

Guidance for Eating and Drinking Safely during COVID-19

Purpose

To ensure the health and safety of the community by minimizing the spread of the virus when eating or drinking.

Description of Task

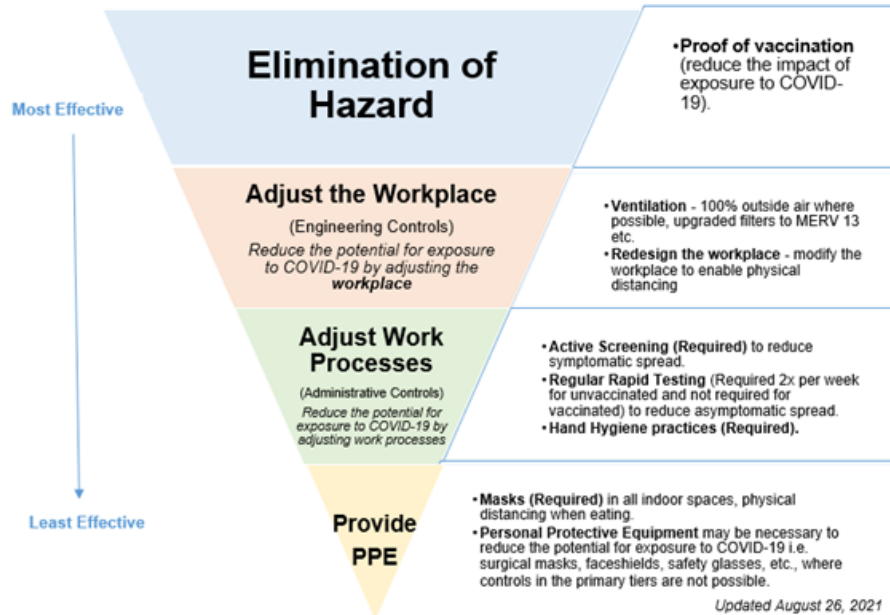
Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to take appropriate rest breaks that allow time for eating or drinking throughout the day to promote self-care. There is some evidence that there is an increased risk of transmission when eating or drinking due to close interactions and removal of masks.

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Hierarchy of Hazard Control

Hazard mitigation should always focus on implementing control measures to eliminate or reduce risk. The hierarchy can be applied to any hazard in the workplace including COVID-19.



Elimination of Hazard

Anyone accessing campus or a University facility in person is required to upload proof that they are fully vaccinated using the MacCheck digital tool, or that they have received an exemption from the university for a validated human rights ground.

Adjust the Workplace

McMaster is compliant with Ontario Regulation 364/20, Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step under the Province of Ontario. The Province is currently in Step 3.

Reopening Ontario Act - RULES FOR AREAS AT STEP 3 AND AT THE ROADMAP EXIT STEP

5.1) The person responsible for a business or organization shall ensure that every person who performs work for the business or organization and whose mask or face covering is temporarily removed to consume food or drink under subclause (4) (i) (iii) is separated from every other person by,

- (a) a distance of at least two metres; or
- (b) plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier.

Reopening Ontario Act - RULES FOR AREAS AT STEP 3 AND AT THE ROADMAP EXIT STEP

Proof of vaccination

2.1 (1) The person responsible for a business or an organization described in subsection (2) that is open shall require each patron who enters an area of the premises of the business or organization that is described in that subsection to provide, at the point of entry, proof of identification and of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

(2) Subsection (1) applies with respect to the following areas of the premises of the following businesses and organizations:

1. The indoor areas of restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments where dance facilities are not provided, but not with respect to takeout and delivery service.

At McMaster, to address the rules as outlined in the Reopening Ontario Act, a number of food service areas will be limiting their seating arrangements in order to comply with the new regulations, but otherwise these locations are maintaining normal operations. The university will continue to review the provincial regulations and any additional changes the government may introduce.

This includes the McMaster University Student Centre, where eating areas will be cordoned off with seating available to those who are able to show proof of full vaccination and ID as required by the province.

Adjust Work/Space Processes

- Restrict eating or drinking to designated and clearly identified areas (i.e., lounges, food services areas, private offices, etc.).
- Position tables, chairs and other furniture in designated eating or drinking areas to maintain physical distancing.
- Remove furniture in designated eating or drinking areas to prevent overcrowding.
- If weather permits, eat or drink outdoors in available distanced seating spaces.

Physical Distancing On-Site

- Physical distancing is required in all areas except indoor instructional spaces (i.e., indoor instructional areas such as classrooms; laboratories; libraries; in-person experiential learning, etc.).
- Maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet (2m) from others while eating or drinking. This includes all spaces and all activities on site where food and drink is available.

Physical Distancing Off-Site

- Maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet (2m) from others while eating or drinking at a McMaster hosted activity (i.e., department meeting, team orientation, student clubs, etc.).

Administrative Controls

Schedule

- Stagger break periods for eating or drinking to reduce number of individuals in the space.

Hygiene Practices

- Wash or disinfect hands before/after eating or drinking; location of the closest sink with soap and water should be communicated or hand sanitizer should be made available.
- Clean tables, microwaves, and other commonly handled items before/after use with supplied disinfectant products.
- Dispose of garbage.

Personal Protective Equipment

Face coverings or masks are required in all indoor areas. Face coverings and masks are required outdoors when physical distancing cannot be achieved.

- Masks can be removed indoors only for eating or drinking when physically distanced from others.
- Masks can be removed outdoors only when physical distancing can be maintained.
- Put mask on as soon as possible after eating or drinking.

Procedures Faculty, Staff and Students in the McMaster Community

- 1) Identify designated eating or drinking locations, areas in which you are able to physical distance, per the Step 3 Regulation
- 2) Ensure there is appropriate space to physically distance, 2M, from others. For example: no eating/drinking in instructional spaces as physical distancing is not required.
- 3) While preparing food or drink, maintain physical distance and do not remove mask.
- 4) Clean table and other items handled (i.e., fridge, microwave, coffee maker, etc.) with disinfectant products supplied.
- 5) Wash or disinfectant hands.
- 6) Remove mask to eat or drink. Put mask on immediately when finished eating or drinking.
- 7) Clean table and other handled items with disinfectant products supplied.
- 8) Dispose of garbage.
- 9) Wash or disinfect hands.

These procedures include lunch/breaks and when planning/hosting McMaster events

Resources

- [O. Reg. 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step](#)
- Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development – [Meal and Break Periods at Work during COVID-19](#)
- [How to Hand Wash](#) video