

December 18, 2020

Dear School Communities in the Interior Region,

**RE: School Notification Process During The Winter Break**

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During the winter break (December 19, 2020 – January 1, 2021), Interior Health (IH) will continue contact tracing of any cases identified at schools. For this, Public Health will directly contact anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and anyone considered a close contact.

In other words, rather than sending letters through the school, IH will communicate directly with anyone at risk of covid-19 over the holidays. IH will also continue online notification of potential COVID-19 school exposures by posting on the IH website. We encourage school community members to monitor this website for any updates in their school.

- Please be reminded that COVID-19 is circulating in the Interior Region. If anyone develops COVID-19 like symptoms, they should call their primary care provider or 811 (see below for booking a testing appointment).
- Contact tracing efforts will continue over the holidays. Public Health will follow up with COVID-19 cases and close contacts in the school setting and notify any close contacts that need to self-isolate.
- Please continue to monitor the School Exposures website: <https://news.interiorhealth.ca/news/school-exposures/>
- It is imperative that everyone follow the provincial public health orders that are in place and avoid gatherings over the winter break. This will minimize the number of cases and contacts impacting school in the New Year.

COVID-19 school exposures continue to be low risk. Despite the number of exposures that have occurred, very few instances of transmission have been linked to the school setting. Existing health and safety measures have been very effective in preventing transmission in schools. Staff and students should continue to use the daily health check form, stay home if they are sick, and arrange for testing if they develop COVID-19 like symptoms by calling their primary care provider or 811. Testing is available for people with cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms.

**Booking a COVID-19 test:**

- Online: You can book an appointment online through the COVID-19 Test Booking Form: <https://interiorhealthcovid.secureform.ca/index.php>
- By phone: Call the COVID-19 Test Booking Line at 1-877-740-7747 for assistance with booking your test.

We look forward to working with you to help keep schools safe throughout the school year. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



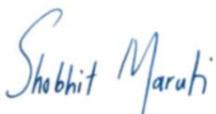
Dr. Albert de Villiers  
Chief Medical Health Officer



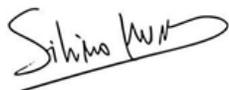
Dr. Carol Fenton  
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