

DSP Licensed Homes

Lifting Community Access Restrictions

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Given the current easing of restrictions for businesses and organizations in Nova Scotia, remaining safe while allowing participants to access community is our top priority. To support safe and timely access to community, the following guidelines have been developed to ensure all who provide services are aligned in their planning and implementation.

Awareness and Communication

- Ensure that staff, volunteers, support workers, participants, and other stakeholders are informed and understand new guidelines.
- It is recommended that staff support participants on initial access to community until the participant is comfortable, particularly in cases where participants would otherwise access community independently

Participant Screening

- Participants should only access community if they are not exhibiting symptoms (exception for access to urgent medical appointments or testing).
- Complete active screening for COVID-19 symptoms upon reentry if the participant has been away from the home for more than 24 hours. If participants indicate any symptoms, contact 811 to complete a screen. If a positive screen is indicated by 811, the participant should be isolated until testing can be accessed, per the COVID-19 Management in DSP Licensed Homes – Guidelines
- Daily screening of all participants in licensed homes remains a requirement per the COVID-19 Management in DSP Licensed Homes – Guidelines

Tracking of Community Access

- Each outing outside of the home must be documented and include:
 - Date/time
 - Accompanying support staff (if applicable)
 - Mode of transportation
 - Place(s) visited
 - Known close contacts, including potential high-risk contacts (e.g. family members, etc.)
- If possible, avoid community settings where physical distancing is not possible, or it is likely that physical distancing would be compromised for the participant or members of the community due to the individual's support needs.
- At this time, it is not advised that participants leave the province on travel if it requires them to self-isolate for 14 days upon return. The need to self-isolate will depend on the region travelled to and the current Public Health order.

Hand Hygiene

- Ensure participant practices proper hand hygiene before leaving the home
- Ensure participant practices proper hand hygiene immediately upon returning to the home
 - If possible, participant should practice frequent hand hygiene with hand sanitizer after contacting high-touch surfaces in public

Masking

- Support staff must wear a medical/procedural mask if it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres while supporting a participant to access community
- Participants may choose to wear a non-medical mask while they are in public, if possible. This should only occur if a participant is able to wear a mask properly for the duration of the time out of the home (e.g. can avoid touching or removing mask).

Cleaning

- Service providers are encouraged to clean and disinfect items coming into the home following community access

Transportation

- All service provider operated vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected (e.g. high touch surfaces) between outings by participants
- If travelling in a private vehicle (e.g. family), the driver must verify that the vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected with a focus on high touch surfaces
- Drivers of vehicles and all passengers (if possible) must be masked
- Drivers and passengers must sit as far apart as possible, minimizing the number of passengers in the vehicle
- When using public transportation, the participant should follow all municipal transit guidelines, maintain safe physical distance, wear a mask (if possible) and frequently use hand sanitizer after contact with high touch surfaces

Temporarily Suspending Community Access

- Community access for a participant must be temporarily suspended if the participant receives a positive screen from 811 for COVID-19 testing (until a negative test result is received) or if a home has a participant with an active case of COVID-19.
- Per the COVID-19 Management in DSP Licensed Homes – Guidelines, any participant with a positive screen must self-isolate until test results are received.