

COVID-19 - SUPPORTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Vulnerable populations may include older adults; people with underlying chronic health conditions, or a compromised immune system; severe and persistent mental illness; difficulty communicating, accessing transportation or medical care; socioeconomic barriers, including homelessness; or social or geographic isolation. These individuals are more at risk of developing severe complications from COVID-19.

Community-based organizations play an important role in helping prevent vulnerable populations from getting, or spreading, COVID-19. The following measures can mitigate the impact of COVID-19:

- Promote the following preventative actions:
 - Practice proper handwashing, cough and sneeze etiquette;
 - Avoid touching face;
 - Avoid contact with people who are sick; and
 - Practice social distancing (2 meters).
- Have supplies on hand for staff, volunteers and people receiving services, such as soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol), tissues, trash baskets and disposable facemasks for people showing mild respiratory symptoms. Plan to have extra supplies available.
- If handling individuals' belongings, staff should use, and be trained in how to properly remove, disposable rubber gloves.
- If possible, identify space (and a separate bathroom if available) that can be used to accommodate individuals with mild respiratory symptoms and separate them from others. Provide these individuals with a disposable facemask to wear while receiving services. These spaces should be cleaned daily.
- Ensure high use areas such as door knobs, bathrooms, common areas, dining rooms, are cleaned more frequently than usual. Ensure the cleaning supplies used are appropriate and used at the appropriate dilution. Please consult your supplier for information and direction. Additional information can be found at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/files/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-NL.pdf>
- Staff need to stay home if they are feeling unwell, have returned to Canada within the last 14 days, have returned to Newfoundland and Labrador on or after March 20, or have had contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
- Work closely with other community-based partners, public health officials and faith-based organizations to identify ways to support each other and individuals receiving services.

- Develop a communications plan for distributing timely and accurate information to staff, volunteers, key community partners and individuals receiving services.
- Stay up to date about COVID-19 by regularly checking www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19.
- Please visit <https://www.811healthline.ca/> for information about self-assessment for COVID-19 infection.