

A message from Dr. Kathryn Cameron

Chief Risk Officer and Chair, Emergency Operations Centre

Updated COVID-19 measures to address variants of concern

March 5, 2021

Colleagues,

Sheridan remains in regular communication with Public Health and work together to respond to on-campus exposures, identify close contacts and implement additional strategies to mitigate further spread of the COVID-19 virus. In response to the evolving situation related to COVID-19 variants of concern (VOCs), the Ministry of Health has provided additional guidance on case, contact and outbreak.

What has changed?

All public health measures to reduce transmission of COVID-19 continue to apply to the new COVID-19 VOCs but require more rigorous application due to the increased transmission risk. Please review the following details.

- Generally, there is a lower threshold for classifying contacts as high-risk exposures that require self-isolation. To mitigate this, all employees and students will be **provided** with and **required** to use a **Sheridan-issued medical mask while on campus**. The medical masks will be available at the entrance in hybrid classrooms and essential services offices. Security will also have extra medical masks available for visitors at the [designated campus entrances](#).
- **Additionally**, where people will occasionally be within two meters of each other for more than a transient interaction (e.g., passing by others), **eye protection** (i.e. a face shield, safety glasses, or safety goggles) is **also required**.
- If someone in your house (children, parents, roommates, etc.) has been exposed to COVID-19 and are **asymptomatic**, employees are required to stay home **except for essential reasons** for the duration of the household member's quarantine period. Per Public Health guidelines, attending work is considered an essential reason and therefore you will continue to be allowed on campus so long as the household member remains **asymptomatic**.
- If someone in your house has COVID-19 **symptoms**, employees are **required to stay home** until the symptomatic individual receives a negative COVID-19 test result or is provided an alternative diagnosis by a healthcare professional. Please contact Occupational Health and Safety Services at ohsservices@sheridancollege.ca to discuss when you can do so safely.

Proper use of personal protective equipment

Once you retrieve a medical mask in your work area, you can temporarily remove the non-medical mask you wore to campus to put on the medical mask. During this time, everyone must stand at **least two metres apart** from all other persons and remain stationary. The short period of time when the masks are being switched is not considered a significant risk by Public Health. Double-masking is not necessary and wearing a medical mask over non-medical mask is not recommended at this time.

As part of this new PPE initiative, we would like to share how the medical masks should be properly donned and doffed. We have the following resources posted on Sheridan Central:

- [COVID-19 Guidelines on Community Protective Garment](#) (i.e. Face Mask) - provides an overview on why we require everyone to wear a mask and the limitations of non-medical masks.
- [How to Don and Doff PPE \(Poster\)](#) - provides information on how, and in which order, PPE should be worn (including medical masks).
- [How to Wear and Handle a Non-Medical Mask](#) - provides information on do's and don'ts of non-medical masks
- [Recommendation on How to Store a Non-Medical Mask Between Uses](#) - provides information on how non-medical masks should be stored when not in use.
- [COVID-19 training video](#) has a section (runtime: 12:55 to 25:19) dedicated to use, care, and limitations of PPE and how to don and doff PPE.

Campus access reminder

While our campuses remain accessible for those attending in-class instruction and staff who are not able to work remotely, everyone must follow the mandatory protocols:

- Bring your onecard with you each time you come to campus, tap it when you enter campus, and display it at all times.
- Answer the self-screening questions on the [Sheridan Alert app](#) with honesty.
- Only use designated entrance and exit points as screening is critical to campus safety.

COVID-19 cases and contact tracing

In the event of an exposure on campus, after an investigation by Public Health and/or Sheridan, **we will continue to directly contact individuals** who are impacted. These contacts will be provided specific instructions via their Sheridan email. Please be sure to check your Sheridan email account regularly.

If you test positive for COVID-19, you may receive a letter from Public Health with instructions on communicating with others about the positive test result. If this is the case, we ask that you notify Occupational Health and Safety Services at ohsservices@sheridancollege.ca immediately and prior to distributing the letters to other Sheridan community members. Through Sheridan's contact-tracing protocols, we can assist you with identifying the recipients and distribution.

Should you receive a letter indicating that you were a close contact from someone who tested positive for COVID-19, please **stay at home** and advise Occupational Health and Safety Services at ohsservices@sheridancollege.ca.

As COVID-19 remains a persistent threat in our community, please continue to maintain physical distancing, wear a mask and practice good hand cleaning to reduce the risk of future infections. As situations quickly evolve, please continue to visit <https://coronavirus.sheridancollege.ca> for the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 at Sheridan, including positive cases of COVID-19 that are connected to our campuses.

We understand that this may be concerning. Please be reminded that confidential employee counselling is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week from our Employee and Family Assistance Program provider, which may be accessed by calling **1.844.880.9142**.

Thank you for doing your part to keep our community safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Cameron, PhD
Chief Risk Officer and Chair, Emergency Operations Centre