVID should use a washroom separate from others whenever possible.
- The Thunder Bay District Health Unit will assist in determining the best way to cohort people within the affected area to minimize spread of the virus.
- The Pandemic team will keep the Supervisor and employees from the affected area informed of all recommendations from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.
- Employees must support people who have symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19 to stay as far apart as possible from others, isolating them in their rooms as much as possible.
- Ill, exposed or COVID-19 positive individuals will be served their meals in their rooms.
- Employees will continue to frequently clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces and areas after use and at least twice daily.
- Common areas of the home should not be used by COVID-19 positive people.

- Reinforce hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and physical distancing within the home. Use of HEPA filters and airing out the home is also encouraged.
- Bedding, towels, and other laundry will be washed daily and will not be shared. Employees must wear gloves and a gown when handling dirty laundry.
- Employees will continually monitor all ill people for worsening symptoms and arrange medical care as needed. In the case of emergency, call 9-1-1. Temperature checks should still be done only if medically warranted, such as when someone has symptoms of illness. If emergency services are called in the staff will need to give the outbreak number which would have been previously emailed if an outbreak was declared.
- New admissions to the area of outbreak should be on hold until the outbreak is declared over by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.
- If tolerated, all people in the outbreak area should wear a mask to protect others.
- Employees will be reminded to stay home if they experience any symptoms of illness and remain at home until cleared to return to work in consultation with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit and ONW management. Pharmacies also have Paxlovid now which can be explored in more extreme symptomatic cases.
- Only essential visitors will be allowed into the outbreak area and will be required to wear PPE.
- Employees will be required to maintain physical distancing with co-workers and essential visitors.

Testing:

- Organize testing for all ill people in the home through contacting the Assessment Centre 807-935-8100 or at <https://tb.covidresponse.ca/> PCR testing is free of charge for employees and the people we support. RAT tests are also available in the homes.
- The Supervisor or employees will monitor for test results online and notify the COVID Lead of test results.
- The Thunder Bay District Health Unit will advise if testing should be done on individuals, employees or essential visitors with no symptoms.

Communications:

- The Executive Director and Director of Community Services or Designate will notify individuals, families, OPTIONS NORTHWEST employees, PGT, MCCSS, board members, unions, and partner agencies about the outbreak, as necessary.
- Individuals, employees, and essential visitors should be made aware of the outbreak measures being implemented at the congregate living setting.
- A sign will be posted on the outside doors of the home indicating there is an outbreak.

- Signs are posted about key outbreak measures-physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette. Signs are posted on the bedroom door of the person positive for COVID-19.
- EMS will be notified of the outbreak if an individual requires transport to the hospital.
- The Executive Director should be prepared for media attention and coordinate messaging with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.
- Regular updates will be provided to the Thunder Bay District Health Unit by the COVID Lead.
- If employees become ill as a result of exposure in the workplace, notification must be given to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and JHSC or Health and Safety Representatives.

Resolved cases and declaring the outbreak over:

- We will work with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit to determine when cases are considered resolved and individuals can come out of isolation.
- The Thunder Bay District Health Unit will declare when the outbreak is over.
- Generally, an outbreak is declared over when there are no new cases of COVID-19 in individuals or employees after 10 days.