

March 11, 2020

All School Staff, Students and Families

**Re: March Break Travel Recommendations Regarding COVID-19**

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) is closely monitoring the development of COVID-19 in our province. While there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19 at Canadian Forces Base Trenton, that individual has been under quarantine since arrival in Canada and all infection prevention protocols have been followed. Although the risk of transmission in our community remains low, it is important for school communities and families to be prepared, to know how COVID-19 is spread, and to minimize the risk of contracting the virus.

We continue to request that teachers advise students and families to follow infection control strategies:

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer,
- Cough and sneeze into the bend of your arm, not into your hand,
- If you use a tissue, throw it away immediately and wash your hands,
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes with your hands,
- Don't share items such as cutlery or water bottles with others – even immediate family,
- Stay home if sick, avoid visiting people in long-term care, or individuals with health concerns,
- If you experience respiratory symptoms and seek medical care, always put on a mask when you arrive.

Additional recommendations for schools and resources for our school communities are available at [hpePublicHealth.ca](http://hpePublicHealth.ca) or by calling HPEPH at 613-966-5500 or 1-800-267-2803, ext. 349.

**March Break Travel**

**If you plan to travel, during the March Break**, check for Travel Health Notices on the Government of Canada website <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice> to learn if you need to use special precautions or avoid non-essential travel. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) now recommends that Canadians avoid all cruise ship travel.

**If you return from travel outside of Canada after the March Break**, monitor yourself for symptoms (fever, cough or difficulty breathing) for 14 days after returning. PHAC is also advising anyone who travelled and who has COVID-19 symptoms to stay home and self-isolate (which means stay in a separate room or keep a 2-metre distance), and call your health care provider, HPEPH at 613-966-5500 or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving situation and you need to consider, when travelling, that current requirements by the Canadian government for returning travellers could change. You should be prepared for the potential recommendation to self-isolate and to stay home for 14 days upon returning from any travel outside Canada.

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HPEPH is committed to providing our community with up-to-date information as soon as it becomes available. Current information about COVID-19 can be found at [Ontario.ca/coronavirus](https://Ontario.ca/coronavirus), at [publichealthontario.ca](https://publichealthontario.ca) and at [hpePublicHealth.ca](https://hpePublicHealth.ca).

**For more information, contact our Infectious and Communicable Disease Program intake line at 613-966-5500 or 1-800-267-2803, ext. 349.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Oglaza', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Piotr Oglaza, MD, CPHI(C), CCFP, MPH, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health and CEO